

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY



HAROLD ADAMS
SPRING NEWSLETTER
2000

Registered Charity No. 1042838

Hon. Sec. Lady Treitel, Eidsvoll, Bedwells Heath, Boars Hill,
Oxford OX1 5JE (Tel. 01865 735678. Best before 7.00 pm or Sats.

FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Jefferies Jubilee, not that of the great man (being 1898) but the Golden Jubilation of the Richard Jefferies Society, now in its fiftieth year. The latest meeting of the Society's managing committee (formally known as 'The Richard Jefferies Society Trust Council'¹) agreed plans for celebrating the anniversary in June; this issue contains full information. Among other business was the pleasure of welcoming our new Honorary Treasurer, Geoff Hirst and of re-welcoming John Price after his years in St. Helena. On the other hand, Dick Bedwin has to leave the Council after brilliantly managing our finances and Margaret Evans no longer has time available to continue as Membership Secretary. Ray Morse and Stan Hickerton have been ill and we admired their courage in attending the meeting. So: greetings, farewells and best wishes for continued recovery as appropriate!

In 1879 snow fell continuously upon England followed inevitably by serious flooding. Familiar civilisation came to a halt, ideas gathered in the mind of Richard Jefferies and in a few years *After London* had been completed. In the later nineteenth century discoveries and inventions laid foundations for the life of technology we now enjoy. Optimism prevailed: William Morris, H. G. Wells and others were soon to envision brave new worlds. Jefferies looked the other way, to an imagined 'relapse into barbarism' which opens *After London*. He had good reasons for antipathy towards London; career necessity had led him there but foul air and a damp climate probably ruined his health. He saw the city advancing and despoiling the open country. To supply fictional means of obliterating pestilential London he chose the rising waters whose catastrophic effects would have been fresh in his memory. A century and a quarter later his weather forecasting seems well justified.

Memories of total flooding have persisted in folk legends and religious belief. Deucalion was advised by his father, Prometheus, to construct a large wooden box in which with his wife he survived a Zeus-implemented inundation. They grounded on Mount Parnassus, unlike the eight mariners in the Ark for whom Mount Ararat was the destination. In both cases residual humankind set out on a stormy pilgrimage towards perfection. In *After London* the clock was turned back to the Dark Ages rather than on to the Brave New World sought by Jefferies¹ contemporaries.

These are matters of current interest because glacier ice is melting all over the world and mean sea level has been raised by about 25 cm. since Jefferies' time. I have just deposited some local material (our village book, millennium calendar and photographs) in Guildford's "Time Vault" due to be opened in A.D. 3000.

Pessimistically, I pointed out to the organisers that it could be deep under water by that time. Professor Keith noted in his 'Critical Study' that Jefferies was deliberately vague concerning the event which led to his imagined inundation. The text suggests that the waters rose slowly, giving advantaged citizens time to escape. Perhaps they fled to artificial islands, relapsing into the kind of barbarism envisaged in the 1995 film of 'Waterworld': drowning civilisations continue to fascinate the human imagination.

Among the Society's members are surely many with a book or two to write. I present them with the outline of a futuristic novel: the title would be 'After Earth'. When the pressurized magma beneath the Yellowstone National Park in America

explodes, as the experts promise, it will saturate our atmosphere with dust and bury our lands under ash. The sole survivors will be the people at that time on the Space Station now under construction. Scarce resources will ensure that this community will speedily relapse into barbarism, to escape from which our hero, Fenix, manages to board an abandoned Russian spaceship. It is in dear old Mir, long since due for destruction, that Fenix embarks on a cautious journey back to Earth, where he finds, to his surprise, that ... Now write on.

Len Grugeon

COUNCIL MEMBERS 1999-2000

President: Professor Jeremy Hooker (elected 1999 for 5 years)

Treasurer: Geoffrey Hirst (co-opted at Council Meeting held 13 November 1999 on resignation of Richard Bedwin) 91A Woodstock Road, Witney, Oxon. OX8 6ED (Tel. 01993 703958)

Secretary: Phyllis Treitel (elected 1995 for 5 years) Eidsvoll, Bedwells Heath, Boars Hill, Oxford OX1 5JE

Vice Presidents: Harold Adams (Founder), Brian Fullagar, Robert McCloy

Members of Council: (with duties)

Leonard Grugeon, Chairman (elected 1997 for 3 years) 31 Poplar Road, Shalford, Guildford GU4 SDH (Tel. 01483 535377)

Margaret Evans, Membership Secretary (elected 1997 for 3 years)

23 Hardwell Close, Grove, Nr. Wantage, Oxon OX12 OBN (Tel. 012357 65360)

Ray Morse, Vice Chairman, Meetings Secretary Publicity Officer (re-elected 1997 for 3 years) 28 Tismeads Crescent, Swindon SN1 4DR (Tel. 01793 530520)

Margaret Gould, Librarian (re-elected 1999 for 3 years) (Tel. 01793 520431)

Patrick Dillon (re-elected 1999 for 3 years) Ethelwyn Gregory (re-elected 1998 for 3 years) Helen Newman (re-elected 1998 for 3 years) John Webb (elected 1999 for 3 years)

Co-opted: A.S. Hickerton John Price

VACANCY

Our Membership Secretary, Margaret Evans, who has served since 1997, does not wish to stand for re-election in October. The Chairman would be very glad to hear of a member who would like to take over the duties of Membership Secretary.

Details can be obtained from Margaret, but please note that although our records are at present computerised, they could equally well be kept by hand.

RESIGNATION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN, RAY MORSE

The list of duties performed for the past 18 years by Ray Morse is so long that it is no wonder that he has decided it is time for him to give most of them up. He will not stand for re-election to Council but will continue to hold keys to the Museum and show people around.

That leaves - despatching our publications twice yearly, arranging the Monday meetings, arranging Council meetings, arranging outings, and carrying out local

publicity. Offers to help with one or more of these will be gratefully received by the Chairman, Len Grugeon, or the Hon. Sec.

REPORT ON THE AGM AND BIRTHDAY LECTURE

This was a well-attended, cheerful meeting. To begin with, notwithstanding the barometer, the forecast, and hours of rain during the night, the weather was glorious - sunny, and not cold. In addition, not only is Liddington Village Hall most comfortable, but it could not have been better placed. To have the church that Jefferies knew so well literally next door to us, and to be able to stand and gaze at Liddingtonda Hill, were welcome rewards.

About 30 members (plus some visitors) attended the AGM, which, genially chaired by Len Grugeon, was lively and productive. Professor Jeremy Hooker was elected as our new President; Margaret Gould and Patrick Dillon were re-elected to Council, and John Webb of Wootton Bassett was elected for the first time. Dick Bedwin formally resigned as Treasurer but offered to stay on for a short time until his successor (not yet elected) took over. Other topics are dealt with in the page; to follow.

At 12.20 we dispersed to our various lunches, and then at 1.30 Mr. Basil Archer of Liddington led a walk round the village, beginning with the church itself. As one drives through Liddington on the fast Swindon to Aldbourne road, one sees virtually nothing of the village (which it bisects) but it is an attractive and interesting place. One of our members got as far as the hill top.

By now, our speaker and new President, Jeremy Hooker, had arrived. He has been ill and needed two walking sticks to get along, so we especially appreciated his coming. We also welcomed Mrs. Hooker, who drove him, and, with her daughter, stayed for the meeting.

The lecture was impressive, both in text and delivery, and has been widely praised by those lucky enough to hear it, (the audience had grown by now to about 45), and Professor Hooker has kindly allowed us to publish the text in Journal No. which accompanies this Newsletter. It deserves close study.

Thanks to Margaret Gould for taking charge of sales of books and leaflets, etc Margaret Bathe, Sylvia Morse, Pam Smith,, and several others, for serving the refreshments, and we must thank Ray Morse for making such a success of all the arrangements.

Phyllis Treitel

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY PAST PRESIDENTS, etc. AND OFFICERS

Presidents

1950-Jan 1965	Samuel J. Looker
Oct. 1965-1974	Henry Williamson
1974-1991	Prof. W.J. Keith
1991-1996	Andrew Rossabi
1996-1998	Richard Mabey
1999- Prof.	Jeremy Hooker

Vice Presidents

1950	Mr. W. Bramwell Hill. F. Davenport
1956	F. Davenport and E. Whiting
1958	F. Davenport, E. Whiting and Mr. H.E. Adams
1961	F. Davenport, H.E. Adams and Lt. CDR. J.O.A. Arkell Retd.
1971-1974	F. Davenport, H.E. Adams, Lt. CDR J.O.A. Arkell Retd. and Mrs. Frances Gay
1974-1975-6	F. Davenport, H.E. Adams, Lt. CDR J.O.A. Arkell Retd., H. Williamson and Stanley George
1975	F. Davenport, H.E. Adams, Lt. CDR J.O.A. Arkell Retd. and Henry Williamson
1977	F. Davenport, H.E. Adams, Lt. CDR. J.O.A. Arkell Retd., Mark Daniel & Cyril Wright
1978	F. Davenport, H.E. Adams, Mark Daniel, C.F. Wright & Miss Edna Manning
1980	F. Davenport, H.E. Adams, Mark Daniel, C.F. Wright, Miss Edna Manning, B.W.J. Fullagar, Mrs. K.C. Kilminster and R.J. McCloy, M.A.
1983	H.E. Adams, Mark Daniel, C.F. Wright, Miss Edna Manning, B.W.J. Fullagar, Mrs. K.C. Kilminster and R.J. McCloy, M.A
1987	H.E. Adams, Mark Daniel, C.F. Wright, Miss Edna Manning, B.W.J. Fullagar and R.J. McCloy
1992	H.E. Adams, Mark Daniel, C.F. Wright, B.W.J. Fullagar and R.J. McCloy
1995	H.E. Adams, B.W.J. Fullagar and R.J. McCloy
2000 (as at March)	Harold E. Adams (Founder), R.J. McCloy, M.A. & B.W.J. Fullagar

Chairman

1950-1971	Mrs. Frances Gay
1971-1986	H.E. Adams
1986-1989	Phyllis Treitel
1989-	Leonard Grugeon (still holds position)

Vice Chairman (new post 1968)

1968-1971	H.E. Adams
1971-1972	Mrs. F. Gay
1971-1977	C.F. Wright
1977-1982	A.T. Rose
1982-	R. Morse (still holds position)

Secretary

1950-1957	H.E. Adams, and Assistant Hon. Sec. Miss Webb (appointed 1956)
1958-1960	Mrs. F. Gay (Acting Sec.) with Miss Webb as Assistant.
1960-1967	Mrs. E.M. Thompson
1967-1971	Mrs. F. Gay (also Chairman)
1971-1973	Mrs. J Jefferies
1974-1974	Vacancy - Mrs. F. Gay & H.E. Adams (acting until)
1974-1995	Mr. C.F. Wright
1995	Lady Treitel (still holds position)

Treasurer

1950-1964	Miss R.M. Vick
1964-1974	Mr. C.F. Wright
1974-1992	Mrs. M. Gould
1992-1995	Mr. J. Thomas
1995-1999	Mr. R.E. Bedwin
1999	Mr. G.W. Hirst (still holds position)

HAROLD JEFFERIES AND THE CALL OF THE SEA [Harold Jefferies 1875-1942, son of Richard Jefferies]

At the Society lecture meeting of 1st November 1999, members were able to look at coloured transparencies of two merchant sailing ships, the *Rodney* and the *Tamar*, with dates of Harold Jefferies¹ service in each ship. This was interesting -* we know from the 1944 Worthing Cavalcade that Harold went to sea in the *Rodney* but it does not tell us that he was later in the *Tamar*, nor does it have a picture of either ship. The pictures we saw were presented to the Society by Lucille Adameck and Mary O'Farrell of Canada, and are temporarily in a Richard Jefferies cuttings file compiled by the Hon. Sec.

Devitt and Moore, a London firm who had been shipowners in the passenger and cargo trade to Australia since the eighteen sixties owned both these ships. We only know a few facts about their passages: the *Rodney*, from 1887 until 1896, was employed on the London-Sydney run. A "voyage" consisted of the round trip, out to Australia and back again to London. All ships went round the Cape of Good Hope on the way to Australia. Some came home the other way, via Cape Horn; the *Rodney* always did this.

It seems that Harold must have made one voyage in the *Rodney* and three voyages in the *Tamar*. On his first voyage, in the *Rodney*, he must have gone "round the Horn", also round the world. It is a pity Harold left no detailed record, no diary, no midshipman's journal of his voyages.

In 1961, Captain Course, published his book *Painted Ports* chronicling the history of Devitt and Moore's ships and their captains. In it we read that the ships all carried passengers. All their sailing ships had painted gunports on the sides, black gunports on a white strake ["Nelson fashion"].

The owners considered that the *Rodney*, launched in 1874, was their fastest ship. On her 1889 passage home from Sydney she met with the *Cutty Sark* as they both approached Cape Horn. The *Rodney* managed to give the ex tea clipper a good run for her money, she arrived at Gravesend only one hour behind the *Cutty Sark*, one of the fastest sailing ships in the world.

The *Tamar*, launched in 1889 by Shanks and Bell of Yoker, Dumbarton, was the last ship built to the order of Devitt and Moore. One of the finest full-rigged ships ever built, she could load over four thousand tons of cargo. She did not appear to be built for speed: her lines were not as fine as those of her earlier sisters. But she proved to be a fast ship, making good passages out to Sydney and from Sydney to London. She made the best time of 1898 for the passage from Newcastle, New South Wales, to San Francisco [fifty one days].

Both the *Rodney* and the *Tamar* carried the figurehead of a lion. This was a favourite choice when ships were specifically built for Devitt and Moore, a design which had been common in the Seventeenth Century Royal Navy. Most of Harold's time on sailing ships was spent as a midshipman, one of the "half deck crowd" as the midshipmen and apprentices in a merchant ship were sometimes called, and whose time on board counted as the sea time in square rig essential to candidates for the Board of Trade Second Mate's examination. The midshipmen were considered to be above the apprentices in status: their Training Scheme was defined as "... the improved plan of professional education of sons of gentlemen for officers in the Mercantile Marine". A premium was payable for each voyage; the full course of training would consist of four voyages or five voyages. The first voyage premium was seventy pounds [for each subsequent

voyage the premium was reduced]; additional charges were: thirty shillings for laundry on the voyage, seven shillings and sixpence for the stationery required for schoolwork, plus the cost of a *Paper's Epitome* [a navigation manual], and the cost of a small case of mathematical instruments. Midshipmen were supplied with cabin food and were looked after by stewards. They attended classes in navigation, nautical astronomy, arithmetic, algebra and trigonometry. But the midshipmen's existence was primarily that of watchkeepers, four hours on duty followed by four hours off, and they took a full part in working ship. They were also employed on seamanlike tasks, splicing wire and hemp ropes, and similar work, under the supervision of the boatswain. They were taught to make sennit [a sort of hand made, plaited rope] and "fancy" knots. [The apprentices paid a comparatively small premium, thirty pounds, for the whole of their four years training. They received the same food as the seamen and looked after themselves. There was no class instruction in navigation - this was learnt from text books in off duty hours: seamanship had to be learnt on the job. An apprentice on finishing his time, might find it necessary to attend one of the nautical schools in London, where he could be instructed in navigation, the Rule of the Road at Sea, and evolutions in seamanship up to the Board of Trade Second Mate's examination standard.]

Both midshipmen and apprentices had "brass bound" uniforms [i.e. liberally sprinkled with brass buttons], but wore their "working suits" at sea. When going ashore in Sydney or Melbourne they would be particularly conspicuous. Ships' captains ashore would be in civilian suits, seamen would go ashore in ordinary clothes - the best they could muster. But the midshipmen and apprentices most likely had no clothes fit for shore leave apart from their uniform, and so they were known on shore as the "brass bounders".

Because the midshipmen enrolled under the terms set out in the Training Scheme, they were sometimes referred to on board as "the schemers", or, when out of favour, as "the bloody schemers".

After making the appropriate number of voyages, as required by the Board of Trade, Harold took, and passed the Second Mate's Examination. He tells us, in the 1944 *Worthing Cavalcade*, that he subsequently joined Elder Dempster's steamer, the *S.S. Congo* as third mate. After a couple of years he "swallowed the anchor" [Samu Looker's phrase] and worked for his uncle, Robert Billing, as a proof reader in Guildford.

Harold's dates in sailing ships, as far as we know them, are:-

1894-1895	Sailing ship <i>Rodney</i>	[1,519 gross tonnage]
1895-1898	Sailing ship <i>Tamar</i>	[2,115 gross tonnage]

Harold finished his time in sailing ships as third mate of the *Tamar*. The promotion of final voyage midshipmen was not unusual, but the ones promoted usually became "fourth officer" or "junior fourth officer" - and promotion was restricted "the more capable" midshipmen. The fact that Harold was promoted to third mate is an eloquent testimonial to his capability.

When Richard Jefferies heard The Call of the Sea on seeing the ships masts "rising straight up above the red roofs" in London, he was not able to respond, ye he writes in 'The Red Roofs of London' [*The Open Air*], "Some day I will go on a long voyage". Later his son Harold was to hear The Call, and to respond, notwithstanding some initial opposition at home. /

After leaving school, Harold entered the engineering industry, in an establishment at Chelsea. Not settling well to engineering, he worried his widowed

mother to be allowed to go to sea. She did not finally consent until after Harold had suffered a severe attack of bronchitis [sea life was supposed to be beneficial to health].

Whilst living with his parents at Goring on Sea, the young Harold had used his knowledge of ship types to construct a working model of a sailing barge. Later he studied every book about sailing ships he could lay hands on. And it seems appropriate that his first ship, the *Rodney*, was an Australian clipper just like the ship his father saw in the London docks in 1883 and described in his memorable essay 'Venice in the East End' [*The Life of the Fields*].

A.S. Hickerton

MR. IDEN'S FORTYFOLDS

"Forty-folds" went on the master, "be the best keeping potatoes" --- "Varty-volc be ould potatoes, and thur bean't none as can beat urn,". So begins Chapter III of *Amaryllis at the Fair*.

PD, writing in the *Financial Times* (9 Oct. 1999) has been sampling some of the old favourites among potatoes, now being revived. The three varieties he selected were Shetland Black, Fortyfold, and Mr. Bresee, saying 'If you have forgotten just how satisfying good plain boiled potatoes can be, cooked in their skins in well salted water, dried off in the pan and peeled at table, look out for this.' Compared with the Shetland Black the Fortyfold, 'which originated in Lancashire in the first half of the 19th century, looks more ordinary (larger, round, mauveish with deep dimpled eyes), but its texture is even denser, drier, and more floury, and its taste is slightly buttery.'

The cutting from the FT was sent in by Peter Robins. The potatoes were on sale at Waitrose.

RICHARD JEFFERIES CUT IN STONE

In a public garden in Swindon, just below Christ Church, are some stone slabs, used as seats, on which words by Jefferies have been carved. It is always gratifying to find that artists are attracted to Jefferies's words and wish to give them permanence.

There is now a new example: Tom Perkins, a letter-cutter, has carved a headstone of slate with the following words from Chapter 3 of *The Story of My Heart*:

Mystery gleaming in the stars, pouring down in the sunshine, speaking in the night. The wonder of the sun and of far space. It is eternity now. I am in the midst of it. It is about me in the sunshine. I am in it as the butterfly floats in the light-laden air. Nothing has to come. Now is eternity. Now is the immortal life.

An exhibition of memorials took place at Blickling Hall, Norfolk, in 1998, and this example of Tom Perkins' work was included. In the accompanying book, *The Art of Remembering* he wrote: 'The words on the slate are from *The Story of My Heart* by Richard Jefferies (1848-1887) who was the son of a Wiltshire farmer'. He had a remarkable power of observing nature combined with a deep poetical and philosophical insight. We should be grateful to Richard Jefferies for reminding us that there is a contemplative side to life in which potentially time stands still, and "All is and will ever be in now."¹

The book can be purchased for £9.95 plus £1.50 postage from Memorials by Artists, Snape Priory, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 1SA. Tel. 01728 688934. There

is also a booklet, *Memorials by Artists* (£6.50 plus £1.00 postage), which shows photographs of new work and gives information about stone memorials.

Our member Pam Smith heard a BBC broadcast about this exhibition and Sheila Povey, after many letters and calls, tracked down the details set out above.

WILTSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

In the Society's accounts members will see an amount of £48 for subscriptions. This is made up of £10 for the Alliance of Literary Societies, £10 for the Friends of the Ridgeway, and £28 for WANHS. The last-mentioned sum seems a great deal but as our Membership Secretary, Margaret Evans, found out on enquiry just a single membership is £23. She also obtained a list of what the Society offers in return for its subscription: Free entrance to the Gallery, Museum and Library; the annual scholarly journal, two newsletters, outings, lectures.

We recommend the Museum and Library at 41 Long Street, Devizes, Wilts. SN10 1NS, in particular the library which has Jefferies material. Devizes itself is an attractive town with much to see and a fair amount of free parking. The telephone number of the Museum, if you want to enquire about opening times, etc., is 01380 727369, they will soon have a website. The journal, which is largely devoted to archaeology, is available but too heavy to post. Jefferies read a paper to the Society on 16 September 1873.

ERRATUM

We would call the attention of members to an error in Andrew Rossabi's review of Peter Tolhurst's book *Wessex: A Literary Pilgrimage* which appears in the current issue of the Journal. In the second paragraph of his review Andrew lists some minor inaccuracies which he spotted in the section of Mr. Tolhurst's book devoted to Jefferies. However, he quite unfairly takes Mr. Tolhurst to task for stating (perfectly correctly) that the early novel *Restless Human Hearts* was written after Jefferies' marriage, not before. Andrew subsequently realised his mistake but by then the Journal had been printed and it was too late to rectify. We offer our sincere apologies to Peter Tolhurst for the error.

COATE MUSEUM OPENING DATES 2000

Richard Jefferies¹ birthplace at Coate will be open (no charge) on the following Sundays in 2000:-

7 May; 21 May; 4 June; 18 June;* 2 July; 16 July; 6 August; 20 August; 3 September; 17 September.

***Also on Saturday 24 June 1.00 pm - 2.00 pm. See notice about 50th Jubilee.**

The house and garden are open from 2.00 to 5.00 on these days, and volunteers from the Society will be there to provide information and sell souvenirs and leaflets. There is parking in Coate Water Country Park, next door, 50p for 2 hours. If you wish to make enquiries, please first try Ray Morse (01793 530520) and then the Hon. Sec. (01865 735678).

REPAIR AND RESTORATION AT LIDDINGTON CASTLE

The Heritage Lottery Fund have granted funds to the National Trail for repair of 14 key monuments along the Ridgeway. In a letter to this Society, the National Trails Officer, Ms. Jos Joslin, set out in detail the proposed repair work to Liddington

Castle which is scheduled for this summer. Local members will monitor what takes place and report. We shall try to alert those attending the celebration on 25 June to any possible interference. The triangulation point will remain.

RICHARD JEFFERIES BOOKS AND SWINDON SCHOOL CHILDREN

Mrs. Ethelwyn Gregory recently wrote to the Head of The Commonweal School, Swindon asking what books by Jefferies they had. Somewhat to her surprise they had two copies of *Bevis* plus *Hodge*, *Amaryllis*, *The Gamekeeper*, *The Life of the Fields*, *The Story of My Heart*, *Landscape and Labour*, *Field and Hedgerow*, *Wild Life in a Southern County*, and *The Old House at Coate*. From the Jack Ackroyd collection: *The Story of My Heart*, *Wood Magic*, *Field and Hedgerow*, and *The Life of the Fields*. The Head, Mr. Keith Defter, confessed that there was not a great demand for the books but he was in favour of Jefferies' work being brought to the attention of the people of Swindon.

Michael Ponting, by contrast, has recently been in touch with his uncle, now retired, who was a deputy headmaster at Icknield School, Wantage. He claims that he can still quote the first page of *The Story of My Heart*. He attended Sandford Street School in the 1920s and was taught by J.B. Jones, for whom he had a great respect.

CELEBRATION OF THE SOCIETY'S 50th JUBILEE

When members attending the 1999 AGM were asked whether they would prefer Saturday or Sunday for this event, they insisted on both. We have therefore arranged events for two days but - also by request - we have left plenty of free time.

On Saturday afternoon (24 June) we have arranged a coach tour of most of the important places near Swindon to which members like to go. The list is not final and the order may change but it looks roughly like this:-

Hodson (Gamekeeper's Cottage), Chiseldon, Burderop, Draycot Foliat, Barbury Castle and the Memorial Stone, the Ogbournes, Marlborough (where we can get tea for £3 upwards) and Savernake Forest.

If about 30 people take part we shall be able to keep the coach fare down to £5 per person. The coach will pick up at Old Town at 2.00 pm, Coate Water 2.15 pm and return about 6.00 pm.

The Museum at Coate will be open from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

No arrangements have been made for the evening.

On Sunday 25 June we have hired the attractive village hall at Liddington. A buffet sit-down lunch will be served at 1.00 pm but doors will be open at 12.00, possibly earlier. Lunch will cost £5 per head but members may wish to bring their own lunch. We cannot serve alcohol; members requiring refreshment can step over to The Village Inn, in the village. We shall do our own catering and shall need ladies in the kitchen and gentlemen to move chairs and tables - please offer.

Sunday morning is free but some members may like to go to morning (Family) Service at All Saints, Liddington, close to the Village Hall. It begins at 10.00. If enough people want it we shall - as an alternative - organise a walk round Coate water (10.00-12.00).

On Sunday afternoon (about 2.00 pm) we shall hear an address by the Vice-President and founder of the Society, Mr. Harold Adams. He will talk about the Society's early days.

We hope to follow that with a slide programme. At 3.45 tea will be served. At 5.00 we shall disperse.

These arrangements are still tentative; to those who return the slip a programme will be sent in early June.

Enquiries to the Hon. Sec.

Note: John Webb, who lives near Swindon, has kindly offered hospitality for the weekend to two, possibly more, members. If you would like to take up the offer, please let the Hon. Sec. know, as early as possible.

ADAM NICOLSON, RURAL WRITER

Bevis Hillier, a writer familiar to members of this Society, recently reviewed in *Spectator* a book about the Millennium Dome by Adam Nicolson. Hillier said of him 'He's a writer not just in the tradition of Richard Jefferies and W.H. Hudson, but in their class.' This is high praise indeed and members may like to know more about him.

He is the grandson of Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville-West, a columnist for the *Sunday Telegraph* and author of numerous books. One of them, *Perch Hill, a new Life* (1999, Robinson) is about the farm he runs in Sussex, and about which he writes in the *Sunday Telegraph*. Other titles are *The National Trust Book of Long Walks*, photographs by Charlie Waite, 1981; *Landscape in Britain*, photographs by Charlie Waite, 1984; *The Elf Book of Long Walks in France*, 1983; *Wetland, life in the Somerset levels*, with Patrick Sutherland, 1986; and *Panoramas of England*, photographs by Nick Meers, 1992.

Andrew Rossabi

GIFT OF BOOKS

We are pleased to acknowledge the gift of 5 books by Richard Jefferies from member Mr. D.G. Hill of Harlow, Essex. These will be for sale, with a few others, at the Jubilee celebration at Liddington on 25 June.

OTHER SOCIETIES

The Edward Thomas Fellowship No. 42

The Edward Thomas Fellowship, in their Newsletter, combine scholarly articles with news and announcements, so that it serves as both Journal and Newsletter. It is always most satisfying to read and is available on loan to members on application (plus postage) to Hon. Sec.

Newsletter 42 for January 2000 is exceptionally rewarding with a previously unknown letter by Edward Thomas (dated 1908) in which he mentions that he is working on *Richard Jefferies*, a visit by the Fellowship's Chairman to Buffalo, N.Y., where he found an interesting collection of Thomas material, plus two other articles.

Roy Burton's successful Edward Thomas Study Day at Urchfont Manor was reviewed, and Kedrun Laurie was thanked for a contribution about Thomas and Arthur Ransome.

The William Morris Society

The New Year 2000 issue of the Newsletter came so early that most of the events it lists will have come and gone by the time this paper goes out. Our members may be interested to know that the 100th anniversary of the death of John Ruskin is the important influence on this year's activities with a Symposium in Sheffield

(15/16 July), Kelmscott Lecture (3 November) and a walking tour of Oxford (20 November).

The American branch of the Society is pleased to announce that The Huntingdon Library at San Marino, California, has acquired the Sanford and Helen Berger Collection of William Morris material.

Surbiton and District Bird Watching Society

We receive regular bulletins from this Society. No. 229 gives information about the content of owl pellets - they show that owls consume mostly Field Voles, plus Common Shrew, Wood Mouse, Bank Vole and young rats.

Alliance of Literary Societies

Helen Newman will represent this Society at the ALS AGM in Birmingham on 15 April. The entertainment will be provided by the Bronte Society. Rosemary Culley, the new Secretary, has kindly advertised this Society's events on her website. Information can also be obtained by contacting Helen Newman, Tel. 0121-423-2100.

Southern Arts

We regularly receive the Newsletter of Southern Arts, with details of who has been awarded what from the funds. This Society would like to present Jefferies in a lively way to schools, in Wiltshire and elsewhere, but our approaches so far have not met with success.

RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

Mrs. Ethelwyn Gregory has kindly taken over sales from Brian Rich. If you would like any of the following, please write to Ethelwyn Gregory, 40 Stratton Road, Princes Risborough, Bucks. HP27 9AX

Picture postcard (quotation & picture) 20p or 3 for 50p

Richard Jefferies & Old Town (guided walk) 20p

Richard Jefferies and Coate Water (guided walk) SOP

Richard Jefferies in Eltham 25p

Back numbers of the RJS Journal £1.00

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

There are still a few copies of *A Spirit Illumined*; these can be obtained from Ray Morse, 28 Tismeads Crescent, Swindon SN1 4DR at the reduced price of £1.00 (which includes postage).

DATA PROTECTION ACT

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

The Newsletter has been compiled and edited by Phyllis Treitel, Robert McCloy, and Andrew Rossabi. The list of 'Past Officers' was compiled by Margaret Gould. It has been typed by Helen Newman. Ray Morse and Stan Hickerton, who usually get the Newsletter printed and despatched and who do the cover, have both been ill; we hope they will both soon be well again. Printing and despatch has been undertaken by Margaret Evans and Phyllis Treitel. The cover photograph is by Nigel Gregory. The cover design is by John Webb.

**THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND
BIRTHDAY LECTURE**

**SATURDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2000
THE VILLAGE HALL, CHISELDON**

PROGRAMME

10.30 Reception and refreshments.

11.00 AGM (members only)

1.00 Break for lunch and walk*

2.30 The Birthday Lecture (Visitors welcome)

Speaker: John Savage, M.A.

Degree *in* English, Cambridge. Taught English 1957-1993 mostly at Cranleigh School, Surrey. Councillor and and past Mayor of Waverley Borough, Surrey.

Subject: In the course of preparation. Details to be included in the Autumn Newsletter.

4.00 Refreshments

*We shall make a brief tour of the Village and visit the church where Richard and Jessie were married in 1874. Details will be included in the Autumn Newsletter in September.

The Agenda for the AGM and the minutes of the 1999 AGM will accompany the Annual Report. Nominations to Council will be welcomed.