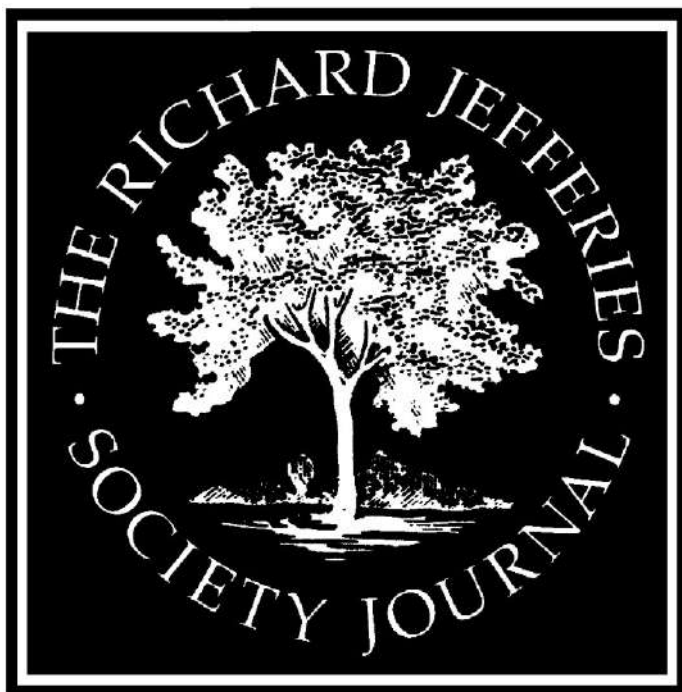




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The RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY (Registered Charity No. 1042838) was founded in 1950 to promote appreciation and study of the writings of Richard Jefferies (1848-1887). Its activities include the Annual General Meeting and Birthday Lecture, winter meetings, summer outings, special events, and the publication of a Summer and a Winter *Journal*, Spring and Autumn Newsletters and an Annual Report. Membership is open to all on payment of the current annual subscription: £12.00 – individual; £14.00 – couple (UK rate).

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The principal aim of *The Richard Jefferies Society Journal* is to present material by Jefferies that has not been published or reprinted, or that is difficult to obtain, together with articles about Jefferies (commissioned or submitted), items of research and discovery, synopses of talks and lectures, book reviews, information relating to places where Jefferies lived, and correspondence.

Submissions, preferably in electronic format, should be sent to the Honorary Secretary at the above address. MSS and correspondence for publication will be acknowledged but cannot be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The Editorial board consists of Janice Lingley, Peter Robins, and Jean Saunders.

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A Little Stream

Richard Jefferies

Three pages in Richard Jefferies' holograph – previously unpublished; untitled. Samuel Looker describes it as "Mature work, fairly late." The title of A Little Stream is the editors' choice.

Heavy leaves of marsh marigold overhang the stepping stones where the meadow footpath crosses a little stream. Long since the stones sank with the yielding earth, and one edge only stands above the surface, and is then concealed by a thick and heavy leaf. Parted by the flat stone the aquatic grasses cannot stay the current so that the stream rushes with unusual swiftness under the plant. The shadow of the broad thick leaves falls on it and in that darker shadow the last golden bloom of the marigold is reflected the more clearly. Sparrow, and finch, and starling come to the stone to drink under the flower. The stone gives them firm footing which they cannot find along the streamlet, for its edges are formed of grass and fibres which will not support them. A solitary stickleback faces the rush and eddy below the stone, you must stoop to see his crimson breast in the shade. Once now and then a small company of roach let themselves drift like sticks before the current to the hatch in the brook where it is bayed up and deep.

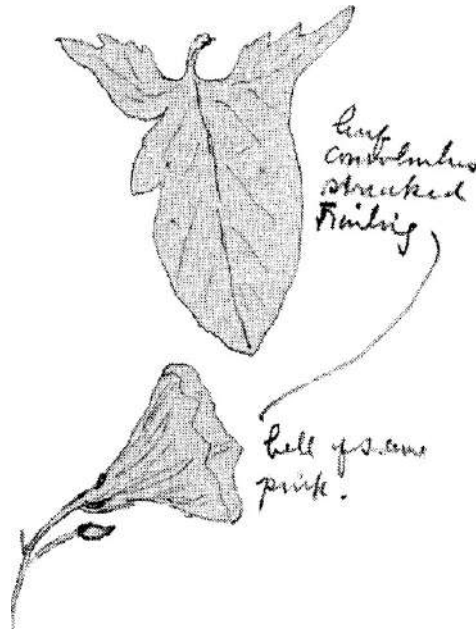
There is a felled oak by the hedge, it was thrown last year and left to season, and the weather has long since darkened the surface of the timber. One large branch stretches nearly to the stepping stone and sitting upon this the spikes or "bonnets" of the grass rise beside the feet. Ants run over the level surface of the oak stump, still blue with the stains of its own sap, visible while crossing the plateau and lost as they descend into the sward.

A white cardamine flowers on the bank of a furrow which like a tributary joins the streamlet below the marigold, and there too a green flag grows. Farther, the buttercups form a surface of gold and cover the grass like a roof.

Looking along this surface a greenfinch comes out from the hedge, and plunges through the golden level and is hidden. He is searching in the grass. Though a glowing colour, the buttercup is not a favourite flower with the visitants of the meadow. Neither insects nor birds care for it. The bee and the butterfly pass it; a few flies, especially a black fly alight on it, and for these probably the flycatcher darts from the hedge, hovers at the flower, and returns. Finches and occasionally a

robin will do the same. But you may watch these thousands on thousands of buttercups and scarce see one visited by a bird, or an insect. Can it be that something of the acrid nature of the plant pervades the pollen in the cup and by a faint odour repels? It is different with the lovely dandelion, one of the first flowers to which the bees rush the moment the sun shines.

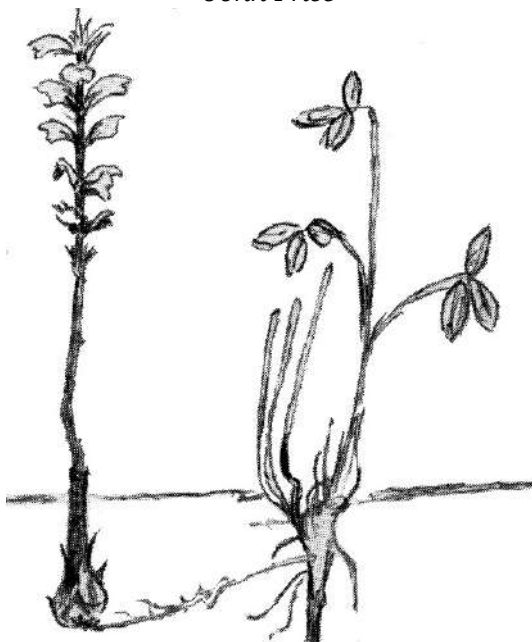
Jefferies' Convolvulus



The image above has been reproduced from page 55 of the *Chronicles of the Hedges and Other Essays*, edited by Samuel J. Looker (London: Phoenix House, 1948). Looker collected the drawing from Richard Jefferies' field note-book (possibly dated October 1880—September 1881) and he commented on page 15 of *Chronicles* that "Jefferies could have achieved considerable success with the pencil had he developed this side of his talent". In "The Coming of Summer" (*Longman's Magazine*, December 1881; collected in *The Toilers of the Field*) Jefferies writes: "On the green banks—waste places—beside the 'New Road' the streaked pink convolvulus is in flower; a sign that the spring forces have spent themselves, that the sun is near his fullness. The flower itself is shapely, yet it is not quite welcome; it says too plainly that we are near the meridian."

Richard Jefferies' Broomrape Sketch

John Price



In *Chronicles of the Hedges*¹ published in 1948, Samuel Looker gathers together some previously uncollected essays and notes by Jefferies, and illustrates the book “with pencil drawings by Richard Jefferies and by his uncle, John Luckett Jefferies”. The sketches by Richard are all from the notebooks filled between 1877 and 1886, and include, on page 9 at the end of the Contents list, the image reproduced above. None of the sketches are labelled, or placed in any context in the text.

The drawing at first sight is unremarkable, and indeed, it has been unremarked upon until recently, when Jean Saunders brought it to my attention as she planned to include it in this issue of the *Journal*. The plant on the left appears to be a toothwort, broomrape, or other related parasitic or hemi-parasitic plant. The plant on the right could be bearing flowers or leaves. The indication of a central vein on each of

¹ *Chronicles of the Hedges and Other Essays* by Richard Jefferies, edited by Samuel J. Looker (London: Phoenix House, 1948).

the three-part structures, however, suggests leaves, or leaflets. From these deductions, it is reasonable to conclude that the right-hand plant is clover, or a closely related species, with three stalks to the left that appear to have been cut, or grazed, off. What is even more interesting is the apparent connection between the two plants, shown as a hairy thread between the two rootstocks, and indicated as being below ground level in the sketch. The only major problem with the drawing is one of scale, as Common Broomrape normally grows to 60cm or two feet, whereas clover will not normally be found taller than 15cm (6 inches). In this illustration they are shown as being of more or less equal height.

Can we learn any more about this sketch from Jefferies' writings? As it happens, we can.

Samuel Looker in *The Nature Diaries and Note-Books of Richard Jefferies*,² quotes an extract for July 8th 1881: "Claygate. Lesser broom rape on clover. Numerous in field. Clover had been mown."

In the essay "Magpie Fields", published in *Nature Near London*,³ the following passage occurs:

The clover this year seems to have been the best crop, though in the district alluded to it has not been without an enemy. Early in July, after the first crop had been mown a short time, there came up a few dull yellowish-looking stalks among it. These increased so much that one field became yellowish all over, the stalks overtopped the clover, and overcame its green.

It was the lesser broom rape, and hardly a clover plant escaped this parasitic growth. By carefully removing the earth with a pocket-knife the two could be dug up together. From the roots of the clover a slender filament passes underground to the somewhat bulbous root of the broom rape, so that although they stand apart and appear separate plants, they are connected under the surface. The stalk of the broom rape is clammy to touch, and is an unwholesome greenish yellow, a dull undecided colour; if cut, it is nearly the same texture throughout. There are numerous dull purplish flowers at the top, but it has no leaves. It is not a pleasant-looking plant—a strange and unusual growth.

One particular field was completely covered with it, and scarcely a clover field in the neighbourhood was perfectly free. But though drawing the sap from the clover plants the latter grew so vigorously that little damage was apparent. After a while the broom rape disappeared, but the clover shot up and afforded good forage.

² *The Nature Diaries and Note-Books of Richard Jefferies* edited by Samuel J. Looker (London: The Grey Walls Press Ltd., 1948), p.113.

³ *Nature Near London* by Richard Jefferies (London: Chatto and Windus, 1883).

So the sketch was clearly done at this time. The reference to digging up the two plants carefully with a pocket knife suggests that having done this, Jefferies then drew the two plants and their interconnection; albeit representing the view as a vertical excavation in the soil, with the soil surface shown in its appropriate position.

Where were the Magpie Fields? *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies*⁴ quotes Freeman in placing them above Molesey Lock near Surbiton, and the observation relating to the period from September to November 1881. He had caught the Broomrape in the early stage of its (abundant) growth, before it started to overtop the mown clover crop.

Jefferies refers to the plant as “lesser broom rape”, whereas I have called it “Common Broomrape”. Both names refer to the same plant, whose scientific name is *Orobanche minor*. Hence “lesser” broomrape would seem to be a more accurate translation of the Linnaean name. It is, however, universally called Common Broomrape today, and modern floras will not give the Victorian version. There are at least nine species of Broomrape found in the British Isles, but only three of these are relatively common, and Jefferies might have known all three as occurring both in Wiltshire and near London. In addition to the Common Broomrape, parasitic mainly on clover, the Knapweed Broomrape (*Orobanche elatior*) grows to 75cm, and the Greater Broomrape (*Orobanche rapum-genistae*), which parasitises Broom and Gorse, can reach one metre in height. Many of the Broomrapes parasitise leguminous plants, which have the extremely valuable ability of being able to fix atmospheric nitrogen and convert it to nitrate salts with the help of symbiotic bacteria living in nodules on their roots. The Broomrapes have thus evolved a clever, mechanism for boosting their protein-building potential by selecting leguminous hosts. Common Broomrape was thus considered a significant agricultural weed in Victorian times.

The “slender filament” referred to, and illustrated, is actually a root of the clover. The Broomrape only produces a very short connecting link to its host. All the Broomrapes are perennial parasites, completely lacking chlorophyll, and are brownish-yellow in colour; the flowers have dark violet veins and purple stigmas, and the whole rather resembling withered orchids.

Finally, I have not yet managed to see the relevant note-books for 1881, but it will be most interesting to read the notes accompanying the sketch; notes which presumably were then used in drafting “Magpie Fields”.

⁴ *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies: a Chronological Study* by Hugoe Matthews and Phyllis Treitel (Oxford: Petton Books, 1994), p.161.

Two letters from Phyllis Hargrave to Samuel Looker

Phyllis Jefferies was born on 6th December 1880 in Surbiton to Richard and Jessie Jefferies. Along with her mother and brother Harold, she stayed with J W North at Beggearnhuish House, Somerset after her father died in 1887. By the age of 10, she was living in Dulwich with her mother and brother. Phyllis moved several times with her mother even after marriage to Alfred Hargrave on 24th April 1916 in Stratford-on-Avon. Phyllis and her husband finally settled in Cornwall along with Jessie.



Phyllis Hargrave, 1936

After her husband died she moved to Seaford where her cousins Christine and Helen Billing lived. Phyllis died in 1958.

Samuel Looker corresponded with Phyllis for over 25 years.¹ The following two letters to him are reproduced, as written and undated. In these Phyllis reveals how her father's notebooks were nearly destroyed and her dislike for Henry Williamson. In the second she is referring to Williamson's comparison of her father with Hitler.

The original letters are part of the Richard Jefferies Society archive held at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, Chippenham.

¹ *Richard Jefferies: Man of the Fields* by S J Looker & Crichton Porteous (London: John Baker, 1965), p.xviii.

Overdale
Cox
Perranporth
Cornwall

July 27 [1942?]

Dear Mr. Looker

Thank you for your letter.

I appreciate very much all you say & your genuine love of my father's writings.

I send you by registered post one of the note books, the date inside, Feb 14th '87, is in my mother's writing, which was just six months before my father died & probably the last note book he used, I do not like parting with these little books at all but feel they would be safe in your hands especially if you will leave them to the nation.

I am offered £20 for the four, perhaps that is more than you wish to give.

I sometimes feel perhaps I ought to destroy them & not put them in the market at all but these times are hard for everybody

I was pleased to see Mr. Rogers when I was in Guildford & interested to have my opinion of Henry Williamson confirmed by him.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Phyllis Hargrave

Cox Hill

June 5th [1943?]

Dear Mr. Looker

The comparison drawn by Williamson is more than ridiculous, can you compare a gentle mystic with a raving lunatic! I feel like writing a scorching letter to him, I have always disliked him & his writings, he is odious!

I have let my house go this month & am leading a gypsy life in my land in the orchard, enjoying it very much when the sun shines.

I shall hope to see you when you are in Perran, you will find the house quite easily if you go down the path by Overdale gate

My fountain pen is not behaving very well.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

Phyllis Hargrave.

‘Jefferies’ Land’ and Kipling’s *Puck of Pook’s Hill* Stories (Part 2)

Janice Lingley

‘. . . the chief end of my car, so far as I am concerned, is the discovery of England. To me it is a land of stupefying marvels and mysteries; and a day in the car in an English county is a day in some fairy museum where all the exhibits are live and real and yet none the less delightfully mixed up with books. For instance, in six hours, I can go from the land of the *Ingoldsby Legends* by way of the Norman Conquest and the Barons’ War into Richard Jefferies’ country . . .’¹

Jefferies’ Land – ‘the Man in the Hill’

The fortuitous combination of magical Shakespearean drama and pastoral English topography in *Puck of Pook’s Hill* (1906), that results in the extraordinary phenomenon of ‘broken Hills’, and courtesy of Puck a magical array of revenant storytellers, appears to be Kipling’s own novel way of invoking the realm of Faery. The transitions between dream and reality, and the conflation of present and past characterising the introductions and conclusions to the *Puck* stories, give the effect of experience that in some way co-exists, or is contiguous with, Dan and Una’s ‘contemporary’ Edwardian world, rather than being extraordinarily intrusive or distinct. In this respect, it is possible that Kipling may have been influenced by the supernatural aspect of ‘Richard Jefferies country’ featured in his children’s story *Wood Magic* (1881).² The young child nicknamed ‘Little Sir Bevis’, who sets out as a diminutive and quixotic knight errant to explore and find meaning in the rural environment of his farmstead home, talks with the various animals and birds he encounters, and understands the speech of the brook. In the concluding chapter, the small child converses with the wind as he dances on a downland hilltop. The wind claims to be the repository of all stories and is dismissive of modern notions of time. He refers Little Sir Bevis to a man ‘in the hill’, and the child’s instant response is to assume the man is in some way alive: ‘What man? And how did he get in the hill?’

¹ Letter to Filson Young (April 1904) in Thomas Pinney, Editor, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling, 1900-1910*, Vol. 3 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 150-151.

² Richard Jefferies, *Wood Magic* (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1881), pp. 173-174.

Just tell him I want to speak to him.' Told that the man is dead, Little Sir Bevis again reacts as if the man may have been his contemporary: 'When did he die? Did I ever see him?' The wind's reply expresses ideas that could have suggested to Kipling the lively immediacy of his revenant story-tellers:

'He died about a minute ago, dear; just before you came up the hill. If you were to ask the people who live in the houses, where they will not let me in (they carefully shut out the sun too), they would tell you he died thousands of years ago; but they are foolish, very foolish. It was hardly so long as yesterday.' . . . 'There never was a yesterday,' whispered the wind presently, 'and there never will be to-morrow. It is all one long to-day. When the man in the hill was you were too, and he still is now you are here; but of these things you will know when you are older, that is if you will only continue to drink me.'

The manner in which Kipling brings the past vividly to bear on Dan and Una's present-day world is not dissimilar.

Puck and Weland's Smithy

In the opening story of *Puck of Pook's Hill*, Kipling's portrayal of Weland, the elven smith of the Old Norse Gods, represents a complete departure from this legendary character's ancient dignity and charisma. Weland is identified with a heathen cult in which both men and horses are sacrificed, until finally he is reduced in Faery folklore to the level of a mere country blacksmith. The 'white-bearded bent old blacksmith' who appears in 'Weland's Sword', confesses to Puck, 'I'm not even Weland now. They call me Wayland-Smith.' (p.17).³ In Kipling's account, Weland arrives in this country as a chanting graven image in the bows of a piratical Viking ship and is worshipped as a god. His 'altars' and 'temples' (pp. 15-16) function as a metaphor of the smithies and forges of the erstwhile weaponry of war – the sword, spear, lance and such-like – and the 'scandalous' sacrifices made to him – 'I was not a gentle God in my Day and my Time and my Power' (p. 17) – presumably refer to the generations of men who died on the medieval battlefields of Britain and Europe.

Though Weland's forge is notionally located in Dan and Una's Sussex valley, the site of Wayland's Smithy is traditionally based on a Neolithic burial mound near Uffington, in Berkshire. The site of the Battle of Ashdown – in which the Saxons, led by a young King Alfred,

³ The page numbers given in brackets for quotations from the *Puck* stories refer to the World's Classics edition of *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*, edited by Donald Mackenzie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

fought successfully to defend their land and their Christian faith and culture against an invading army of heathen Danes – is nearby, as also is White Horse Hill and Dragon Hill, the scene of St George's victory.

In *Something of Myself* Kipling tells us that when considering an idea for the development of a story he moved 'easiest from a given point'⁴. The 'given point' he selected for his introductory story would appear to have been the description of the area given in the collection of articles by Richard Jefferies on the 'History of Swindon and its Environs', published under the title *Jefferies' Land*.⁵ Wayland's Smithy, says Jefferies, is considered to be the burial place of the defeated Danish warlord and the legend of Wayland-Smith 'is thought to have originated in a Danish superstition concerning spirits who dwelt in rocks and were cunning workmen in iron and steel.'⁶ Apropos the effigy carved into the chalk on White Horse Hill, Jefferies states: 'Tradition asserts that it was made by order of King Alfred, to commemorate his victory over the Danes at Æscdun, in the year 871. A white horse was the standard of the Saxons, as a raven was that of the Danes.'⁷ This last comment appears to be the basis of the 'splendid white horse' as a token heathen sacrifice (p. 16) in 'Weland's Sword' and the 'raven-winged' ships (p. 105) in the second of the three Roman stories based on the Great Wall in the North. The reference to King Alfred's navy in the preliminary 'Puck's Song' acknowledges that the Danish incursions in fact took place in the south.

Bevis and the Puck Stories

The many parallels between *Bevis* and *Puck of Pook's Hill* strongly suggest Jefferies' influence. *Bevis, the Story of a Boy*, as originally published, was intended for the adult reader, but subsequently became identified with the younger reader apparently because the eponymous hero, and his companion in his adventures, were children. The child-centred *Puck* stories were also intended for an adult readership, though Kipling realised they would attract child readers. 'The tales had to be read by children, before people realised that they were meant for grown-ups', he comments in his autobiography.⁸

Another point of interest is that *Bevis*, though thematically

⁴ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan, 1937), p. 185.

⁵ Richard Jefferies, *Jefferies' Land, A History of Swindon and Its Environs*, edited with notes by Grace Toplis (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. Ltd., 1896).

⁶ Jefferies, *ibid.*, pp. 128-130.

⁷ Jefferies, *ibid.*, p. 125.

⁸ Rudyard Kipling, *ibid.*, p. 190.

integrated, does not have the formal structure of a plot, but concentrates on the processes whereby two boys learn to swim, sail, and hunt with a gun. Kipling's novels of boyhood, *Captains Courageous* (1897) and *Kim* (1901), also describing processes of learning and maturation, are comparable.

The openings of both *Bevis* and the *Puck* stories appear to take their cue from a similar historical and cultural perspective. The 'rings and roundelays', 'footed in Queen Mary's days On many a grassy plain', of which Puck sings with booming voice at the beginning of 'Weland's Sword' (p. 10), is comparable with the 'fine engraving of "An English Merry-making in the Olden Time"' which is delivered to the farmhouse in the introduction to Jefferies' novel (p. 21)⁹; the inflected form of 'Olden' suggests the medieval. The engraving is not described in any detail, for young Bevis considers the picture, though it 'might look very well . . . was of no use to him.' He claims the large wooden packing-case as 'his perquisite', and turns it into a raft for the first of his water-borne adventures. However, Jefferies provides us with a very entertaining description of a 'Merry-making', which includes a dance, in the concluding chapter of his charming rural novel *Greene Ferne Farm*.¹⁰ A downland episode in this early novel by Jefferies features the Oxfordshire dolmen traditionally known as 'Wayland's Smithy', and associates this ancient artefact with magical folklore. This episode appears to be the source for the conflation of similar ideas in the first of the *Puck* tales.

In erstwhile folklore and superstition, the misfortune of being benighted and losing one's way was the work of the mischievous hobgoblin Puck or, as he was also known, Robin Goodfellow. The Puck of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream* conforms to this notion,¹¹ and the little play Dan and Una enact in their Fairy Ring Theatre (pp. 7-8) is of course based on the fairies of the *Dream*. The diminutive figure who steps from the alder bushes by the river to narrate 'Weland's Sword', acts entirely in character when, in the story, he mazes the horse of an old farmer with his magic. This introductory episode is located at Willingford Bridge, notionally 'Weland's Ford' and the site of 'Wayland-Smith's' forge.

Lost on the Wiltshire downs at night, Margaret Estcourt and

⁹ The page numbers given in italics refer to the edition of *Bevis, the Story of a Boy* published by Jonathan Cape (London, 1932), illustrated by E. H. Shepard.

¹⁰ Richard Jefferies, *Greene Ferne Farm* (Longcot: Petton Books, 2009; first published 1880), pp. 114-120. The 'fine old country dance' named 'Sir Roger de Coverley' (p. 117) dates from at least the early part of the seventeenth century.

¹¹ William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. i. 32-9.

Geoffrey Newton, in Jefferies' novel, are similarly confused,¹² but these two comparatively 'modern' young people are quite unaware of any supernatural influence on their circular wanderings. The Greene Ferne Farm shepherd, Jabez, also coincidentally benighted on the downs and by his own confession, 'took by the nause and drawed round and round', knows better apparently. He enigmatically ascribes his plight to 'the Ould Un' who 'bides in thuck place war them gurt stwoanes be',¹³ referring to the dolmen known as Wayland's Smithy, though in Jefferies' novel it is not identified as such. However, as stated above, the well-known legend of 'Wayland's Smithy' appears in Jefferies' non-fiction account of the diverse archaeology of the site and the surrounding area. In *Greene Ferne Farm*, the association of the inferred hobgoblin with Wayland-Smith's dolmen appears to be Jefferies' own innovative contribution to the subject. The notion evidently interested Kipling. Eschewing Geoffrey Newton's suggestion of the Devil,¹⁴ he translates 'the Ould Un' into the charming and congenial fairy who introduces himself to Una and Dan as 'the oldest Old Thing in England' (p. 9).

Thus is the way prepared for Kipling's Weland to arrive on Britain's shores as a heathen god of weaponry and warfare; a reinvented Weland or 'Wayland-Smith' who forges, aided by Puck, the magical sword dedicated to the cause of 'the Thing'; subsequently, the theme of Wealden Iron and the making of ordnance in 'Hal o' the Draft'; and finally, in the concluding story 'The Treasure and the Law', the mass-produced guns of a modern-day world in the context of a pheasant shoot. Jefferies' story of boyhood is located within the manor owned by Bevis' father, and the estate includes a pheasant preserve. The boys' fathers shoot pheasants, and towards the end of the story they equip their sons with sportsmen's guns (p. 481). The matchlock gun Bevis and his friend Mark secretly forge in a farm labourer's cottage (pp. 263-272) becomes central to their hunting forays on New Formosa.

Though their personalities as authors differ, the autobiographical presence of both writers adds an important dimension to their work. The fatherly figure responsible for the adaptation of Shakespeare's *Dream* that initially evokes the world of Faery for his children (p. 7), and who welcomes the children home, at the end of the first tale, quoting from James Hogg's 'Kilmeny' (p. 21), thus declares his own

¹² Jefferies, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-60.

¹³ Jefferies, *ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

¹⁴ For the post-Reformation attitude to the old world of Faery, see Katherine M. Briggs, *A Dictionary of Fairies* (London: Allen Lane, 1976), p 11.

involvement with the Faery world.¹⁵ Jefferies is notably present in *Bevis* in passages that invite comparison with the visionary quality of his autobiography *The Story of My Heart*.¹⁶ Mark is based on Jefferies' younger brother Henry who as an adult crossed the Atlantic to settle in America (pp. 209 and 506). The 'great sea' that *Bevis* declares he will sail at the end of the novel is perhaps metaphorical in meaning; in his autobiography Jefferies' beloved downland hills, the source of much of his inspiration as a writer, are identified with the sea's mystery.¹⁷

Though their methods as writers differ, Kipling proceeds, as does Jefferies, by evoking a sense of strangeness within locations ordinarily familiar to his protagonists. As inhabitants of 'The Magic Land', it seems *Bevis* and Mark have entered into another dimension of time and distance in which their presence on the lake is neither seen nor heard by those ashore. The sound of their gunfire, the barking of their dog, are inaudible; their Homeric raft, invisible. Thus, though the 'magic' of this is not overtly acknowledged either by themselves or the narrator, the boys' pretence that they are living on an island in mid-ocean appears to be their situation. The process in *Bevis* is marked by the exotic names the boys give to the flora and fauna about them (willows are 'blue gums' and rabbits 'kangaroos', for example). In the *Puck* stories, it is the vividly evoked physical presences of the revenants that achieves the sense of strangeness, as well as the tales they tell.

'Gramarye' and Orion the Hunter

The denoting of the topography of the *Puck* stories as a location of 'Gramarye' – *She is not any common Earth, Water or Wood or air, But Merlin's Isle of Gramarye, Where you and I will fare.* – is unique to the prefatory 'Puck's Song'. Though the Corbett ballad 'Rewards and Fairies' and the ballad entitled 'Sir Andrew Barton' are the only verse from Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* that Kipling specifically invokes in the *Puck* stories, his contemporary readers are likely to have been familiar with the magical connotations of 'gramarye' from the context provided by 'King Estmere'. This also appears in Percy's collection, first published in 1765 and popular for more than a

¹⁵ See the note on Hogg's 'Kilmeny' in the Mackenzie edition, p. 415; also cf. Kipling's fine ballad 'The Last Rhyme of True Thomas', based on the medieval legend of Thomas the Rhymer, in M. M. Kaye, *Rudyard Kipling, The Complete Verse* (London: Kyle Cathie, 1996), pp. 304-8.

¹⁶ Richard Jefferies, *The Story of My Heart, My Autobiography*, with an Introduction by Jeremy Hooker (Totnes: Green Books, 2002; first published in 1883).

¹⁷ Jefferies, *ibid.*; see, for example, pp. 19-21, 31 and 75-77.

century.¹⁸ In the ballad, 'gramarye' is magically inscribed on the foreheads of King Estmere and his loyal companion Adler Yonge. Had Kipling elected to consult the then newly-published *Oxford English Dictionary*, he would have learned that 'gramarye', denoted to be obsolete, except when used archaically, means 'grammar; learning in general', and referred particularly to medieval Latin, the language of scholarship and wisdom. In the ballad, gramarye, in its primary lexical sense, is the means by which the romance of chivalry and swordsmanship and traditional minstrelsy and song are magically enhanced; 'gramarye' also comprehends magical plant-lore – changing appearance, creating disguise and giving protection. All these ideas are given expression in the *Puck* stories.

The singing of key verses from the ballad features in Jefferies' narrative and communicates Bevis and Mark's boyish enthusiasm for chivalry. In a comparable spirit Una chants lines from Macaulay's 'Lay of Horatius' as she bravely prepares to defend her brushwood fortress of Volaterrae from the advance of Lars Posen's army (p. 83). With minds 'full of battle', prior to the re-enactment in play of the Battle of Pharsalia with boys from the nearby village, Bevis and Mark's singing of verses which emphasise the power of 'gramarye' is insistent. Bevis declares that he and Mark will 'study gramarye or magic' after the battle has been fought (p. 161). Percy's collection is probably 'the grey and battered volume of ballads', among the books that Bevis takes with him to the island camp on New Formosa (pp. 291-2). But in the context of the New Sea, 'gramarye' is endowed with transcendent meaning. The name of New Formosa is Latinate, deriving from the adjective *formosus*, meaning 'beautiful', and it is the spell wrought by beauty's enchantment that informs several very fine passages in *Bevis*, which are characteristic of Jefferies' visionary style and his distinction as a Nature writer. The theme of light, especially, may have suggested to Kipling Parnesius' devotion to a Mithraic sun-god (pp. 95 and 111).

On the first morning of the boys' sojourn in the 'Tropics' of the Indian Ocean (pp. 323-4), the great clarity and brilliance of the summer light transforms their world of ocean and archipelago, and is perceived by Jefferies as the essence of life: 'The light touched all things, and gave them to be.' The boys wonder at it. 'It's magic,' says Bevis; 'Enchantment,' says Mark. In a comparable episode, Bevis, a lover of the sky, gazing at the stars over the island, recalls the sun's movement over the garden of his farmstead home and thinks of it as 'a magical golden ring'. He feels instinctively that: 'There was magic in

¹⁸ Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, edited by Edward Walford (London: Frederick Warne & Co., 1892), pp. 58-62.

everything, blades of grass and stars, the sun and the stones upon the ground.’ (p. 356). Voyaging aboard their Homeric raft, built of timber from New Formosa, Bevis and Mark, on one especially notable occasion, discover a small bay and a waterfall which they name Sweet River Falls. Despite themselves, the two young ‘savages’ are enchanted by the music of the waterfall. The narrator articulates its singing in terms of a sense of timelessness, great vistas of past and future rural landscape whose years are contained within the moment of the present (pp. 399-400). But these moments of intense communion with the beauty of the natural world are sublimated to the boys’ fascination as hunters with the power of their weapon. The clause in *The Charter of the River* permitting Elsie and John to ‘freely enjoy and exercise “The High The Low and the Middle Justice upon and over all Birds, Beasts, Reptiles, Fishes and Insects”’¹⁹ ironically contrasts with the lawlessness of the gun predominating within the boundaries of the New Sea. On one occasion the boys’ gun becomes the means of the needless and indiscriminate destruction of the wildlife about them, for they kill more than they can eat. The narrator observes: ‘they hungered to repeat the wild excitement when the game was struck and hunted down. Had it been the buffaloes of the prairie, it would have been just the same; had it been the great elephants of inner Africa, they would have shot them down just the same.’ (p. 424). Jefferies considered human beings insufficiently mature to abrogate to themselves the use of powerful and potentially very destructive weaponry; hence he puts guns into the hands of children, and portrays them as becoming increasingly alienated from the natural world.²⁰ Bevis indiscriminately shoots an otter. At the beginning of *Rewards and Fairies*, Una and Dan do no more than track the trail of an otter through the early morning dew.

The gramarye of New Formosa finally and inevitably begins to disintegrate when a farm labourer at work in a distant field, claiming extraordinary powers of hearing, says that he thinks he has heard the boys’ voices across the water, ‘talking something about shooting’ (p.

¹⁹ The significance of *The Charter of the River* in relation to Jefferies’ *Bevis* is discussed in Part I of this article.

²⁰ In the final story of the Norman trilogy, the great sword magically forged by Weland with Puck’s help for the exemplary knight Hugh is used to kill gorillas. The literary background that Kipling evokes, R. M. Ballantyne’s *The Gorilla Hunters*, also describes in rather disturbing and ambivalent terms the killing to excess of such creatures. This children’s novel, published in 1861, features the three boys who were shipwrecked in *Coral Island, A Tale of the Pacific Ocean* (1858). The boys appear in the sequel as fully grown adults intent on big game hunting in Africa. Ballantyne (1825-94) was one of the most popular writers of children’s adventure stories of his day. The likelihood is that Jefferies, a keen reader as a child, also knew of the story.

475). The two chapters before last in the novel comprise little more than a treatise on the gun, the theatrical American snap-shooter vividly providing evidence of the rapidity with which bullets can be discharged. (pp. 493-8). The concluding image is of Bevis and Mark by the lake in the dark of winter with a cold wind blowing from the 'black North', and the great constellation of Orion, the hunter of classical legend who vowed to kill all earth's creatures, 'lording the heavens with his sword'.

Though this ending in a wintry landscape appears to be finite, the narrator notes the force in the spring buds that will push out the leaf as Arcturus rises in the East. Thus there is the potential for more positive development. During the boys' last foray as hunters, before they leave 'The Magic Land' to return home, Bevis keenly observing swallows in flight becomes, through the intensity of his vision, aware of the faraway music of Sweet River Falls, and with this comes an instinctive understanding of the power of a bird's wing (pp. 465-6); in this passage the child character and author merge. It would seem, that Kipling, perceiving and inspired by this aspect of Jefferies' writing, sought to develop a magical topography, combined with the theme of weaponry and the gun, in order to pursue his own ideas on reconciliation. He presents his two country children as benign presences in the rurality of their home landscape. The fine passages which describe Una and Dan enacting their fairy play in a summer meadow, playing in their boat, fishing, and recounting their friendship with the elderly countryman Hobden, very effectively convey the children's positive involvement with their locality. Through the mediation of Puck, Kipling portrays them as eager to learn, and to understand through legend and history, something of the mystery of 'Human Earth'. However, like *Bevis*, the *Puck* stories are brought to a cold and threatening wintry conclusion. The point that both writers begin from a similar cultural stance has already been made. At the end of the final story, 'The Treasure and the Law', Old Hobden tells the children he is looking forward to 'lawful Spring in England' (and no doubt a rural renaissance), but the image of a mischievous Puck creating havoc disguised as an anarchic bull (an obverse hint of Mithraism perhaps)²¹ predominates, while ironically the children go indoors singing the Corbett ballad 'at the tops of their voices', with apparently all thought of whatever they may have learned from Puck and his revenant story-tellers erased from their minds by the autumnal leaf-fall of Oak, Ash and Thorn (p. 174).

²¹ The ritualistic killing of a white bull by the sun-god Mithras was central to the cult.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of this final story, pheasants shelter from a 'big beat' on the other side of the valley (metaphorically suggesting war) in Far Wood, the location of the children's watchtower Volaterrae (p. 163). In *Bevis* Jefferies lampoons the pheasant preserve when, in their exploration of the 'Indian Jungle', the two boys come across a small structure improvised of sticks, serving as a platform for the barley on which the birds are fed. It is considered in playful pretence to be a 'fetish' of 'savages' or 'pigmies' and a place of their 'worship' (pp. 83-4). In view of their subsequent careers as young imperial-style hunters, the irony seems to be at the boys' expense. The significance of the pheasant shoot in 'The Treasure and the Law' is extended by the corpses hanging from the gamekeeper's gibbet in the introduction to the concluding story of the sequel *Rewards and Fairies* (p 391). The game enclosure over which Dan and Una's father presides is of an exceptional nature. In the first story of the Roman trilogy 'We don't hunt,' Una tells the charismatic Parnesius – who personifies so much that is of positive significance in *Puck of Pook's Hill* ²² – 'We preserve – pheasants.' The smiling young centurion's response is to imitate the cry of the cock-pheasant 'so perfectly' that a bird answers 'out of the wood.' (p. 85).

Demeter of the Baskets and the Old Woman of Heffle Cuckoo Fair

Two articles by Jefferies published in the collection *Field and Hedgerow, Last Essays*²³ appear to have influenced Kipling's formulation of the expression 'Demeter of the Baskets'. Demeter, called Ceres by the Romans, was the great Greek goddess of agriculture, especially arable crops.

In the first story of the Roman trilogy, 'Demeter of the Baskets' refers to a new statue of the goddess on Vectis (the Isle of Wight), the location of the country estate owned by the father of the centurion Parnesius. In his childhood on Vectis, the Romano-Briton and his siblings enjoyed a happy rural family life, comparable to that of Dan and Una.²⁴ Parnesius identifies the statue not only with his mother (p. 86), but also Roma Dea, the Goddess of Rome. A statue of this deity adorns the Great Wall, and is an inspiration to Parnesius and his friend Pertinax, as Captains of the Wall, in their battles with the invading pirates from the North (p. 125). The expression occurs

²² See Janice Lingley, 'Kipling's Isle of Gramarye: What's In a Name', *The Kipling Journal*, Vol. 87, September 2013, No. 351, pp. 46-47 and 49-55.

²³ Richard Jefferies, *Field and Hedgerow, Last Essays* (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1904).

²⁴ Kipling based his centurion's rural home on the Roman remains discovered at Brading. See A.L.F. Rivet, *Rudyard Kipling's Roman Britain: Fact and Fiction* (Keele: University of Keele, 1976), p. 7.

uniquely in 'A Centurion of the Thirtieth', but there are significant oblique references to Demeter in two other *Puck* stories, which suggest that Kipling is proposing a local folklore based on the cult, deriving from the time when Britain was a Roman province.

In 'Dymchurch Flit', out of the moonlight and into the fire-lit oast-house of Dan and Una's river valley strides a rustic revenant called Tom Shoesmith who is 'three full inches taller than Hobden, a grey-whiskered, brown-faced giant with clear blue eyes.' This magical storyteller, a Puck-in-disguise figure, is hailed by Hobden as an old friend. He appears to have his origins in the essay by Jefferies entitled 'The Countryside: Sussex', in which he describes a visit to an oast-house and there observes a 'giant' of a countryman treading hops.²⁵ In Kipling's story Tom Shoesmith helps Hobden with this task; hops were traditionally grown in the Dudwell valley, as the oast-houses which survive attest. However, Jefferies' essay begins with his thoughts on wheat as a crop. As from the oast-house he hears the voices of the men outside harvesting the grain to the hum of the threshing-machine, wheat assumes in his mind an almost iconic identity, representing the plenitude of the countryside, the fertility of the soil and man's ability to win from it sustenance of great vitality and virtue.

The ballad Tom Shoesmith sings is Kipling's own composition. The 'Old Mother' of whom the revenant sings with his 'big voice' (p 147) –

Old Mother Laidinwool had nigh twelve months been dead,
She heard the hops was doing well, an' so popped up her head,
For said she: 'The lads I've picked with when I was young and fair,
They're bound to be at hopping and I'm bound to meet 'em there!' ²⁶

– is Kipling adapting one of the epithets by which Demeter was known. Her name in Greek means 'Earth-Mother'; in the Homeric Hymn 'To Demeter' the goddess is addressed as 'Old Mother'. The folklore the ballad thus establishes may have been merged in the author's mind with Jefferies' 'Old Woman of Heffle Cuckoo Fair', featured in the preliminary to his essay 'April Gossip'²⁷, 'Heffle' being the dialectal form of Heathfield. Very little about the Fair has survived in local records. It was held in April in the village of Cade Street, and was declared open by an 'Old Woman' ceremoniously releasing a cuckoo from a basket to herald the advent of spring, and the time of sowing. Kipling exploits the fact that 'Old Woman' was another of the epithets that refer to Demeter. 'Old Mother' declares her relationship

²⁵ Jefferies, *ibid.*, pp. 76-93.

²⁶ For the complete song, see M. M. Kaye, *Rudyard Kipling, The Complete Verse*, (London: Kyle Cathie, 1990), pp. 492-493. The expression 'Laidinwool' refers to the *Burial in Wool Acts* of 1666 and 1678.

²⁷ Jefferies, *ibid.*, pp. 200-203.

with Persephone, who was gathering spring flowers in a meadow, when she was carried off to be his wife by Pluto, king of the Underworld for six months of every year, thus establishing the classical legend of the seasons. Jefferies follows his reference to the Old Woman with an account of his meeting with two children climbing over the gate of a hop-garden, where they have been picking 'Lent Lilies'. The daffodil was associated with the Persephone legend, for she is said to have wreathed her head with these flowers before she was taken captive. Jefferies' Lent lilies, however, are destined for the 'Lunnon' market, and his article goes on to deplore the decimation of the wild flowers of the countryside in order to meet this burgeoning trade.

Besides presiding over the cycle of life and death, Demeter was also referred to as the 'Law-Bringer', for it was under her aegis that civilisation based on settled agricultural societies came into being. In the concluding story of *Puck of Pook's Hill* the old countryman Hobden has the last word: 'Winter, he's come, I rackon, Mus' Dan,' he called. 'Hard times now till Heffle Cuckoo Fair. Yes, we'll all be glad to see the Old Woman let the Cuckoo out o' the basket for to start lawful Spring in England.' (p.174). Thus the expression 'Demeter of the Baskets', and its qualifying epithets referring to aspects of the Demeter and Persephone legend, has also the local Sussex identity Jefferies discusses.

'Nun-nun-nunquam geldavit': Black and Brown Rats

Coincident with the move to Bateman's, Kipling's short story 'Below the Mill Dam' first appeared in the September 1902 edition of the *Monthly Review*, and was subsequently published in the collection *Traffics and Discoveries* in 1904. The narrative, a parable in microcosm of the radical technological change represented by the development of hydroelectric power,²⁸ features Park Mill, the eighteenth-century mill on the Bateman's estate which is located on the site of a medieval corn mill constructed in about 1250. An ancient mill formerly located at nearby Robertsbridge, and recorded in *Domesday Book*, also contributes to Kipling's ideas. The installation of a turbine and the modifications to the mill wheel described in the story are based on innovations to the machinery of Park Mill which Kipling actually set in progress.²⁹ The story is ingeniously imaginative in presentation. The confrontation between the two generic modern-day

²⁸ See Terry S. Reynolds, *Stronger Than a Hundred Men: A History of the Vertical Waterwheel* (Baltimore; London: John Hoskins University Press, 1983).

²⁹ Kipling, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-80.

human characters, the Miller and his partner, the Engineer, and the two historically based anthropomorphic characters, the Black Rat and his ally, the Grey Cat, discusses allegorically the subversion of the centuries-old traditional water-wheel which the new technology featured in the narrative sets in progress. The Spirit of the Mill, residing in the Wheel (referred to as 'old thing', anticipating the use of this epithet in the *Puck* stories), and the Waters which power the Wheel's movement, form a background chorus to the conversations of the Grey Cat and the Black Rat, and the activities of the entrepreneurial human characters.

The theme of non-payment of geld³⁰ which the water-wheel insistently chants as a background chorus, quoting *Domesday Book*, has interesting connotations. In his book on the Norman inquisition into land holdings and their value, R. Welldon Finn observes: 'How early 'gelds' were levied is uncertain: many must have been for some special purpose, and among these were those recurrent impositions collected to buy off Danish armies.'³¹ Land which was not subject to geld payment in the medieval period was probably subject to 'forest' law, the word 'forest' being essentially then a legal term. It referred primarily to a royal hunting ground reserved for the beasts of the chase. As such, it would have been outside (Latin *foras*) the agricultural and pastoral life of the manor and its administrative framework, and thus free of geld payment. The 'forest', not necessarily entirely tree-covered, also traditionally conceded to forest dwellers the 'Right of Common', for such purposes as grazing, pannage and turbary.³² These areas would also have been free of liability for geld. *Domesday Book* often refers to a tract of uncultivated land as 'Waste' not because it is unusable, but because it is subject to 'forest' law.³³

Though unspecified, Kipling acknowledges that his 'genuine old English black rat' has a source. We are informed at the story's beginning that it is 'a breed which report says, is rapidly diminishing before the incursions of the brown variety', and the observation is repeated, word for word, at the story's ending. The 'report' Kipling invokes may refer to the rather distinguished opening of Jefferies' early

³⁰ *Nun-nun-nunquam geldavit*. The Mill is stammering as it rattles along. The word is *numquam*, Latin for 'never'; the *Victoria County History* translates the phrase in this context as meaning 'never paid tax since the Conquest' (1066).

³¹ R. Welldon Finn, *An Introduction to Domesday Book* (London: Longman, 1963), p. 241.

³² Welldon Finn, *ibid.*, pp. 205-206.

³³ For a fascinating account of the legal battle to preserve Commoners' Rights in Ashdown Forest in the late nineteenth century, see Barbara Willard, *The Forest: Ashdown in East Sussex* (Poundgate: Sweethaws Press, 1989), pp. 43-57.

novel, *World's End*, published in 1877.³⁴ Jefferies' 'dark coloured', 'good old English rat', is driven from a rural barn by an invasive newcomer, the grey rat, to a nearby area of desolate and infertile land. The rat's activities initiate a process of topographical and ecological change, resulting in the creation of a natural dam and a productive area of marshland colonised by gypsies, who establish a cottage industry based on basket-weaving. But this peaceable development has to give way to the 'ogres' of 'Legal Rights' and the advent of 'Steam'. A local farmer and landowner claims jurisdiction over the land and refuses the gypsies' offer of 'quit-rent', to establish their 'claim upon the soil' and immunity from eviction. The village is eventually swallowed up in the foundation of Stirringham, a centre of industry and commerce which considers that 'the world could not exist without its watches and guns, its plated goods, its monster factories and mills', and sends 'cargoes to Timbuctoo and supplies Java and Malabar with idols'. The token appearance, in due course, of the engineer with level and theodolite, 'followed by an army of workmen', heralds the rule of the invasive rat – 'parvenu grey Hanoverian rascals', says Jefferies – in the foundations and sewers of the great conurbation.³⁵ This scenario is comparable with the Engineer of Kipling's story, who symbolises the demise of the Old English black rat by stuffing and putting him in a glass case. There can be little doubt that Kipling's invader is comparable with the rodent of his source, a northern creature 'imported in the holds of vessels' and, says Jefferies, destined to obtain 'undisputed sway over the country'. Kipling's fable implies that the innovations introduced by the two human characters, the re-invented Miller, and the young Engineer, will inevitably lead to a similar 'infestation'. The nature and significance of the incursion is comparable with that of the Winged Hats, in the Roman trilogy of the *Puck* stories.³⁶

Kipling would almost certainly have been aware of the literary sources of Jefferies' 'parvenu grey Hanoverian' rats. In Sir Walter Scott's *Rob Roy* (1818), set in the time of the first Jacobite rebellion of 1715, the character Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone speaks of 'the new turnips, and the rats, and the Hanoverians' as having changed the world of 'Old England' that he formerly knew.³⁷ In Henry Fielding's

³⁴ Richard Jefferies, *World's End*, with an Introduction by Andrew Rossabi (Longcot: Petton Books, 2008). First published in 1877.

³⁵ Jefferies, *ibid.*, pp. 3-9 and 118-9.

³⁶ See Janice Lingley, 'Kipling's *Isle of Gramarye*: What's in a Name', in *The Kipling Journal*, Vol. 87, September 2013, No. 351, pp. 47-8.

³⁷ Sir Walter Scott, *Rob Roy*, edited by Ian Duncan (Oxford: Oxford University Press., 2008; first published 1818), p. 178.

The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling (1749), set in the time of the second Jacobite rebellion of 1745, Squire Western deploras the militant politics of ‘roundheads and Hanover rats’, and its effects upon the country’s economy: he hopes for an end to the crisis ‘before the Hanover rats have eat up all our own, and left us nothing but turneps to feed upon.’³⁸ Both these novelists draw upon the satire that was popularly directed at the Hanoverian regime.³⁹

Note: The article includes extracts from an article by Janice Lingley previously published in *The Kipling Journal*, entitled ‘Kipling’s *Isle of Gramarye*: What’s in a Name’, Vol. 87, No. 351, September 2013, and a further article by Janice entitled ‘Magical Rural Topographies: Kipling’s *Puck of Pook’s Hill* and Richard Jefferies’ *Bevis, the Story of a Boy*’, published in *The Kipling Journal*, Vol. 88, No. 353, June 2015.

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³⁸ Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, edited by John Bender and Simon Stern (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 279-80.

³⁹ See the note (p. 482) to the Oxford World’s Classics 2008 edition of *Rob Roy* by Ian Duncan; the note on p. 890 of the Oxford World’s Classics edition (2008) of Fielding’s *Tom Jones*; also note 3, p. 914, of the Penguin Classics edition of *Tom Jones* (2005), edited with explanatory notes by Thomas Keymer and Alice Wakely with an introduction by Thomas Keymer. Jefferies makes no specific reference to *Rob Roy* or *Tom Jones* in his writings, but mentions other novels by Scott: *Kenilworth* (1821) in ‘My Old Village’ and Jefferies’ *Land* (Ch. 5), and *Woodstock* (1826) in *The Gamekeeper at Home* (Ch. 3).

The Marabar Echo: Forster and Jefferies

Roger Ebbatson

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The obscurity of the events in the Marabar Caves scene of *A Passage to India* is matched by the mystery surrounding the provenance of this cathartic sequence. In her analysis of the MS. versions of the novel June Perry Levine concludes that 'the relationship between the data and the work of art is unclear.'¹ E. M. Forster knew the three main Indian cave groups, all of which are distinguished by either carving or painting. The key feature of the Marabar, by contrast, is their featurelessness: 'Nothing, nothing attaches to them', Forster writes, 'and their reputation—for they have one—does not depend upon human speech' (p. 124).² Human speech, and indeed all other sounds, are reduced to 'boum' by the pervasive echo to which Adela and the others are exposed.

For this episode Dr. Levine claims that 'no one has discovered any parallels'.³ There seem to be striking resemblances of language, imagery and meaning between the Marabar sequence and a passage in Richard Jefferies' *The Story of My Heart* (1883). There is little doubt that Forster had read this famous spiritual autobiography. The warrant for such a statement lies in the scene in *Howards End* where Bast tells the Schlegel sisters of his night walk into the Surrey woods—a walk which he says had 'all come about from reading something of Richard Jefferies'. Though Helen interposes that it 'came from something far greater', she cannot save the luckless clerk from a literary outburst which ends in 'a swamp of books'. Forster comments, 'Within his cramped little mind dwelt something that was greater than Jefferies' books—the spirit that led Jefferies to write them', and as Bast departs Helen adjures him to remember that he is 'better than Jefferies'.⁴ This implies a fair degree of familiarity with Jefferies' *oeuvre*, in which *The Story of My Heart* occupies the central place. Forster may also have discussed Jefferies with Lowes Dickinson, since

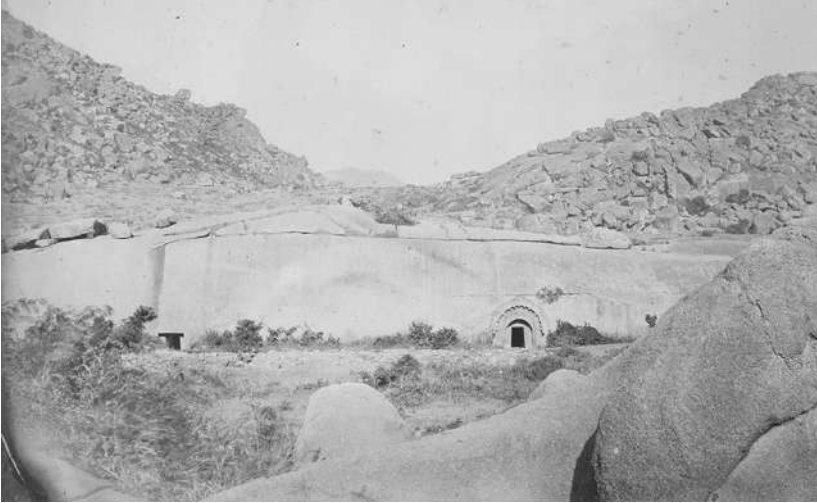
¹ June Perry Levine, *Creation and Criticism, A Passage to India* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1971), 72.

² *A Passage to India* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966). Subsequent reference is to this edition.

³ Levine, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁴ *Howards End* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967), 114-15.

he recounts how in 1885 Dickinson worked on a socialist farm in Surrey, and notes the proximity of H. S. Salt, the Fabian journalist who was to produce one of the earliest studies of Jefferies.⁵ However this may be, it would seem that some sentences of peculiar power in *The Story of My Heart* were subconsciously woven into the fabric of the Marabar Caves scene.



Sudama and Lomas Rishid Caves at Barabar, 1870⁶

In the sixth chapter of his book Jefferies recounts how he used to stand near the Royal Exchange and watch the great crowds, asking himself rhetorically, 'Where then will be the sum and outcome of their labour?' (p. 71).⁷ Then he switches to his central image of energy and power: 'Burning in the sky, the sun shone on me as when I rested in the narrow valley carved in prehistoric time. Burning in the sky, I can never forget the sun.' 'Is there any theory, philosophy, or creed, is there any system or culture', he demands, 'any formulated method able to meet and satisfy each separate item of this agitated pool of human life?' (p. 71). Jefferies reviews the cultures and religions of the past. In the 'elaborate ritual' of Egypt he finds 'Nothing; absolutely

⁵ E. M. Forster, *Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson* (London: Edward Arnold, 1934), 53. Salt's *Richard Jefferies* (1894; repr. 1905) gives a somewhat transcendental account of its subject; the stress on the connexions between Jefferies and Edward Carpenter would have interested Forster and Dickinson.

⁶ With thanks to the British Library for giving permission to use this extract from the 1870 photograph by Thomas Fraser Peppé of caves at Barabar. © The British Library Board.

⁷ *The Story of My Heart*, ed. S. J. Looker (London: Constable, 1947). All reference is to this edition.

nothing'. After Nineveh and Assyria comes this passage which may have been seminal to Forster:

The aged caves of India, who shall tell when they were sculptured? Far back when the sun was burning, burning in the sky as now in untold precedent time. Is there any meaning in those ancient caves? The indistinguishable noise not to be resolved, born of the human struggle, mocks in answer (p. 72).

This is the noise of the city-dwellers, 'an indistinguishable noise—it is not clatter, hum, or roar, it is not resolvable ... no attention can resolve it into a fixed sound' (p. 69), just as the Marabar echo 'is entirely devoid of distinction' (p. 145). In the learning and religion of these diverse cultures from Confucius, through the Aztecs, to Polynesia, Jefferies finds 'nothing. Nothing! They have been tried, and were found an illusion'. In the light of such learning 'can aught be gathered which can face this, the Reality? The indistinguishable noise, non-resolvable, roars a loud contempt' (p. 73). Another passage follows which, despite its pantheist mysticism, may also have underlain Forster's conception:

Burning in the sky, the sun shines as it shone on me in the solitary valley, as it burned on when the earliest cave of India was carved. Above the indistinguishable roar of the many feet I feel the presence of the sun, of the immense forces of the universe, and beyond these the sense of the eternal now, of the immortal (pp. 73-4).

Earlier, Jefferies had given a quasi-geological description of his Wiltshire meditations which parallels Forster's evocation of India:

Burning, burning, the sun glowed on the sward at the foot of the slope where these thoughts burned into me. How many, many years, how many cycles of years, how many bundles of cycles of years, had the sun glowed down thus on that hollow? Since it was formed how long? Since it was worn and shaped, groove-like, in the flanks of the hills by mighty forces which had ebbed (p. 28).

From this eyrie he journeyed imaginatively,

'Travelling in an instant across the distant sea, I saw as if with actual vision the palms and cocoa-nut trees, the bamboos of India, and the cedars of the extreme south' (p. 23). Likewise, he visualizes the religion of the early cavemen: 'At the mouth of the ancient cave, face to face with the unknown, they prayed' (p. 48).

The concatenation of imagery is remarkable: not only the vision of the Indian cave and the 'indistinguishable roar', but also the recurrent emphatic 'nothing', and the overwhelming presence of the sun. For Jefferies the sun symbolizes his 'fourth idea' and opens the way towards that 'soul-life' of which his diaries speak. He wishes to go

‘straight to the sun, the immense forces of the universe, to the Entity unknown’ (p. 74), like Mr. Grace in *Maurice* with his ‘new cosmogony’ whose ‘chief point was that God lives inside the sun’,⁸ or Forster’s Indian friends who ‘said they were descended from the Sun’.⁹

Yet the presence of the sun epitomizes the gulf of temperament, experience and history which separates the two writers. In Forster’s novel the sun returns to his kingdom ‘with power but without beauty—that was the sinister feature’, and through ‘excess of light, he failed to triumph’, no longer ‘the eternal promise’ which excites Jefferies, the sun is ‘debarred from glory’ (p. 112), and must bow to the dark truth of the caves which Jefferies perhaps inspired.



Lomas Rishid Caves at Barabar, 1870

⁸ *Maurice* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), 127.

⁹ ‘Racial Exercise’, *Two Cheers for Democracy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), 31. Jefferies was himself interested in Eastern thought. Edward Thomas found among his books translations of *The Assemblies of Al Hariri* and of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and the diaries reveal acquaintance with the work of Anna Kingsford, the Buddhist explicator. Edward Thomas, *Richard Jefferies* (London: Dent, 1938), 163; *The Nature Diaries and Notebooks of Richard Jefferies*, ed. S. J. Looker (London: The Grey Walls Press, 1948), 273-4.

W. E. Henley on Jefferies

Henley reviewed The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies by Walter Besant for the Athenæum on 8 December 1888. The article was substantially re-written and republished as Views and Reviews, Essays in Appreciation by W. E. Henley (London, David Nutt, 1890), pp. 177-182.

J EFFERIES

His Virtue

I love to think of Jefferies as a kind of literary Leatherstocking. His style, his mental qualities, the field he worked in, the chase he followed, were peculiar to himself, and as he was without a rival, so was he without a second. Reduced to its simplest expression, his was a mind compact of observation and of memory. He writes as one who watches always, who sees everything, who forgets nothing. As his lot was cast in country places, among wood and pasturage and corn, by coverts teeming with game and quick with insect life, and as withal he had the hunter's patience and quick-sightedness, his faculty of looking and listening and of noting and remembering, his readiness of deduction and insistence of pursuit—there entered gradually into his mind a greater quantity of natural England, her leaves and flowers, her winds and skies, her wild things and tame, her beauties and humours and discomforts, than was ever, perhaps, the possession of writing Briton. This property he conveyed to his countrymen in a series of books of singular freshness and interest. The style is too formal and sober, the English seldom other than homely and sufficient; there is over-much of the reporter and nothing like enough of the artist, the note of imagination, the right creative faculty. But they are remarkable books. It is not safe to try and be beforehand with posterity, but in the case of such works as the *Gamekeeper* and *Wild Life* and with such a precedent as that established by the *Natural History of Selborne* such anticipation seems more tempting and less hazardous than usual. One has only to think of some mediæval Jefferies attached to the staff of Robin Hood, and writing about Needwood and Charnwood as his descendant wrote about the South Downs, to imagine an historical document of priceless value and inexhaustible interest. And in years to be, when the whole island is one vast congeries of streets, and the fox has gone down to the bustard and the dodo, and outside museums of comparative anatomy the weasel is not and the badger has ceased from the face of the earth,

it is not doubtful that the *Gamekeeper* and *Wild Life* and the *Poacher*—epitomising, as they will, the rural England of certain centuries before—will be serving as material and authority for historical descriptions, historical novels, historical epics, historical pictures, and will be honoured as the most useful stuff of their kind in being.

His Limitation

In those first books of his Jefferies compels attention by sheer freshness of matter; he is brimful of new facts and original and pertinent observation, and that everyone is vaguely familiar with and interested in the objects he is handling and explaining serves but to heighten his attractiveness. There are so many who but know of hares disguised as soup, of ants as a people on whose houses it is not good to sit down, of partridges as a motive of bread sauce! And Jefferies, retailing in plain, useful English the thousand and one curious facts that make up life for these creatures and their kind—Jefferies walking the wood, or tracking the brook, or mapping out the big tree—is someone to be heeded with gratitude. He is the Scandalous Chronicler of the warren and the rookery, the newsmonger and intelligencer of creeping things, and things that fly, and things that run; and his confidences, unique in quality and type, have the novelty and force of personal revelations. In dealing with men and women, he surrendered most of his advantage and lost the best part of his charm. The theme is old, the matter well worn, the subject common to us all; and most of us care nothing for a few facts more or less unless they be romantically conveyed. Reality is but the beginning, the raw material, of art; and it is by the artist's aid and countenance that we are used to make acquaintance with our fellows, be they generals in cocked hats or mechanics in fustian. Now Jefferies was not an artist, and so beside his stoats and hares, his pike, his rabbits, and his moles, his men and women are of little moment. You seem to have heard of them and to far better purpose from others; you have had their author's facts presented elsewhere, and that in picturesque conjunction with the great eternal interests of passion and emotion. To be aware of such a difference is to resent it; and accordingly to read is to know that Jefferies would have done well to leave Hodge and Hodge's masters alone and keep to his beasts and birds and fishes.

The General

Is it not plain as the nose on your face that his admirers admire him injudiciously? It is true, for instance, that he is in a sense, 'too full' (the phrase is Mr. Besant's) for the generality of readers. But it is also

true that he is not nearly full enough: that they look for conclusions while he is bent upon giving them only details: that they clamour for a breath of inspiration while he is bent upon emptying his note-book in decent English; that they persist in demanding a motive, a leading idea, a justification, while he with knowledge crammed is fixed in his resolve to tell them no more than that there are milestones on the Dover Road, or that there are so many nails of so many shapes and so many colours in the pig-sty at the back of Coate Farm. They prefer 'their geraniums in the conservatory.' They refuse, in any case, to call a 'picture' that which is only a long-drawn sequence of statements. They are naturally inartistic, but they have the tradition of a long and speaking series of artistic results, and instinctively they decline to recognise as art the work of one who was plainly the reverse of an artist. The artist is he who knows how to select and to inspire the results of his selection. Jefferies could do neither. He was a reporter of genius; and he never got beyond reporting. To the average reader he is wanting in the great essentials of excitement: he is prodigal of facts, and he contrives to set none down so as to make one believe in it for longer than the instant of perusal. From his work the passionate human quality is not less absent than the capacity of selection and the gift of inspiration, and all the enthusiasm of all the enthusiasts of an enthusiastic age will not make him and his work acceptable to the aforesaid average reader. In letters he is as the ideal British water-colourist in paint: the care of both is not art but facts, and again facts, and facts ever. You consider their work; you cannot see the wood for the trees; and you are fain to conclude that themselves were so much interested in the trees they did not even know the wood was there.

Last Words

To come to an end with the man:—his range was very limited, and within that range his activity was excessive; yet the consequences of his enormous effort were—and are—a trifle disappointing. He thought, poor fellow! that he had the world in his hand and the public at his feet; whereas, the truth to tell, he had only the empire of a kind of back garden and the lordship of (as Mr. Besant has told us) some forty thousand out of a hundred millions of readers. You know that he suffered greatly; you know too that to the last he worked and battled on as became an honest, much-enduring, self-admiring man: as you know that in death he snatched a kind of victory, and departed this life with dignity as one 'good at many things,' who had at last 'attained to be at rest.' You know, in a word, that he took his part in the general struggle for existence, and manfully did his best; and it is with

something like a pang that you find his biographer insisting on the merits of the feat, and quoting approvingly the sentimentalists who gathered about his death-bed. To make eloquence about heroism is not the way to breed heroes; and it may be that Jefferies, had his last environment been less fluent and sonorous, would now seem something more heroic than he does.

* *

Afterword about W. E. Henley

Peter Robins

William Ernest Henley was a contemporary of Jefferies, born in the adjoining county of Gloucestershire in 1849. He inherited his creativity from his mother, a descendant of the poet and critic Joseph Warton. Henley passed the local Oxford examination but a lack of financial means and ill-health made it impossible to begin his study. At the age of twelve he was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the bones in his legs and one was amputated below the knee. The other was eventually saved by Dr Joseph Lister at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary but entailed a gruelling, twenty-month stay in hospital.

During this time Henley began to write poetry about his experiences as a patient and some were published in *Cornhill Magazine* in 1875. These hospital poems have been hailed as early examples of free verse and the first attempt in English to use ugliness, cruelty, and pain as the subjects of poetry. The best-remembered poem, 'Invictus', is still gathered in poetry anthologies and contains the lines, 'I am the master of my fate:/I am the captain of my soul'. It is said that the poem inspired Nelson Mandela when he was imprisoned. While in the Infirmary, Henley taught himself several European languages and, despite his disability, he was a social and energetic man. It was here that he was introduced to Robert Louis Stevenson, who was impressed by Henley's fortitude and stoicism in bearing his treatment and they became good friends, though fell-out rather dramatically later. Stevenson used him as a model for Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*. They collaborated in the 1880s on four plays but all had poor reviews and Henley returned to poetry and criticism.

In 1877 he moved to London to be the editor of *London*, a journal of the type more usual in Paris than London, written for the sake of its contributors rather than of the public. The following year he married

Anna Boyle but suffered the loss of their daughter, Margaret, who died at the age of six in 1894. When *London* folded Henley edited the illustrated monthly *Magazine of Art* from 1882-1886. Jefferies had contributed to this publication in 1878, 1881, 1882 and 1887 and, among others, Henley published pieces by R L Stevenson and J Comyns Carr and brought the work of Whistler and Rodin to a wider public. His editorships continued with the *Scots* (later *National Observer*) until 1893 during which time he had published Rudyard Kipling's poems, later collected as *Barrack Room Ballads and Other Verses*.

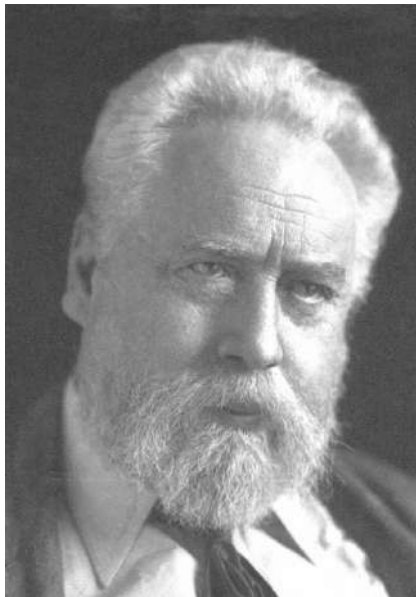
Henley's first volume of poetry was published in 1888 by David Nutt, simply titled *A Book of Verses* which included the hospital poems. The bleak realism of these was too much for many Victorian readers but the volume received critical acclaim, the *St. James's Gazette* describing it as 'wholesome phantasy, wholesome feeling, wholesome human affection...the Hospital section is the literary picture of human suffering which has not before found its artist. There is here the result of direct experience by one who knows what to say, what to indicate, what to leave unsaid.' The volume was in its third edition by 1892. In that year Nutt issued another volume by Henley, *The Song of the Sword*. Further collections were *For England's Sake* (1900), prompted by the wave of patriotic feeling which swept over the country during the South African War, *Hawthorn and Lavender* (1901) and *A Song of Speed* (1903).

As well as contributing to the publications he edited, Henley's work appeared in *The Athenaeum*, *Vanity Fair*, *The Saturday Review*, *St. James's Gazette* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*. In 1890 Nutt published a selection from the journals as *Views and Reviews: Essays in Appreciation* which Henley described in his Prefatory to the volume as 'less a book than a mosaic of scraps and shreds recovered from the shot rubbish of fourteen years of journalism.' His deprecation of his own journalism perhaps colouring his view of Jefferies, bluntly put down as a mere reporter, 'nothing like enough of the artist, the note of imagination, the right creative faculty'. This is contrary to Besant who, in the 'Conclusion' of his *Eulogy*, praises Jefferies in his later years: 'We no longer see the commonplace reporter who tries to write commonplace and impossible stories – we watch the future poet of the "Pageant of Summer" whose early struggles we witness while he is seeking to find himself. Presently he speaks. He has found himself; he has obtained the prayer of his heart; he has been blessed with the fuller soul.'

Henley had a reputation for acerbic criticism and *Views and*

Reviews, according to a contemporary commentator, was ‘a volume of notable criticisms covering a wide range of authors, though wilful and often one-sided were terse, trenchant and picturesque, and remarkable for insight and gusto.’ He lauds Dickens but can’t resist a reproach, ‘His faults were many and grave. He wrote some nonsense; he sins repeatedly against taste,’; similarly of Shakespeare, ‘He often writes so ill that you hesitate to believe he could write supremely well.’

Henley died at his home in Woking on 11 July 1903 aged 53, after falling from a train in the previous year, which rekindled his latent tuberculosis. With the exception of ‘Invictus’ his poetry has fallen into obscurity but as an editor of and a contributor to a number of literary publications he was an inspiring influence on the higher class of journalism.



W. E. Henley by George Charles Beresford
14 March 1903

Richard Jefferies and the Metaphysics of Wild Flowers

Rosamond Richardson

From a lecture given to New Networks for Nature, Stamford, Lincolnshire, November 2014.

To me there are no diamonds: flowers but no gems,' wrote naturalist and writer Richard Jefferies. He went on to confess 'I am no botanist.' Botany was to him one of the labours of Hercules, and he was not Herculean by temperament. For the mystic Jefferies, as he put it, 'The language in which [wild flowers] are written has no alphabet, and cannot be reduced to order. It can only be understood by the heart and spirit. Look down into this foxglove's bell and you will know that..' Echoes of John Clare, who died in 1864 when Jefferies was 16, and who similarly rejected botany as a 'dark system which I abandoned with dissatisfaction'. 'I want the soul of the flower,' writes Jefferies, 'I want the inner meaning and the understanding of the wild flowers in the meadow...'

Twenty years after Jefferies' death the German poet Rilke gave this advice to a young man: 'if you will stay close to nature, to its simplicity, to the small things hardly noticeable, those things can unexpectedly become great and immeasurable.' 'Before I had any conscious thought' – this is Jefferies – 'it was a delight to me to find wild flowers, just to see them. It was a pleasure to gather them and to take them home ... the wild white violet, the meadow orchis, the blue veronica, the meadow cranesbill...'

Jefferies is familiar with the metaphysics of small things, of the 'ordinary' and the 'everyday': he sees transcendence in immanence – as when sitting by a spring on 'a moss grown rock, overrun with creeping ivy ... Alone in the green-roofed cave, alone with the sunlight and the pure water, there was a sense of something more than these ... Beside the physical water and the physical light I had received from them their beauty: they had communicated to me this silent mystery.' To Richard Jefferies, wild flowers bridge physical and metaphysical worlds—the two worlds we all live in: the world of matter, and the world of the imagination [as Einstein was to say a generation later, 'Imagination is more important than intelligence.']. Aware of the mystery of consciousness, of the unknowable (and as often as not, the

ineffable), Jefferies refuses to be limited by conditioned thinking. He sought what John Clare called ‘the religion of the fields’.

Jefferies lived in an era when rural traditions were still alive, and when it was taken for granted that there is more to a wild flower than just a wild flower. To the Victorian Jefferies, wild flowers are many things: they provide medicine, food and drink for country people, and fodder for cattle. A vital link in the food chain for insects and birds, they enrich the soil as they decay. Wild flowers have always been threaded through the creative, literary and religious imagination of mankind. From earliest times the study of plants spans the utilitarian to the aesthetic to the philosophical, their mythic elements making them potent symbols inspiring what Coleridge calls the shaping power of the imagination.

A single violet contains elements from the material to the mystical: it’s an important umbrella species for fritillary butterflies, spiders, lizards, hazel dormice and scrub warblers. It also has legendary status in Classical and Christian cultures, and Shakespeare mentions it no less than 18 times. It features in medieval illuminated manuscripts, and there’s Durer’s famous ‘bouquet of violets.’ The Greeks and Romans drank violet wine, they made confectionery with crystallised violet petals. Violets are a colouring agent for vinegar, preserves and syrups. Applying the leaves was a folk remedy for bruises, and antiseptic enough to cure a mouth ulcer. Salicylic acid turns out to be present in violets – so an infusion prescribed by herbalists for pain and sleeplessness has some validity. This litany demonstrates the web of attributes, the ‘natural history’ of just one tiny flower.

What Jefferies sees in a wild flower reflects not merely these elements of his culture, but his way of seeing the world. He sees eternity in nature, spirit in matter, just as Blake sees ... a World in a Grain of Sand ... And Heaven in a Wild Flower ... And he would surely agree with John Berger in his famous *Ways of Seeing*, ‘The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled... Seeing comes before words ... We explain the world with words, but words can never ... unpack its intrinsic mystery.’

Even the micro-technologies that now detect the highly developed sensory apparatus of plants, their electrical and chemical signalling systems, make the continuum of plant life (which is 99% of earth’s biomass, after all), more and not less mysterious. Richard Jefferies sensed, that beyond scientific knowledge, lies ultimate mystery: there are ‘things ... too deep to be written,’ he writes in his journal, conscious that we are powerless to actually explain even the seemingly mundane: ‘nothing that has been thought explains even the lichen on

the wall... There are a million books, and yet with all their aid I cannot tell you the colour of the May dandelion.'

'Where did the plants come from at first?' asks Jefferies. 'Did they come creeping up out of the sea at the edges of the estuaries, and gradually run their roots into the ground, and so make green the earth?... everything good and sweet seems to come out of the flowers, up to the very highest thoughts of the soul, and we carry them daily to the very threshold of the other world.' Jefferies recognises that on an aesthetic level, the beauty of a wild flower can influence our deepest consciousness. He would find a kindred spirit in Hans von Balthasar, who wrote: 'Beauty is a word that has never possessed a permanent place or an authentic voice in ... the exact sciences ... [but] We can be sure that whoever sneers at her name as if she were the ornament of a bourgeois past ... soon will no longer be able to love.' The unitive consciousness of the mystic is, classically, stimulated by beauty: it is with what Jefferies calls 'the antennae of the Soul' that he experiences this state: 'The sward on which I was lying, the orchard behind, the house, the white wall of the garden ... the elms ... and the stile, with myself, were in the same stream of space.'

What Jefferies is aware of when looking at a wild flower is the entirety of its journey, from its physical and cultural history to metaphysical mystery. A wild flower's Odyssey starts down in the darkness of the earth, where it feeds on soil, water and light. We can now measure how plants sense and respond to light, water, gravity, temperature, soil structure, nutrients, toxins, microbes, herbivores and even chemical signals from other plants. This sensory awareness is amazing: as a leading light in plant intelligence Stefano Mancuso puts it, 'a plant has 3000 chemicals in its vocabulary, while the average human has only 700 words.' Feeding on light from the sun – Jefferies' Holy Grail – this astonishing life-form emerges to reach through air to the sky, from earth to heaven: from the material to the transcendent, a symbol of both ephemerality and eternity, of birth, life, death and afterlife. In this wild flower's material progress through its short life and perennial return Jefferies perceives transcendence, through it he connects to the liminal, to the perpetuum mobile of existence with its unrepeatability described by Richard Feynman as 'the inconceivable nature of nature.'

That all creatures and plants are rooted in matter – matter that is endless and inexorable, but whose ultimate origins are unknown – is a given to Jefferies. As Paul Celan was to write, 'No one moulds [anything] again/out of breath and clay'. Matter [a wild flower] is a conglomeration of indestructible atoms, recycling eternally (as far as

we know). The harebell returns to its teaspoon of soil, to its connection with eternity through its atoms recycling and metamorphosing, endlessly. Eternity resides in matter, as Jefferies perceives when looking at a wild flower: 'while you feel this moment 'tis forever. It is eternal' he said, 'It is eternity now, I am in the midst of it; it is about me in the sunshine.'

So there are elements, in any wild flower, of both known material reality and of the unknown: that harebell is unique, it is a minor miracle. It grows from soil of which one teaspoon contains 40 billion micro-organisms, all of which have come from decaying matter, and will return to living matter, and so on for millions of years. 'Upon that surface' writes Jefferies, 'we walk and act our comedy of life, and what is beneath is nothing to us. But is it not from the under-world, from the dead and the unknown, from the cold moist ground, that these green blades have sprung.'

It is obvious to Jefferies that wild flowers are part of a continuum, not merely incidental to our survival but integral to the 'great chain of being', that continuum of which *Homo sapiens* is but a part, for which he has some responsibility, and which he can never either master or re-create. 'The sun and the deep sky, the limitless ether, were only the continuation. There is no break, no chasm, between here and there ... I have never felt so much myself, an individual, as a part of this whole ...' He senses 'something beyond the philosophies in the light, in the grass blades, the leaf, the grasshopper, the sparrow on the wall ... gazing at the sunset – the reed, a sense that there is Something More.'

To Richard Jefferies wild flowers belong to what he called 'the alchemy of nature,' and he pleads for 'a little alchemy' to inspire the mind of scientists and specialists, 'for the inner mind and soul.' Suspicious of the post-'enlightenment' mind, he finds in scientific study, 'no attempt' as he puts it 'to find the soul under the scalpel.' He goes on: 'If we had never before looked upon the earth, but suddenly came to it man or woman grown, set down in the midst of a summer meadow, would it not seem to us a radiant vision?' The French philosopher Emile Cioran, a century after the birth of Jefferies, describes botany as an appendix to Paradise. To Jefferies, the labours of Hercules of the scientist and the triumphs of the botanist are all very well, but they are not the whole picture: they are but elements in a 'dream of some spirit land' as Jefferies has it, in the wider mystery of things. 'Let us,' he pleads, 'let the soul hope and dream, and float on these oceans of accumulated facts.'

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Correction: *Journal* number 27 (winter 2014) p.33. The year associated with the earliest known photograph of Richard Jefferies (photograph A) should read 1855/6.

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