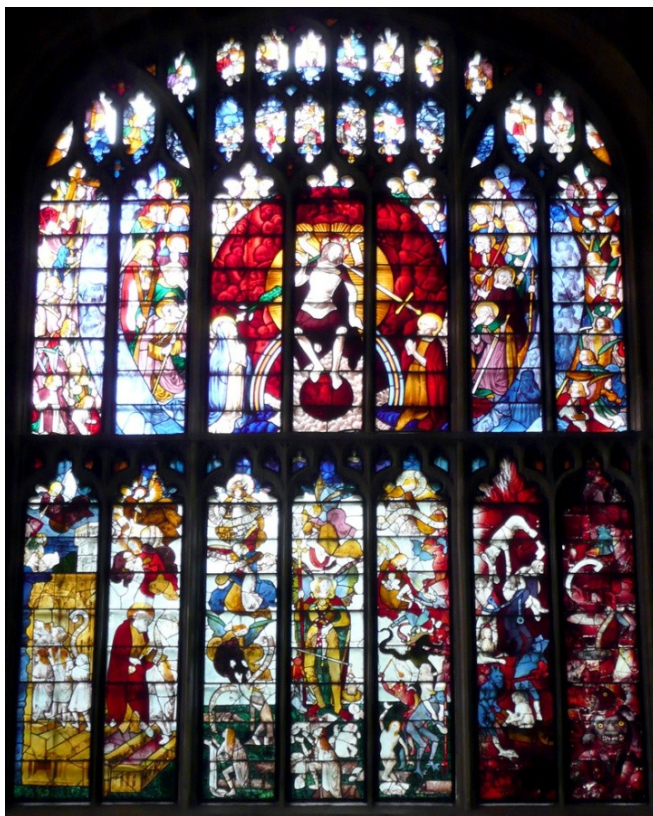


THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2017
& ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17



The West Window, Fairford church.
See pp. 13-15.

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

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

Members receive spring and autumn newsletters along with a summer *Journal*. The annual report is included in the autumn newsletter. The Society has a library of books by and about Richard Jefferies that is now stored at Michael Sherwood's home and to whom we are most grateful. The Society's archives are placed in the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, Chippenham, or are on display at the Richard Jefferies Museum. Activities include a spring meeting, a study day in summer, special outings, a Birthday Lecture and an Annual General Meeting.

TRUSTEES AND COUNCIL MEMBERS 2016-17

Peter Bainbridge, Simon Coleman, Patrick Dillon, Roger Ebbatson, Margaret Hunt (Swindon Secretary), Eric Jones (Vice Chairman), Ray Morse (Hon. Vice President), Sheila Povey (Hon. Vice President), John Price (Chairman), Mike Pringle, Andrew Rossabi (President), Jean Saunders (Secretary), Barry Sloan, Richard Stewart, Phyllis Treitel (Vice President), and Rebecca Welshman. With regret, Peter Bainbridge resigned as Treasurer on 25 May 2017. The Society is sad to announce the death of Duncan Pepper – a most valued Council Member and a good friend.

Hon. Sec.

Jean Saunders

The Old Mill, Mill Drive, Foulsham,
Norfolk NR20 5RB

☎ 01362 683210

Email: info@richardjefferiessociety.co.uk

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



NEWSLETTER: edited by Jean Saunders; proof-read by Peter Robins; cover photographs by Tom Saunders. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Society. The deadline to submit material for the Spring 2018 Newsletter is **28 February 2018**. Please send your contributions, preferably by email, to the Hon. Secretary as above.

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DATA PROTECTION ACT

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

FROM THE CHAIR

John Price



From left to right: Angus MacLennan, John Price and Richard Fortey

I would like to start this report by again expressing my enormous thanks to Jean Saunders, who is the lynch-pin of the Society at present. Not only is she the Society Secretary, Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor and co-editor of the *Journal*, but she has recently taken on the role of Treasurer as well. Pete Bainbridge, who has been Treasurer for several years, has had to pass over the responsibilities due to his extended family challenges at present. Jean tells me she enjoys all the roles but I am concerned that not enough of us are sharing the responsibilities of running the Society, and I would appeal to all members to consider whether they could assist Jean in any way, and perhaps understudy some of the jobs. Do get in touch with me, or talk to Jean, if you would be prepared to help in any way. Jean is in fact, at present, the “One-Stop-Shop” for Society members.

The past six months have proved very interesting to me in terms of Society activities. The trip to Petersfield exploring aspects of Edward Thomas’s life there was most rewarding for the three of us that attended. A report in this newsletter describes the visit.

The second award of the John Webb Memorial Prize, this year in conjunction with the White Horse Bookshop in Marlborough, was a most successful occasion. Publishers submitted a wide range of titles they felt might qualify for the award, and after an initial long-listing, Richard Stewart again led the discussion at the final selection meeting. Richard Fortey, a writer whom I have long admired, was the unanimous winner with his *The Wood for the Trees*; and his cheque and certificate were presented at an event sponsored by the White Horse Bookshop on a day organised by the Marlborough LitFest on “Country

Writers". We are very grateful to Angus MacLennan for making this joint award possible.

I have given two talks on Richard Jefferies this summer. One was to some of the medical staff at the Great Western Hospital, and the other was at the Crowborough Festival. The latter event was very well attended, and it became clear that there is considerable pride in the town about our/their author, despite his stay there being very short. I can also report that the misspelling of "Jeffries Way" on a road sign has now been corrected.

I have reported elsewhere in this newsletter about Duncan Pepper's sad death and his funeral, but I must mention here his great help with the Literary Award. Last year he read all the books shortlisted, and was a great help at the final selection meeting. This year he was far too ill to travel to Coate for our meeting, but he had made careful notes on each of the final listed books, which I was able to read out at the selection meeting.

Two or three months ago, I had a visit from a young pupil at Marlborough College, Charlotte Gow, who was undertaking a project on Richard Jefferies. Every member of her year group had been required to produce a project on a subject of their own selection, and Charlotte had chosen Jefferies. She had visited the Museum, and asked me some very perceptive questions. I am very pleased to say that she told me recently that her submission had been considered the best of the Year Group! I am also pleased to welcome her father, Matt Gow, to membership of the Society.

Another new member whom I was delighted to meet was Michael Sherwood, who kindly agreed to house the Society Library at his house in Devon. We met at Duncan's house in Chew when he collected the boxes. The library is a very underused resource, despite our reducing its size by offering surplus stock to members; and is available on request for research.

There was an almost unanimous welcome to the special extended 130th Anniversary Edition of the Society's *Journal*, and we look forward to next year's similarly enlarged offering. I am also happy to let members know that the first volume of Andrew Rossabi's new biography of Jefferies should be published next year. It has been a labour of love – and scholarship. Further details will follow.

I was very interested to read the citation from the "Sarsens" article in the WANHS in 1946 (see p.31). H.C. Brentnall actually built the house in which I now live, and continued to inhabit it until his death in the 1950s. He was a remarkable polymath, and was Chairman of WANHS for many years, as well as carrying out many excavations of barrows and tumuli in the area. Despite being familiar with his work, I had not come across any references to Jefferies by him until now. Although RJ was careful not to identify specific locations in his writings, Brentnall could have mentioned Charles Sorley's poems, as in them he clearly names a number of locations on the Marlborough Downs, some

associated with Jefferies – but perhaps the intimation is that Jefferies’ works were much more widely known than Sorley’s in 1946; and this was two years before the rash of publications and re-publications in 1948 for the Centenary.

I did, by the way, have to look up the meaning of “skald”!

I look forward very much to welcoming all those members who can manage to join us, to our AGM on the 4 November at Liddington, when Roger Ebbatson will be speaking on “Seeking the Beyond: Materiality versus Spirituality in Jefferies and Hardy.”

FROM THE SECRETARY

Jean Saunders

A warm welcome is extended to new members who have joined the Society since September 2016:

Malcolm Andrews – Kent
Malcolm Dixon – Cumbria
Sally England – London
Becky & Mark Frost – Dorset
Matt Gow – Wiltshire
Nick Hall – North Yorkshire
David Lloyd – Devon
Stephen Parsons – Somerset

Sylvia Pilot – Wiltshire
Michael Sherwood – Devon
Sarah & Peter Troughton –
Wiltshire
David Wilkins – Berkshire
Carol Winder – Wiltshire
Arabella White – Cheshire
Howard Wix – Fife

The total membership during the 2016-17 subscription year, that ended on 30 June 2017, numbered 232 – this includes 56 joint members and three organisations. Life membership applies to 34 members. Although the majority live in the United Kingdom, others live in Europe or English-speaking countries. Annual subscriptions were due on 1 July – thank you to those members who paid promptly. This is much appreciated and reduces my workload.

Many thanks to those of you who responded so positively and encouragingly to the extended summer edition of the *Journal*. Peter Robins and I put a considerable amount of work into producing the publication and it is good to read the comments. Members of the Society’s Executive Council have agreed that we should continue with the soft-back book format and publish one *Journal* a year that will be issued in the summer. The theme of the Summer 2018 edition will be ‘Richard Jefferies: The View from Abroad’.

I regret to announce that, as a result of family commitments, Peter Bainbridge has stepped down as Honorary Treasurer and the post is now vacant. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank Pete for his enthusiasm and for his interest in the Society – we need more people like him to help keep the Society alive. We are keen to hear from anyone who might consider taking on the treasurer’s role. It is a five-year term of office and appointments are made at

the AGM when trustees are elected to the Society's governing Executive Council. The treasurer's role is one of good book-keeping, maintaining records of expenses and income, and preparing the end-of-year accounts on 1 July. It is useful, but not essential, to be able to use Excel spread-sheets and to attend four meetings a year in Swindon that includes the AGM. Please contact me if you can help in any way.

JOINT MEETING: Richard Jefferies Society and Friends of Alfred Williams, Richard Jefferies Museum, Saturday 1 April 2017.

Margaret Hunt

The annual meeting of the two organisations, who came together to share readings by or about Alfred Williams and Richard Jefferies, was hosted by the Society this year and attended by eleven members of one or both societies and one non-member.

John Price gave the first Joint Event reading, entitled 'Childhood at Coate', taken from Edward Thomas's 1909 biography of Richard Jefferies.

Caroline Ockwell gave an account of the fortunes of a 19th century chapel in South Marston, which had recently been privately purchased with a view to restoring it for social use.

Next came Graeme Franklin, who read from Williams' *Scenes from a Wiltshire Village* (Bassett Down), with which he had family connections.

Eric Jones then produced passages from *Nature Near London* by Jefferies, and also handed out pictures of Sussex sheep and shepherds from the relevant period.

Roy Burton's choice was taken from a specially prepared hand-out consisting of a number of Williams' poems. This was 'After the Rain', a 1926 very slightly annotated version of the original, written in 1912. A reading of the first and third verses had been included in the autumn 2016 funeral service for the late John Forster.

Sylvia Pilot and Roy Burton jointly read Williams' 'To a Blackbird' verses – from *Poems in Wiltshire* (1911).

Next, non-member John Simmons, contributed the initial paragraph from the first chapter of Jefferies' *The Story of My Heart*.

Margaret Bathe combined with Roy Burton in presenting Roy's selected lines from 'About Wiltshire' by Williams.

The penultimate reader was Margaret Hunt, who gave a short extract from Jefferies' *Hodge and His Masters* (1880). This concentrated upon the everyday outdoor activities of a farm labourer's small son.

Finally, Graeme Franklin returned to read Williams' account of Liddington.

Throughout the event, there was group discussion upon all the items selected.

STUDY DAY: Connections and Inspirations: the Influence of Richard Jefferies on Writers and Poets, Richard Jefferies Museum, Saturday 24 June 2017.

Margaret Hunt

The event was attended by 10 members of the Society, plus the speaker Rebecca Welshman, her partner and two small children. Apologies for absence had been received from Peter Bainbridge, Jean Saunders and Michael Parrott.

John Price opened the proceedings by welcoming those present, introducing Rebecca and referring to a recently-discovered letter from Albert Einstein, in which he expressed a view of time remarkably similar to Richard Jefferies own, as outlined in *The Story of My Heart*.

Accompanying her talk with a digital presentation, Rebecca first indicated that her research had revealed that until after his death, Richard Jefferies had been widely known as the author of *The Gamekeeper at Home*. Recognition was gained thereafter as the result of the trend toward the study of natural history, which highlighted Jefferies' concentration upon countryside topics. The production in 1890 of a new edition of John Watson's Jefferies' book was also influential in this regard. In their writings from this time, Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson and John Ruskin had echoed Jefferies' rural interests. The placing of the Jefferies bust in Salisbury Cathedral in 1897 had also served as a form of advertisement – to Thomas Hardy and George Eliot, for example.

Edward Garnett (also Richard, his father) were influenced by a resuscitation of Jefferies' *The Story of My Heart*, and the latter considered that the novel *Amaryllis at the Fair* was superior to Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Jefferies met Hardy in 1873. A quotation from W.H. Hudson, written when he stayed in Jefferies' cottage after the latter's death, was read to the meeting.

Rebecca next referred to the effect of Jefferies' writings upon Alfred Williams, and drew attention to the more than half a century of Jefferies research carried out by Samuel Looker. Agriculturalist A.G. Street, was referred to, also John Clare, who had designated Jefferies as "The father of nature writers". Lastly, mention was made of Claire Tomalin's biography of Thomas Hardy.

General discussion then took place, led by John Price, who indicated that Jefferies' *After London* had influenced science fiction writers, such as William Morris and John Fowles. T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* was another possible example.

Brian Morris drew attention to childrens' fiction references. On the matter of Jefferies' access to books, a pocket Shakespeare and poetry had been the most prominent of these.

Norma Goodwin referred to Hudson's writings from the days when he lived in Hampshire.

The influence of Jefferies upon D.H. Lawrence was mentioned by Roger Ebbatson as stemming from the days in his youth, when Lawrence had been able to access Jefferies' books at the local Mechanics Institute. *The Open Air* had been sent to him in 1909. Lawrence's early novel, *The White Peacock*, had affinities with Jefferies' works in its intense and emotional rendering. It was also noted that at this time, authors had tended to echo Jefferies in their emphasis upon the inclusion of gamekeepers. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* had resemblances to Jefferies' *Greene Ferne Farm*.

Ben Hughes had come upon Jefferies' writings while at school, and spoke of the impressions he had gained from them.

Wye Valley writer about countrywide matters, Flora Klickmann, who might possibly have followed Jefferies' example, was mentioned by Margaret Hunt. No one present knew of her.

Gillian Bromhead read two poems by local poet Mollie Holden, which were reminiscent of Jefferies mode of expression. Other matters referred to were: the suggestion that men find it more difficult than women to respond to nature's manifestations and to express views upon them; participation in modern walking groups is not the best means of becoming aware of, and responding to, the natural environment; Gerald Finzi and Frank Bridge were examples of composers who had been influenced by Jefferies.

An extract from *Millstone Grit* by Glyn Hughes, and a poem by Charles Hamilton Sorley were read by John Price.

Finally, Rebecca Welshman gave short readings from Jefferies' 'Connections and Inspirations' – a description of the views to be seen from the village of Liddington – and from *Wild Life in a Southern County*. She finished by reciting a poem.

The morning session of the Study Day closed just before 1.00 pm. In the afternoon, lively discussion continued, authors discussed at some length being Edward Thomas and W.H. Hudson. The point was raised that Hudson always wrote as a "visitor" when describing English scenery, which may have been because he was born in Argentina.

SUMMER OUTING: Visit to Petersfield and Steep

John Price

On Thursday 15 June, three members of the Richard Jefferies Society met at the newly amalgamated Petersfield Museum. We visited the temporary Edward Thomas Exhibition, mounted to mark the centenary of the writer's death at Arras. This was a fascinating display, showing many artefacts belonging to Thomas, such as his clay pipe, and his army trunk; as well as many examples

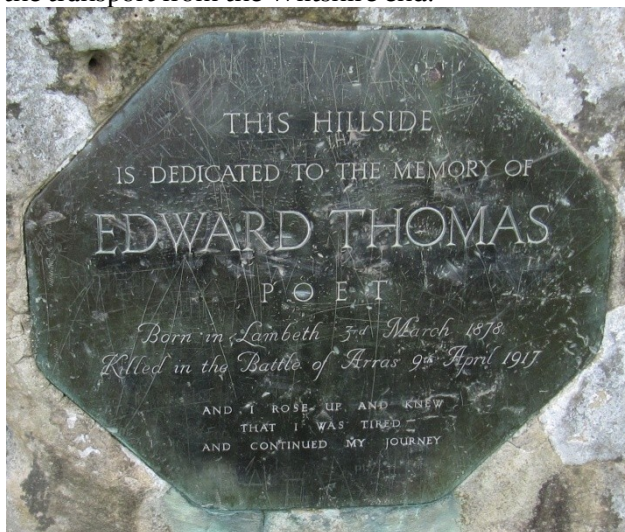
of his writing and published works. Various local artists had also produced a selection of prints, reflecting on Thomas' life and works.

In an adjacent room, there was a collection of photographs, all taken by Thomas in 1913, on a Box Brownie. These came to light only recently, and some were used to illustrate a new edition of *Journey into Spring*. Finally, we were privileged to visit the Edward Thomas Archive Room, in which books and manuscripts from the Tim Wilton-Steer collection are being stored and catalogued.

After taking lunch in Petersfield we were fortunate in being able to visit the local Church at Steep, where a floral display was being prepared for its opening the next day. Each arrangement celebrated a poem by Thomas. "Nettles" was a fairly obvious, if hazardous, choice for an arrangement, but Adlestrop provided more of a challenge. The Laurence Whistler engraved windows were emphasised in further arrangements; although one window was vandalised in 2010, and has been re-engraved by Tony Gilliam.

We then undertook a pilgrimage (by car) in order to visit Thomas's various houses in Steep. These were: "The Red House", "Berryfield Cottage", and "2 Yewtree Cottages". Our most adventurous excursion was to scramble down Shoulder of Mutton Hill from the woodland track at the top to visit the Edward Thomas Memorial Sarsen, which was put in place in 1937. From here, splendid views were visible to the South.

A most enjoyable and rewarding day, with many thanks to Pete Bainbridge, who provided the transport from the Wiltshire end.



The plaque on the Edward Thomas Memorial Sarsen



Pete Bainbridge (left) and Mike Parrott beside the Edward Thomas Memorial Sarsen



View from the top of Shoulder of Mutton Hill

WILD LIFE IN A SOUTHERN COUNTY

Richard Stewart

Many members will no doubt be familiar with a very good source of quotations by Richard Jefferies, most of them about a paragraph in length. This is *The Pocket Richard Jefferies* by Alfred H. Hyatt, published by Chatto and Windus. My copy is a second impression, dated 1906, so it was obviously popular at that time. After a recent re-reading of *Wild Life in a Southern County* I turned to this source and was disappointed to find only two passages that the author considered worth including. He obviously preferred the later works, which I can understand: 'The Pageant of Summer' as a single essay had eleven inclusions with twenty seven for *The Story of My Heart*. *Wild Life in a Southern County* is an early work and I doubt if many readers of Jefferies would consider it to be his best work. However, I consider each of these short passages well worthy of selection – chapter references given:

Chapter One – 'The joy in life of these animals – indeed, of almost all animals and birds in freedom – is very great. You may see it in every motion – in the lissom bound of the hare, the playful leap of the rabbit, the song that the lark and the finch must sing; the soft, loving coo of the dove in the hawthorn; the blackbird ruffling out his feathers on a rail. The sense of living – the consciousness of seeing and feeling – is manifestly intense in them all, and is in itself an exquisite pleasure'.

Chapter Three – 'The colour of the yellowhammer appears brighter in spring and early summer: the bird is aglow with a beautiful and brilliant yet soft yellow, pleasantly shaded with brown. He perches on the upper boughs of the hawthorn or on a rail, coming up from the corn as if to look around him – for he feeds chiefly on the ground – and uttering two or three short notes. His plumage gives a life and tint to the hedge, contrasting so brightly with the vegetation and with other birds. His song is but a few bars repeated, yet it has a pleasing and soothing effect in the drowsy warmth of summer'.

Chapter Nine – 'Who can stay indoors when the goldfinches are busy among the bloom on the apple trees? A flood of sunshine falling through a roof of rosy pink and delicate white blossom overhead; underneath, grass deeply green with the vigour of spring, dotted with yellow buttercups and strewn with bloom shaken by the wind from the trees – is not this better than formal-patterned carpets, and the white flat ceilings that weigh so heavily upon the sight'.

Chapter Twelve – 'The nightingale shows no timidity while all is still, but sings on the bough in full sight, hardly three yards away, so that you can see the throat swell as the notes are poured forth – now in intricate trills, now a low, sweet call, then a liquid "jug-jug-jug!" To me it sounds richer in the morning-sunlight, flowers, and the rustle of green leaves seem the natural accompaniment; and the distant chorus of other birds affords a contrast and relief – an orchestra filling up the pauses and supporting the solo singer'.

FAIRFORD CHURCH



St Mary's church, Fairford, Gloucestershire, March 2009



Detail from the West Window pictured on the front cover.
The Blue Devil is wheeling one of the damned in a wheelbarrow.

Richard Jefferies wrote about St. Mary's church in the final article of a series of eight for the *North Wilts Herald* under the main title of a 'History of Swindon and antiquities of its environs' published on 29 February 1868, vol. 7, no 350, p.5. The

articles were signed 'Geoffrey' and re-published in *Jefferies' Land: A History of Swindon and its Environs* edited with notes by Grace Toplis (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1896). The following text is reproduced from Ch. VIII, 'The Oxford Road,' pp.198-203.

Fairford lies at a considerable distance from Swindon, and in another county, but is of a celebrity so great that it can scarcely be passed over in silence. The church is the cause of its fame. It is a fine old structure, built more than three centuries ago by a person of the name of John Tame, in the year 1493. John Tame was a merchant and seafaring man, and chanced to take a prize ship destined for Rome. The prize was highly valuable on account of a quantity of magnificent stained glass which was found on board, and so greatly delighted was Tame with his capture that, bringing it to England, he built a church to put it in. The church was then dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and the stained glass has remained ever since, the wonder and admiration of all who have seen it. The design is said to have been that of Albrecht Dürer, the celebrated artist, but doubt has been thrown upon this by the fact that at the date when this glass was made he had not yet reached his twentieth year, while it is well known that a length of time is necessary to complete such work. These windows number no less than twenty-eight, and the paintings are from scenes in the Bible. The choir windows contain the various events that attended the crucifixion of Christ; these windows, together with some upon the western side of the church, are somewhat larger than the others. Other windows portray the apostles, prophets, martyrs, fathers, confessors, and persecutors of the church, in short a sort of ecclesiastical history. These figures are full size. Hell and damnation are represented at the west end with such horrible minuteness of detail that we understand this window is usually kept covered. The paintings are well preserved and the colours fresh, while so excellent is the execution that Sir Anthony Vandyke was of opinion that they could not be surpassed by the pencil. It is scarcely probable that Dürer could have designed these extensive windows ere he had attained his twentieth year; or, if he had designed them, that they could have been executed in so short a time as must necessarily have elapsed from the date of the design to the capture of the ship by John Tame. In all probability the fame of Dürer has usurped that of another less celebrated. During the Civil Wars, when such articles ran a great risk of destruction at the hands of the Parliamentarians, these paintings were turned wrong side uppermost, and so escaped being smashed. Bishop Corbett, who died on January 28th, 1635, and was, says one contemporary, "the best poet of all the bishops of that age," seems to have visited Fairford, since the following two poems are supposed to have been written by him upon Fairford windows:—

Tell me, you anti-saints, why brass
 With you is shorter lived than glass?
 And why the saints have scap't their falls
 Better from windows than from walls?
 Is it because the Brethren's fires
 Maintain a glass-house at Blackfryars?
 Next which the church stands north and
 south,
 And east and west the preacher's mouth,
 Or is't because such painted ware
 Resembles something that you are,
 Soe pyde, so seeming, soe unsound,
 In manners and in doctrine found.
 That out of emblematick witt
 You spare yourselves in sparing it?
 If it be soe, then, Fairford boast
 Thy Church hath kept what all have lost;
 And is preserved from the bane
 Of either war, or Puritane:
 Whose life is coloured in thy paint
 The inside dross, the outside saint.



UPON FAIREFORD WINDOWS.

I knowe no painte of poetry
 Can mend such colore'd imagy
 In sullen inke, yet (Fayreford) I
 May relish thy fair memory.
 Such is the echoes fainter sound,
 Such is the light when the sunn's
 drown'd,
 So did the fancy look upon
 The work before it was begun.
 Yet when those showes are out of sight,
 My weaker colors may delight.
 Those images doe faith fullie
 Report true feature to the eie,
 As you may think each picture was
 Some visage in a looking-glass;
 Not a glass window face, unless
 Such as Cheapside hath, where a press
 Of painting gallants, looking out,
 Bedeck the casement rounde about.
 But these have holy phisnomy;
 Each paine instructs the laity
 With silent eloquence; for heere

Devotions leads the eie, not eare.
 To not the cathechisinge paint,
 Whose easie phrase doth soe acquainte
 Our sense with Gospell, that the Creede
 In such a hand the weake may reade,
 Such tipes e'er yett of vertue bee,
 And Christ as in a glass we see—
 When with a fishinge rod the clarke
 St. Peter's draught of fish doth marke.
 Such is the scale, the eye, the fin,
 You'd thinke they strive and leap within;
 But if the nett, which holdes them, brake
 Hee with his angle some would take.
 But would you walke a turn in Paules,
 Looke up, one little pane inrouls
 A fairer temple. Flunge a stone,
 The church is out at the windowe flowne.
 Consider not, but aske your eies,
 And ghosts at midday seem to rise;
 The saintes there seemeing to descend,
 Are past the glass and downwards bend.
 Look there! The Devill! all would cry,
 Did they not see that Christ was by.
 See where he suffers for thee! See
 His body taken from the tree!
 Had ever death such life before?
 The limber corps, be-sully'd o'er
 With meagre paleness, does display
 A middle state 'twixt flesh and clay.
 His arms and leggs, His head and crown,
 Like a true lamb-kin dangle downe;
 Whoe can forbear, the grave being nigh,
 To bringe fresh ointment in His eye?
 The wondrous art hath equal fate,
 Unfixt, and yet, inviolate.
 The Puritans were sure deceav'd
 Whoe thought those shaddowers mov'd
 and heav'd
 So held from stonnige Christ; the winde
 And boysterous tempests were so kinde
 As on His image not to prey
 Whome both the winde and seas obey.
 At Momus bee not amaz'd;
 For if each Christian's heart were glaz'd
 With such a windowe, then each brest
 Might be his owne evangelist.

2 WOODSIDE, TALWORTH

Jean Saunders

Audrey Smith wrote about the Jefferies' family move from Victoria Street, Swindon to 2 Woodside (now 296 Ewell Road) in her biography*:

Despite the ties that bound him to Sydenham, he did not take a house in that district – perhaps it was a little too close to London for him, or perhaps suitable property was too expensive for him. Instead, he turned his face towards Surrey, where Sarah Billing [Jefferies' sister] was living, and his choice rested finally on an unpretentious house on the borders of Long Ditton and Surbiton. It seems possible that either the Harrilds or the Billings might have used some influence for him here, since the house – No. 2, Woodside – belonged to a man who was probably known to both families. Douglas Straight, who was only four years older than Richard, had been a working journalist until he followed his father to the Bar and subsequently built up a thriving practice in criminal cases. Mr. Straight owned both terraces of the Woodside development (Woodside and Woodside Villas – twelve houses in all), and Richard became his tenant, removing Jessie and the baby from Wiltshire to Surrey in February, 1877. (p.102)

Mr. Straight's Woodside houses seemed like a suburban outpost. They had been built c.1851, but, probably because they were on low-lying land of dubious drainage, no other housing development had taken place nearby; indeed, Mr. Straight found some difficulty in keep[ing] his property fully tenanted. ... The Woodside houses, though damp, were otherwise quite pleasantly situated. Tiny front gardens, enclosed by iron railings, separated them from the highway, on the other side of which was the open wildness of Tolworth Common. The outlook from the back rooms was attractive, over small, walled gardens to a copse of mixed deciduous trees and conifers ... The yearly rent was £30, plus £5 ground rent. (p.120)

The 19th century maps on pages 19 and 20 indicate the once rural nature of this area, set in countryside between the River Thames and the 'Hogs Mill River'[†]. Note that Tolworth was known as Talworth then.

The owner of 2 Woodside,[‡] Sir Douglas Straight (1844-1914), was born in Bayswater and attended Harrow School. At the age of six, he lived at Surbiton Hill. On leaving school he worked as a journalist and then a lawyer although he maintained a literary interest. In 1867, he wrote a memoir of his time at Harrow entitled *Harrow Recollections by an Old Harrovian* and signed the preface with the name Sidney Daryl, a pseudonym he used for other publications. From 1870-

* *The Interpreter: A Biography of Richard Jefferies*, Audrey Smith, (Blue Gate Books, 2008).

† The Hogsmill may be named after John Hog, an important resident of Kingston in the 12th century. <http://www.londonslostrivers.com/hogsmill-river.html>

‡ The British Library (BL 58817) holds a copy of a lease for '2 Woodside Terrace' in Jefferies' hand dated 24 February 1880 (some 3 years after they moved in). Sisters Sarah, Jane and Nancy Waters of Hook are named as the lessors who were, perhaps, acting on behalf of Straight whilst in India.

74 he was the Conservative MP for Shrewsbury. In 1879 he was made a judge of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad in India. After thirteen years of judicial service abroad he was knighted soon after his return from India in 1892. Straight began work again as the joint editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1893–1896) and then editor of it from 1896. Straight died in London, aged 69. Perhaps Jefferies and Straight were acquainted in some way through writing, rather than through the influence of other family members as Audrey Smith suggests, and this led to the Jefferies' family moving to 2 Woodside.

By the time that Edward Thomas wrote his biography of Richard Jefferies (1908), Woodside 'has been overtaken by London for some time, though its front windows have a swelling, leafy view of Hounslow, Richmond Park, and Wimbledon Common on one side, and of Hook, Chessington, Claygate, and their woods, on the other.' (p.111)

Cyril Wright (former Secretary of the Society) recounted his visit to 2 Woodside in a talk to the Richard Jefferies Society on 5 December 1977. He said:

Seventy years later (after Thomas's biography), I tried to locate it, and felt glad that both Jefferies and Thomas had been spared the depressing sight of a Chinese Take-Away shop bearing the number 296 Ewell Road, part of a row of small modern shops, possibly adapted from the former terrace houses. It is not just overtaken, it is swallowed up, submerged, almost obliterated by the insatiable Greater London....

H.K. Springett, Naturalist and lifelong lover and student of Jefferies' works, explored the area south of Surbiton, in the direction of Tolworth, Worcester Park, Hook and Chessington, during the last war, (1944) and took a number of irreplaceable photographs of buildings and scenes associated with Jefferies life in Surrey. To him we are indebted for a view of No. 296 Ewell Road, after the terrace had suffered from bomb damage, the adjoining house having entirely disappeared.

Springett's photograph (see p.18) was reproduced in the *Worthing Cavalcade – Richard Jefferies: A Tribute* (1946) on p.114.

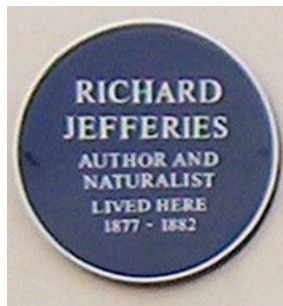
On 3 October 1992 Andrew Rossabi (the Society's President) reported his findings of 2 Woodside at the RJS Birthday Lecture held at the Surbiton Library Annexe. He recounted that:

The premises are now occupied by D.J. Murphy Ltd., publishers of *Pony and Horse & Rider* magazines. The external fabric of the upper two floors, now offices, seems fairly intact: the windows with cambered heads appear identical to those in the Worthing Cavalcade photograph. But it is not clear what alterations had already been made to the building since Jefferies' day. There is no plaque, no record of Jefferies having resided and written many of his best-known books here.

Mr. Rossabi was pleasantly surprised at the state of the Hogsmill River:

I came expecting to find it discoloured with effluent and choked with litter. It proved a bright, clear, slow-flowing stream, so shallow for much of its course that

it hardly deserves the name of river. But though no longer so deep as in Jefferies' day it still runs 'clear and sweet', is still 'too broad for leaping over', still wears an inhabited look, is still tenanted by moorhens and water-rats.

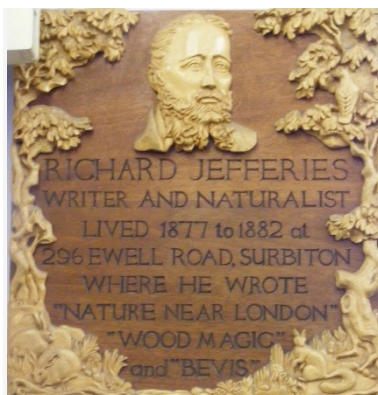


Springett's photograph of 296 Ewell Road

Eventually a blue plaque was placed on the wall under the second floor windows in May 2003. By 2017, the ground floor of the building had become the offices of an estate agent.

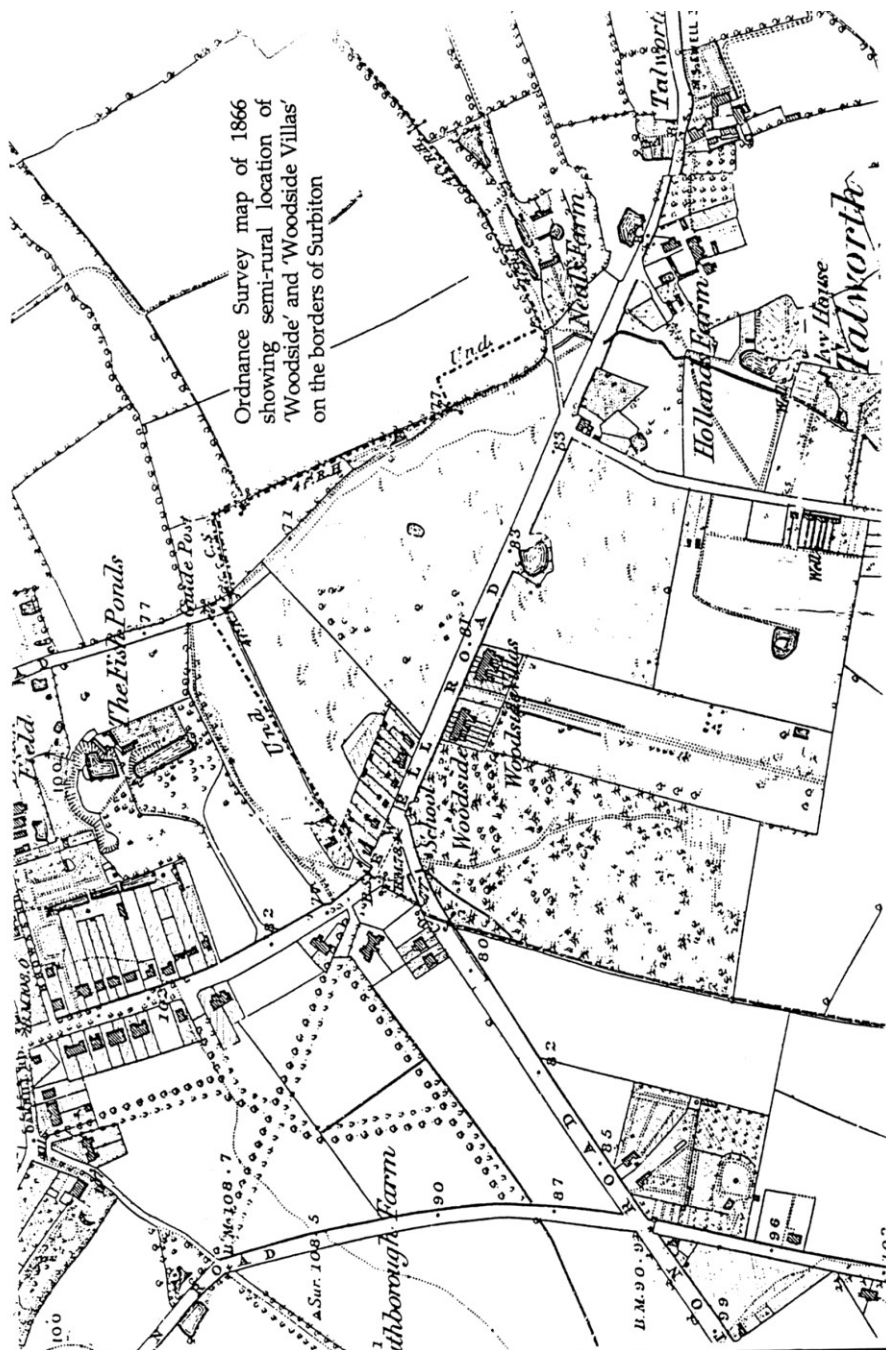
Jefferies name still lives on in a small park nearby that Surbiton Borough Council purchased in 1947. In 1980 a part of The Wood was fenced off and named the Richard Jefferies Bird Sanctuary.

There is also a wooden plaque that graces the entrance to Surbiton Library pictured below.



Ordnance Survey map c. 1816. X marks where Woodside was built c.1851





HOW DID YOU DISCOVER RICHARD JEFFERIES?

Michael Stagg has been a member of the Society for at least 45 years. He lives in Suffolk but was born in Wiltshire. He remembers discovering Richard Jefferies' writing in the 1950s when he attended Marlborough Grammar School. On leaving school his first job was a forest worker in Savernake Forest and recalls reading Jefferies' essay about the forest. He writes: 'Hardy, Clare, Thomas and Richard Jefferies nurtured and fed me on my early literary excursions, and they still do! ... Jefferies fuels my "Moonraker" image and my connection with my native county, even though I have lived in Suffolk longer now, than I have been a Wiltshire resident! I have just finished re-reading *Red Deer* – with a surname such as mine, it seems apt that this book is one of my favourites.'

For Stephen Parsons, Richard Jefferies has always been around. 'When, as a boy, every summer included a period "packed off" to stay with my grandmother in a Wiltshire village not too far from Salisbury, there was a copy of *Bevis* in the bedroom there. And at home *The Old House at Coate* stood on my father's bookshelf (it now stands on mine). In more recent years I've returned to him through *The Story of My Heart*. Then I've also visited Coate a few times as it was on a route I used a lot travelling to see my parents in their last years. And I attended a couple of RJ Soc events (e.g. John Carey's talk on *After London*). So I thought it was now about time I joined properly!

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY & WHITE HORSE BOOKSHOP LITERARY PRIZE

The short-list for the 2016 prize was announced at the end of March 2017 as follows:

- *The Nature of Autumn*, by Jim Crumley, published by Saraband.
- *The Running Hare*, by John Lewis-Stempel, published by Doubleday.
- *Six Facets of Light*, by Ann Wroe, published by Jonathan Cape.
- *Walking Through Spring*, by Graham Hoyland, published by William Collins.
- *The Wood for the Trees*, by Richard Fortey, published by William Collins.

On 13 May the judging panel met and agreed that Richard Fortey's *The Wood for the Trees: The Long View of Nature from a Small Wood* should be awarded the prize and this was announced at a ceremony at the White Horse Bookshop on 3 June where Mr Fortey was in attendance. He was awarded £1000 and given a certificate of excellence in nature writing (see photograph on p.4).

Following his retirement, Richard Fortey, a British palaeontologist, natural historian, writer and broadcaster, bought four acres of ancient beech and bluebell woodland in the Chilterns, near Henley. The book chronicles, month by month, his developing relationship with the wood, investigating the range of species living in his territory, then expanding to consider the socio-economic history of the area, and issues involved in the maintenance of the woodland as a thriving ecosystem. The author's academic background allows for scientific accuracy in recording species, and the holistic approach to describing the woodland echoes Jefferies' approach to writing about the area around Coate.

Please send Richard Stewart your nominations for the 2017 award as soon as possible and no later than 31 December (to allow for Christmas releases) to 112, Westerfield Road, Ipswich, IP4 2XW or email rgsvalezina@hotmail.co.uk.

BURDEROP PARK DEVELOPMENT

On 16 March 2017 John Price attended the presentation event that accompanied the planning application. City & Country Burderop Limited, based in Essex, propose 54 new houses in the grounds and conversion of the old buildings to provide 25 units. Mr. Price wrote: 'The eyesore of the modern Halcrow offices will all be demolished; as will the excessive areas devoted to car parking [427 spaces reduced to 219]. The plan is still to convert the main house into flats, at the same time restoring some old wall paintings that were apparently put into store in the 70s. The Tudor buildings and the gatehouse will be converted into residences, and the walled garden will be restored – with three houses to be built within it at one end... [An] architect was very pleased to learn of the Jefferies' writings, as was the site manager. I am now going through *Round About a Great Estate* and *The Gamekeeper at Home* to draw out quotes that they may be able to use on information boards round the site. They were also very pleased with the suggestion that relevant names could be used round the development. "Okebourne Chace" could be a very suitable name for a small courtyard development. We discussed the ice house as a feature to be interpreted – and avoided by peripheral paths for Health and Safety considerations.

'I am reassured by what I have learned about the company. I found out that one of my ex Head Boys, who now runs a nationwide arboricultural company from Bury St Edmunds, does work for them sometimes – and is very happy environmentally with what they have done elsewhere. The only snag, of course, is that these developments are going to be very expensive, and there is no possibility of so-called "affordable housing".'

RICHARD JEFFERIES MUSEUM TRUST REPORT

Mike Pringle

The last year or so has been an extremely busy time, with the museum having an autumn/winter season for the first time, filled with writing/poetry classes, families and children's activities, museum openings, talks and workshops, Poetry Swindon festival, and endless volunteer work inside and out. This effectively closed the gap between last summer and this, and, with visitor numbers of nearly 6,000 adults and over 2,000 children, pushed everyone to the limits of their availability and stamina! But it paid dividends. Earlier in the year, we applied for a number of grants, and eventually landed a £12,000 HLF grant for creating more interpretation around Jefferies' life and works; a £3,500 grant to fund garden plants, rabbit fencing, gardening equipment etc.; and, most exciting of all, £55,000 from Arts Council England to fund a full programme of activities both this year and next. As a consequence of these grants, we have been able to publish a full and exciting timetable of events and activities, in advance, both as a printed programme and on our website. To give one example of where this programme has enabled the museum to grow, is on the Sunday afternoon openings, where we were able to pay for a series of 'entertainments' in the gardens, with everything from beautiful viola music, to shadow puppet theatre based on *Wood Magic*.

As well as the formal grant funding process, we have been very fortunate in other sorts of support: more people donating money as 'friends'; huge numbers of volunteer teams from Thames Water, Nationwide and Intel (all doing sterling work in the gardens); a donation of three sturdy sheds from InSwindon; and a wonderfully generous donation from Jean Saunders which was matched by the Society. The money was to help us with the parlour, which has now been completely redecorated, with a very beautiful William Morris wallpaper, refurbished bookshelves and furniture, and the original wooden floor revealed and restored (though we are still waiting for suitable replacement planks for the rotten wood along the external walls). Furthermore, the room now has a large touchscreen computer for displaying videos, including the film starring John Price as RJ, the Channel 4 programme with Tony Robinson, the BBC Proms, and a number of other films made about the museum or Jefferies. In tandem with the decoration, we have been digitising everything in the museum – photos and data for all artefacts, full books catalogue, scans of information held in folders, copies of all illustrations in all Jefferies' books etc.. The database will be available on the large screen (and website) so people can explore everything in the museum via simple keyword searches.

In terms of volunteers, we now have quite a team, including some of those who have been doing good things for the museum for years, temporary folk just

passing through, those who show up now and then, and even a number of teenagers. All doing their bit, and all helping to keep the place growing and improving. The result of all the work the team has been doing is an ever increasing number of people discovering and exploring the museum; a new generation of Jefferies' fans. Although, curiously, we think we may have already reached saturation point – we appreciate one of the key aspects of the site is to provide a haven, a place where people can feel the atmosphere that Jefferies left behind – so we are now actively taking our foot off the visitor-number pedal which tends to dominate everything nowadays, and working to give fewer people an even richer experience. The first step in this is a shorter, more focused Poetry Swindon festival, then a winter of creating new interpretation for the HLF project, all the security of knowing we already have funding for next year. Though part of what we do may have to be a sign to go above the door that reads: “In all the years I’ve lived in Swindon, I’ve never actually visited this place!”



Mulberry Tree at Coate Farm
Lino cut by Alex Coppock-Bunce, 2017

THOSE WHO HAVE DEPARTED

Duncan Pepper

1942-2017



Duncan and Diane Pepper

Born on 29 August 1942, Duncan joined the Society along with his wife Diane in 1997. They lived and worked in Edinburgh but on moving south in 2008 Duncan became very active in the Society as a member of its Executive Council and helped regularly at the Richard Jefferies Museum as a volunteer guide. He also looked after the Society's library. His best friend, his wife, died in 2013, so Duncan moved the following year to Chew Magna in Somerset along with his cat, his daughter Hannah, son-in-law and grandchildren.

We shall miss him terribly and our thoughts go to his family.

From Jean Saunders.

Always in excellent health it was a most dreadful and totally unexpected shock to hear from Duncan Pepper on 1 March 2017 to inform the Society that:

I've had confirmed that I have pancreatic cancer with secondaries in the liver. This gives me a rather restricted future as the cancer is notoriously quick.

To spare my daughter un-necessary work I am working my way through my financial affairs clearing up wherever possible.

You can never get a medic to give a forecast of survival so I have set up my own:

(1) Pessimistically ... April.

(2) Realistically, mid-May when we have a regular family holiday booked on the Helford River in Cornwall.

(3) Optimistically midsummer's day – a romantic day!

As a retired doctor he was well aware of what was in store. Duncan wrote to me not to gain sympathy but for purely practical reasons to sort out his membership renewal for 2017-18 should he survive that long.

He died peacefully on 10 June 2017 and almost achieved his optimistic forecast.

From Norma Goodwin.

My first memory of Duncan was on a residential course about Countryside Writers at Urchfont Manor in 2001. He brought along a large bag of Fortyfold seed potatoes which he shared out for us to take home and grow in our gardens. This variety of potato, which featured in *Amaryllis at the Fair*, is a heritage potato dating from around 1800 and I believe Duncan obtained them from one of the national Potato Days. Duncan was so full of life and was able to reconcile his loss of Diane by making a new home and life with his family in a really lovely house. He was so happy to help bring up his grandchildren. It's good he had a happy few years living life to the full.

From John Price.

I attended the 'Celebration of Life' for Duncan on 27 June 2017. It was a moving and unrushed occasion in a Memorial Woodland near Thornbury, north of Bristol. It was a Humanist service led by a well-briefed celebrant, but several members of the family also read out tributes. Duncan's interests, as we know, were extremely wide, and he certainly lived by the exhortation to "fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run". His willow coffin was present throughout the service, so that speakers could address personal remarks to Duncan's remains, and the Chapel remained open afterwards, so that individuals could quietly pay their own respects.

I offered several possible Richard Jefferies' readings for the Service, and one was chosen, which was also read out towards the end of the Celebration.

I always very much appreciated Duncan's contribution to Council – and to the Society; and I shall very much miss sharing Museum duties with him for a day a month. He follows in the equally enjoyable museum partnerships I enjoyed with Mark Daniel and John Webb.

BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Executive Council member, Rebecca Welshman has compiled a selection of Jefferies' articles on sporting and natural history that will be published on 5 September 2017 (Merlin Unwin Books, ISBN: 978-1910723401, 224pp., hardback) and titled *Sport in the Fields and Woods*. The anthology includes a few newly attributed articles such as 'Ironbound December' that was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on 26 December 1879.

Brian Morris has written a study of the environmental history of Southern Malawi that draws on literary, ethnographic and archival data. *An Environmental History of Southern Malawi: Land and People of the Shire Highlands* offers a detailed history of the region from the nineteenth century until the end of the colonial period. The hardback book was published by Palgrave Macmillan last year and is also available on Kindle. (ISBN: 978-3-319-45258-6, 343pp., 10 illustrations).

Freda M. Chaney has had her first novel published, titled *The House that Laughed*. (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, paperback, 274 pp. ISBN: 9781542345156). Twenty-seven-year-old Sara Beck is an investigative journalist who is stuck in a rut. She has a boss who antagonizes her, and an ex-boyfriend who has left her for another woman. Her life changes dramatically when Jacob Donnithorne meets her at a spooky B & B that books reservations according to a guest's reading preference. Sara's world is turned upside down as she reads. She and Jacob travel, discuss books, sample wine, visit an English manor house, and fall in love with each other's quirkiness. A mysterious twist at the end leaves Sara in a free fall from which she readily recovers.

Norman Chaney has written 'The Appointed Earth: Literary Reflections on the Creation'. Jefferies is one of eleven writers featured. At the time of writing the book had not been published.

Edinburgh University Press published an edition of *After London* in May 2017 edited by Mark Frost. Mark Frost is Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Portsmouth and uses *After London* for his students. He writes widely on environment, literature, and culture in the nineteenth century. Recent and forthcoming works include studies of Ruskin, Charles Dickens, William Morris, Richard Jefferies, and ecology in late Victorian science fiction. He is working on an article on Victorian representations of water, which will draw upon *After London*, 'The Modern Thames', and Looker's notebooks; and another on Victorian disaster sci-fi in which Jefferies will be prominent. There will be a review of the EUP edition of *After London* in the Society's *Summer Journal*, 2018.

CITINGS OF JEFFERIES

Jean Saunders came across an article entitled 'Nature Study for Nurses' by Anne E. Perkins M.D. (*The American Journal of Nursing*, Vol. 11, No. 10 (Jul., 1911), pp. 779-782. Published by: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins). The doctor opens with: SOME hospitals are obliged to make the rule that the nurses off duty must go out of doors, instead of 'going to bed because they feel so tired.'... John Burroughs and Bradford Torrey have many delightful books for reading to a patient as well as to one's self. Winthrop Packard, F. Schuyler Mathews, Wm. Hamilton Gibson all write charmingly of common wayside things. Burroughs has compiled in *Songs of Nature* the best nature poems. Richard Jefferies' 'A Sublimated Burroughs' is too little known to most readers, his exquisite 'Hours of Spring' and 'Wild Flowers,' the 'Pageant of Summer,' and 'Selections' can be had in little vest pocket editions from Mosher.

[There will be more about Mosher and Burroughs in the next RJS *Journal*.]

There is mention of Jefferies in 'Seekers after God' by Durant Drake (*The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan., 1919), pp. 67-83. Published by the Cambridge University Press on behalf of the Harvard Divinity School). This from p.73:

[John Stuart] Mill was an earnest seeker after God, and so was Richard Jefferies, whose *Story of My Heart* (Longmans, Green, & Co., ninth impression, 1906) is one of the most beautiful books in our language. To be sure, Jefferies passionately repudiates belief in God: 'How can I adequately express my contempt for the assertion that all things occur for the best, for a wise and beneficent end, and are ordered by a humane intelligence! It is the most utter falsehood and a crime against the human race. ... Human suffering is so great, so endless, so awful that I can hardly write of it.' But this is clearly a denial merely of the omnipotence of God; while in Jefferies' constantly reiterated longing for 'something higher than Deity,' and indeed in the mysticism and 'soul-thirst' which pervades the book, we see what most of us would call the search for a more tenable conception of God, certainly not at all a satisfied atheism. Mr. Hobhouse has recently phrased more calmly what Jefferies and many others have felt: 'The moral indifference of nature forces itself upon us; and it becomes evident that the real as such is not spiritual nor the creation of anything that is purely spiritual, just, or good, in the human sense. The spiritual is an element in Reality.' (I.L.T. Hobhouse, *Development and Purpose*. The Macmillan Co 1913).

Geoff Hirst reported that *After London* was mentioned in the *London Review of Books* (30 March 2017) reviewing Iain Sinclair's *The Last London*, a transcript of a lecture given as part of the *LRB* Winter Series at the British Museum. Its subject is whether London is undergoing some kind of meltdown. 'The compulsion to imagine and describe a final city runs from Richard Jefferies, with his *After London*; or, *Wild England* (1885), through Ford and Lewis, to the drowned worlds of J.G. Ballard and Will Self, the dystopian multiverses of

Michael Moorcock and China Miéville.’

Morehead State University issued a press release on 23 March 2017 to announce that their professor of English, Dr. Ronald D. Morrison, had a book published with co-editor Laurence W. Mazzeno, president emeritus of Alvernia University, entitled *Victorian Writers and the Environment: Ecocritical Perspectives*. Published in December 2016 by Routledge, the book features essays by 14 scholars from the U.S., England and Australia that focus on the ways in which Victorian writers wrote about both natural and human-created environments. ‘Included in the collection is Morrison’s essay on Richard Jefferies, a Victorian novelist and journalist who wrote extensively on agriculture and nature in the 19th century.’

Andrew Rossabi is a regular visitor to the Fry Gallery in Saffron Walden. The Gallery holds an extensive collection of works by the community of artists who between 1930 and 1970 lived at Great Bardfield near Braintree in N.W. Essex. The village gave its name to the group, of whom Eric Ravilious and Edward Bawden were the most notable members. Bawden worked in a variety of media and is known for the dry quirky humour of his designs.

Among the books on sale in the gallery was *Edward Bawden’s London* by Peyton Skipwith and Brian Webb, published by the V & A in 2011. Andrew was delighted to discover the authors had prefaced their text with a quote from ‘Footpaths’ in *Nature Near London*, which opens with an injunction to the reader always to get over a stile. Towards the end of the essay Jefferies resumes the theme, and this was the passage chosen by the authors for their epigraph: ‘Once more never go by a stile (that does not look private) without getting over it and following the path. But they all end in one place... The inevitable end of every footpath round about London is London. All paths go thither.’

Another find ... in April 2017 Thames & Hudson published *Ravilious & Co: The Pattern of Friendship* by Andy Friend, with an introduction by Alan Powers. In Chapter 2 we learn that the young Eric Ravilious, as a part-time teacher at the Eastbourne School of Art, recommended his students read ‘the novels of Aldous Huxley and David Garnett, and Richard Jefferies and White’s *The Natural History of Selborne*’.

Valerie Haworth came across this comment made by John Moore that is held in the John Moore Society’s archives and to whom we are grateful for permission to reproduce it. John Moore refers to the Williamson-edited version of *Hodge* in part of a composite book review article, of which Valerie only has a proof copy with no clues as to where it was published. Moore wrote:

Richard Jefferies is a writer for whom I have a blind spot; but there is no doubt that *HODGE AND HIS MASTERS*, first published in 1879, was a fine and careful piece of rapportage – I put it no higher – of life in the countryside as he knew it. It is now

republished under the rather inept title 'A Classic of English Farming', with a preface by Henry Williamson.

Margaret Hunt has been collecting citings for the last year from the *Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Magazine*:

June 1940, p.110 under NOTES: The Jefferies-Williams Memorials.

The Jefferies-Williams Memorials. The *Wiltshire Gazette* of January 4th, 1940, contains an account of the two memorials to the two Swindon writers, Richard Jefferies and Alfred Williams, recently set up on Liddington Hill and Barbury Down. Shorter notices are given by other Wiltshire papers. The scheme originated and was carried out entirely through the persevering efforts of Mr. J.B. Jones, of Swindon, with the assistance of a small number of subscriptions given in answer to his appeal. On November 18th, 1938, with the cooperation of the Director of the Ordnance Survey, an aluminium plaque was fixed to the triangulation pyramid at Liddington bearing this inscription: — 'Liddington Hill. The Hill beloved of Richard Jefferies and Alfred Williams'. On December 14th, 1939, a rough sarsen stone weighing three tons, given by Messrs. Tattersall of the Manton Training Stables, was removed from Overton Hill to Barbury Down, and erected there by permission of Mrs. and Miss Calley of Burderop. Two bronze plates with incised lettering are let into the face of this block. One bears the inscription: — 'Richard Jefferies 1848-1887' with a quotation from *The Story of My Heart*, whilst the other has 'Alfred Williams 1877-1930' with a passage from one of his poems, 'On the Downs'. An article by J.B. Jones appeared in the *Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard*, January 13th, 1940.

Mr. Jones writes later: — 'The memorial stands in the extreme S.W. corner of Chiseldon parish, and Coate and South Marston are in the same straight line. The vertical frontal angle of the stone (which is approximately a square in horizontal section, though it does not look it) points along this straight line. Jefferies' plate (the right hand one) looks down upon the two Bronze Age tumuli which are specifically mentioned in Chapter III of *Wild Life in a Southern County*. It of course also looks over the countryside of *Round about a Great Estate*. Williams' plate faces Liddington'.

Ed. H. Goddard.

June 1940. p. 142, under *Additions to Museum and Library*. Reference is made to Mr. L. V. Grinsell's 'The Archaeological Contributions of Richard Jefferies'. Transactions of the Newbury District Field Club, Vol. VIII, 1940, p. 216-226, 3 illustrations.

This is a careful and complete study of the whole of Jefferies' writings as to the main interests which affected his work throughout his career.

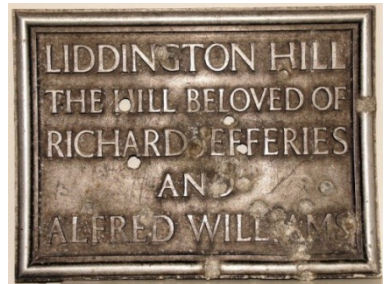
Mr. Grinsell divides this into three periods. In Phase I, when he was aged 18 to 26, from 1866 to 1874, local topography and archaeology were his dominant interests, as seen in articles on the Country round Swindon, the History of the Goddards of N. Wilts, and Swindon and its History published later. In Phase II, when he was aged 26 to 33, 1874-81, natural history took the place of topography, whilst in Phase III, 1881, when he became a sick man until his death in 1887, philosophy ousted his former interests.

During Phase I 'He was living and had always lived at Coate. Whilst he was living there his writings on that part of the country were very factual and showed little of the deep sentiment which is revealed in his later works. About 1877 he moved to London. From this time his writings became less factual and more contemplative and reminiscent, while his literary powers were maturing.' Mr. Grinsell does not suggest that Jefferies was ever much of an archaeologist, or topographer, but that his descriptions of the Wilts and Berks borderland, of the White Horse and of Liddington, do reflect the character of the country as few other writings do.

Dec 1946, p.419: article entitled 'Sarsens', by H.C. Brentnall, F.C.A. In the first paragraph, Mr. Brentnall claims that 'So far as the general public is concerned, the Marlborough Downs are little known' (as compared with those nearer London). He goes on to say: 'Poets have trumpeted each several Sussex height, but our downs have had few skalds, and even Jefferies, when he wrote of his beloved Liddington, could never bring himself to write its name.'

P.468: An article in the Swindon *Evening Advertiser* for 10 October 1946, describes a pilgrimage by Mr. J.B. Jones to Richard Jefferies' various homes outside Wiltshire. 'It was an act of piety that few are likely to repeat, for the sprawl of modern building has often covered the trail. Most of the article is concerned with a place that Mr. Jones does not name, though we may guess he turned west not east to reach it. There he found indeed no memories of Jefferies' brief stay but the same atmosphere of slander, squabble and censoriousness which Jefferies had remarked sixty years before.'

June 1947, p.614. Entitled 'Vandalism at Liddington', this reads: 'The Swindon *Evening Advertiser* for 12 April 1947, reported that the memorial tablet to Richard Jefferies and Alfred Williams had been found in a hedge and rescued by the owner of the land. It then stated: 'The tablet was wrenched from the obelisk on Liddington Hill some time about 1945, when the vicinity was a closed military area. A photograph shows that the inscription is defaced by many bullet holes.'



Margaret Hunt found this in Vol. VIII of the *Book of Knowledge: an Encyclopaedia for Readers of all Ages*, edited by F.B. Wheeler (Hon. D. Litt., F.R. HIST.S) and published by the Amalgamated Press (not later than 1935) in a section entitled 'Fact Index and Study Outlines' sub-section for 'High School and After' students, under Books for the Nature Student, the following Richard Jefferies titles are recommended on p.4252:

After London – or Wild England
Bevis

The Life of the Fields
Red Deer

Wood Magic
Nature Near London
The Amateur Poacher

The Gamekeeper at Home
Field and Hedgerow

Jean Saunders came across a quote from Jefferies' article 'Birds' Nests' (*Field and Hedgerow*) in *The Bird-Lover's Bedside Book* edited by R.M. Lockley (London: The Country Book Club, 1960). Pp. 80-83 reproduce about three-quarters of the essay from the beginning: 'Perfectly lovely!' to 'The egg takes its chance, coloured or not.'

John Price reported mention of Jefferies in an article celebrating the centenary of Edward Thomas's death by Matthew Oates in *The Times*, 23 March 2017. The piece, headed 'Voices of the great nature poets are timeless' describes Thomas's prolific writing career and includes 'His 1909 biography of Richard Jefferies, the founder of nature writing, remains the definitive work.'

In an article (*Surrey Mirror*, 26 March 2017) about the crime-writer J.S. Fletcher (1863-1935), Mark Davidson informs us that: 'Fletcher wrote several novels of rural life in imitation of Richard Jefferies, beginning with *The Wonderful Wapentake* (1894).'

Alan Starr, a local historian, has written *Making History in Pevensey* (Pom Press, 2017. ISBN: 978-0957303027) that includes information about Jefferies visit to Pevensey Castle along with quotes on pp.33-35. The book describes how the movement of the coastline left the port stranded for hundreds of years. Then, in 1846, the railway arrived, and the sleepy old port and castle welcomed tourists. The town became a focus for cultural tourism. By the early twentieth century it had become an emblem of English history. Starr also mentions writers who were influenced by Jefferies.

In John Fowles' Journal for 28 May 1964 (aged 38 at the time) he wrote:

We didn't see another soul in this lost little bit of countryside: it was a Jefferies day, living with nature, and over everything the faint mysteriousness that inhabits rural England – as much today as it did a hundred years ago. The birds, the spiders, the flowers, the land, the silence, the thunder that lay in the West ... I wandered in these things. I want no other paradise.

The opening article, in a collection of essays, short stories and poems about nature, reproduces extracts from *The Story of My Heart*. Entitled *The Curlew: Dreaming the Wild* (Ceredigion: The Wild Wood Press, 2017, ISBN 978955018459) and edited by Dr. Lynn Parr, all the other contributors are alive and kicking – one as young as twelve. *The Curlew* is a quarterly book devoted to nature writing. Sales benefit conservation organisations, so contributors are not paid, yet it has attracted writers and illustrators from around the world – including some well-known names, such as the former National Poet of Wales, Gillian Clarke, and TV's 'Big Cat People', Jonathan and Angela Scott. The

current issue has excellent writing from India, USA, New Zealand, Ireland, Wales and England. The editor's decision to include Jefferies was taken because she 'was so moved by the strong feelings in *The Story of My Heart* that [she] wanted to use it to show today's writers what really good nature writing should be like (and very often isn't).'

Margaret Hunt reminded us of Helen Thomas's reminiscences in Part I of her autobiography: *As it Was*. In discussing her keenness for 'being without clothes, and moving about naked', Helen states that Edward 'and I read Richard Jefferies, and with delight I found the joy in one's body spoken of there as if it was right and good,' and recounts the summer evening walks when 'we had been talking of Richard Jefferies and his love for the human body. We had just read his essay, "Nature in the Louvre" and his description of the "Venus Accroupi" (sic) which he had admired so much'.

Janice Lingley's article, 'Bevis and Arthur Ransome's *Swallowdale*,' published in the Society's *Journal* in Summer 2012 (No. 23, pp. 17-25), attracted the attention of an American publisher, Layman Poupard, who asked permission to reprint it in their *Children's Literature Review*, published in association with Gale Cengage Learning. The article appears, in Volume 215 of the *Review*, March 2017, pp. 96-100, in a section devoted to Ransome. It was Janice's wish that the fee she was due to receive from Layman Poupard be donated to the Society, so that it might be used in memory of Mark Daniel, who so kindly provided expert help and advice concerning the topography of 'The Bevis Country' and the map of 'The New Sea', which accompanied the original article. A donation of £116 has been received by the Society and will be used to help maintain Jefferies' grave in Broadwater Cemetery, with an eye also to the Jefferies/Hudson Memorial Garden. The grave is now under the care of Michael Parrott, having been formerly tended by the late Mr. Mark Daniel. We are most grateful to Miss Lingley for the kind donation.

The Fireside, Pictorial Annual 1892 edited by the Rev. Charles Bullock B.D. (London: 'Home Words' Publishing Office, 7 Paternoster Square, E.C.) contains this on p.667:

THE PARENTS OF RICHARD JEFFERIES.

MISS MARGARET THOMAS, the sculptor of the Richard Jefferies bust in Salisbury Cathedral, says, when in Bath last year she paid a visit to the parents of Jefferies. 'I found his father a healthy, good-looking man of seventy-five years of age, the obvious prototype of the Farmer Iden of *Amaryllis*, and his mother a small woman of seventy-three, an invalid. They did not in the least desire to be brought into notice, and had not read many of their son's books. They were very far, indeed, from realising the extent of the fame he had achieved.' Mr. and Mrs. Jefferies 'talked freely about "Dick," saying he was for ever sitting in the window writing with a bit of pencil.'

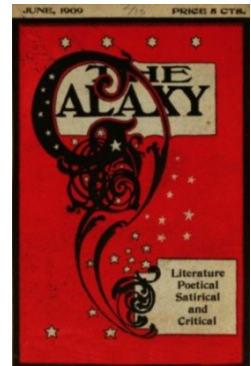
Margaret Gould provided a review of *The Autobiography of an English Gamekeeper* by John Wilkins of Stanstead (London: T. Fisher, Unwin, 1892). The article was published in *The Essex Review* (Vol. I, 1892, pp.251-3) and was particularly scathing about ‘this book [that] was compared with Richard Jefferies’ delightful *Gamekeeper at Home*. It is a work of a very different calibre. ... There is not the slightest touch of sympathy with, or appreciation of, the beauties of rural nature in the whole book.’

Roger Patrick submitted an article to *Shooting Times* magazine about the influence that Richard Jefferies and the author and illustrator ‘BB’ had on his childhood. It won the Readers’ Story competition, for which he received twelve bottles of beer! The article was published in the 24 May 2017 edition of the magazine and included images of the first edition covers of *Bevis* and *After London*.

Richard Jefferies is quoted in *As Kingfishers Catch Fire: Books & Birds* by Alex Preston and illustrated by Neil Gower (Corsair, 2017). In a review of the book in the *Evening Standard* (13 July 2017), this is included: “‘The lark and the light are one’ to Victorian nature writer Richard Jefferies.” [Quote from ‘Out of Doors in February,’ *The Open Air*.] The book documents Mr. Preston’s passion for bird-watching through literature and he quotes from many writers, including Richard Jefferies’ observations about ‘The Hovering of a Kestrel’.

Peter Robins came across *The Galaxy* – a monthly literary magazine published by the proprietor and editor Benj. A. Banks in Norfolk, Virginia, between 1907-13. It circulated in Virginia and other Southern states. In the twenty-one surviving issues, seven contributions by Richard Jefferies have been discovered. These are headed, ‘The Spell of the Sea’, ‘By-Ways of Immortality’, ‘The Fullness of Life’, ‘The Poet’s Dazzling Dream’ (June, 1909) and other uplifting titles. All texts had been extracted, without acknowledgement (or copyright clearance presumably) from *The Story of My Heart*. Other contributions to the magazine included Rudyard Kipling, Robert Burns, W.T. Stead, various items from *The Spectator* and submissions by local poets and authors. The June 1909 edition carried a quote from chapter VII of *The Story of My Heart* that included: ‘The song should never be silent, the dance never still, the laugh should sound like water which runs forever.’

Roger Ebbatson was the first to mention Richard Emeny’s *Edward Thomas: A Life in Pictures* (Enitharmon Press, 2017). This is the culmination of many years studying the poet’s life and work and draws also on Emeny’s (Chairman of the Edward Thomas Fellowship) extensive knowledge of Thomas’s family, friends, literary associates, publications and the places he either lived or visited. There



are multiple references to Richard Jefferies.

Some letters have come to light from Jessie Jefferies to the publisher Thomas Bird Mosher (Maine) that reveal that Jefferies had little knowledge of the extent to which his work was known in America during his lifetime. The letters will be published in the summer 2018 edition of the Society's *Journal*.

John Rudge made an interesting discovery about Samuel J. Looker (1888-1965) whilst investigating a hand-written poem that he found by Looker in a book of poetry entitled *Red Dawn* published in 1915 and written by the Glasgow Marxist Albert Young. The poem 'To Albert Young' appears on the verso of the book, signed by Samuel Looker and dated 24/12/15:

To Albert Young
O Rebel poet singing in the night
With scorn of bloated greed and iron might.
Hater of shams, prophet of high desire and noble purpose lit at Freedom's fire.
At last shall dawn the day whereof you dream.
A hideous nightmare shall the old time seem.
Brother and comrade, blithely to the fight.
First in the conflict, waiting for the light.

Mr. Rudge was curious about Looker's political allegiance; clearly left-wing as a young man. Looker was a Labour County Councillor in Staffordshire from 1949-54 and a member of the Fabian Society. In a letter to the *Chelmsford Chronicle* published on 7 April 1944 Looker declares 'I have no Socialist friends, and would describe myself, like my grandfather before me, Joseph Hinton, of Danbury, as an Independent Radical'. After a discovery that Looker had written *Songs of the Wayside: Poems by a Conscientious Objector* in 1916, Mr. Rudge found evidence that Looker was, indeed, registered as a conscientious objector in WWI.

Richard Jefferies and his works are referred to frequently in *Ecology and the Literature of the British Left: The Red and the Green* by H. Gustav Klaus, Valentine Cunningham (Routledge, 29 Apr 2016). Premised on the belief that a social and an ecological agenda are compatible, this collection offers readings in the ecology of left and radical writing from the Romantic period to the present. This from p.12: 'Can green and red be combined? One answer can be found in the work of Richard Jefferies and Thomas Hardy. In contrast to the more conservative vision of earlier writers like George Eliot, they present a radical view of the past and the role of the working class in the creation of the English landscape, and Rignall argues that this is combined with an ecological understanding of the natural world ...'

Andrew Rossabi reported that an excerpt from *The Amateur Poacher* featured in the programme of words and music on the theme of Arcadia, broadcast on Sunday, 16 July 2017 on BBC Radio 3. Jamie Glover read the penult-

imate paragraph, beginning ‘Let us be always out of doors among trees and grass...’

Valerie Haworth reports that the latest newsletter from the Edward Thomas Fellowship contains a reprint of the Edward Thomas’s article ‘In the footprints of Richard Jefferies’, originally printed in *The New Age*, April 1896. This is followed by an article by David Kerslake of the ETF entitled ‘Edward Thomas and Swindon’.

Eric Jones drew attention to J. Maynard’s *The Agricultural Labourer in Worcestershire: Responses to Economic Change and Social Dislocation 1790-1841*. PhD thesis, Coventry University in collaboration with the University of Worcester. In his introduction, Maynard cites Jefferies for his penetrating remarks on social science issues, referring to observations about methodology of oral history in ‘Three Centuries at Home’ (*The Old House at Coate*) as well as Jefferies’ romantic descriptions of the English countryside in ‘The Squire at Home’. The thesis can be read at <http://eprints.worc.ac.uk/365/>

Michael Parrott reported that there were 86 members of the public at the 5 August tour at Broadwater Cemetery, Worthing. He said that the only vandals had been the grass-cutting contractors who had taken out a couple of chips of marble from the kerb stone of Jefferies’ grave and also had damaged memorial trees with strimmers. The Friends of Broadwater Cemetery have lodged a complaint about the damage and this is being taken seriously by Adur and Worthing Council. The Society also wrote to the Council pointing out that Jefferies’ grave is a Grade II listed building and damage could be subject to prosecution.

A quote from Richard Jefferies’ *The Story of My Heart* (Ch. IV) headlines an article ‘Mythical creature with touch of romance,’ in the nature notebook of *The Times* (19 August 2017). Miriam Darlington writes: “How extraordinary, strange, and incomprehensible are the creatures captured out of the depths of the sea,” the writer Richard Jefferies exclaimed in 1883, meditating upon the community of fauna around our islands. “The distorted fishes; the ghastly cuttles; the hideous eel-like shapes . . . monstrous forms, to see which gives a shock to the brain.”

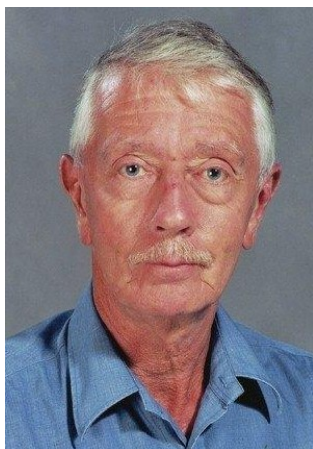
Angela Atkinson was quoted in the *Swindon Advertiser* on 31 August because ‘her third “hidden Swindon” recommendation is the Richard Jefferies Walk around Old Town. Jefferies was a Victorian nature writer who lived and worked in the Swindon area and the walk takes you to places that were part of his life.’ The walk is in a series of leaflets produced by the Richard Jefferies Society that can be downloaded from <http://richardjefferiessociety.co.uk/fiction.html>.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & BIRTHDAY LECTURE
SATURDAY 4th November 2017
VILLAGE HALL, CHURCH ROAD, LIDDINGTON, SN4 0HB

PROGRAMME

- 10.30 Doors open and refreshments.
- 11.00 AGM (Members only) – see Agenda page 40.
- 1.00 Lunch break. Bring a packed lunch. Local pub serves food but service can be very slow. The hall is next to Liddington Church with views across to Liddington Hill.
- 2.30 The Birthday Lecture
Speaker: Roger Ebbatson
Title: Seeking the Beyond: Materiality versus Spirituality in Jefferies & Hardy
- 4.00 Tea
- 4.30 Depart

Birthday Lecture



Roger Ebbatson, pictured left, writes: My talk will endeavour to offer a comparative juxtaposition of selected writings by Jefferies & Hardy dealing both with the social and agrarian issues experienced by the workfolk during the Great Depression and, in a countervailing movement, with the more inward personal experience of spiritual aspiration and an intuitive sense of 'the Beyond'. The focus will be on selected essays in *The Hills & the Vale*, set in comparison and contradistinction with Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Whilst Jefferies, in his final essays, moves away from social issues towards a more inward and transcendental mode of thought, in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in a countervailing movement the heroine's innate

spirituality is progressively negated and undermined by her life-experiences, her rape/seduction and subsequent marital abandonment leading her towards the culminating communal immiseration of the field-workers at Flintcomb-Ash, followed by her arrest at Stonehenge and subsequent execution. The social consciousness exhibited, for instance, in Jefferies' 'The Wiltshire Labourer' or 'After the County Franchise' is also powerfully articulated in the final tragic stages of Hardy's novel, both writers' diagnosis chiming with the Marxian

account of change in the Victorian countryside, whilst Jefferies' more mystical final phase, which is not echoed in Hardy, may be more productively framed by reference to the Heideggerian concept of 'the Open'.

Roger Ebbatson is Visiting Professor at Lancaster University, a Fellow of the English Association, and a Vice-President of the Tennyson Society. He has written extensively on Richard Jefferies, beginning with *Lawrence & the Nature Tradition* (1980), and subsequently in *An Imaginary England* (2005), *Heidegger's Bicycle* (2006), *Landscape & Literature* (2013), and most recently, *Landscapes of Eternal Return* (2016) that will be reviewed in the next *RJS Journal*.

DIRECTIONS TO LIDDINGTON VILLAGE HALL SN4 0HB (See map on next page)

Liddington Village Hall is located next to Liddington Church, Church Road, just off the main B4192 road from Commonhead Roundabout, at Swindon, via the Aldbourne road. There is ample parking space at the hall. The Village Inn (that serves food from 12am to 2pm – ☎ 01793 790314) is a short walk away, but service can be very slow and you might risk missing the start of the Birthday lecture.

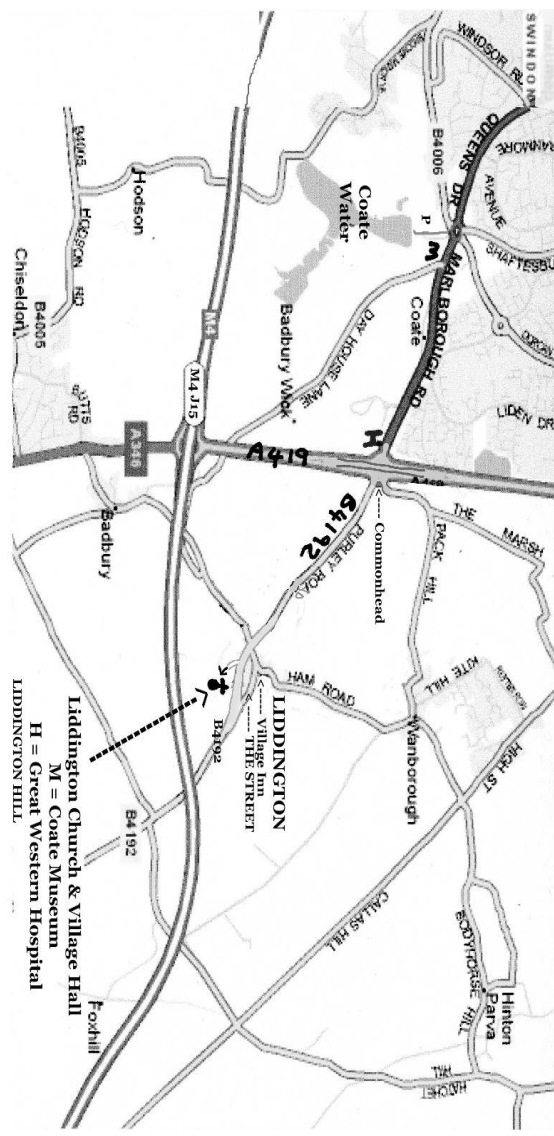
Liddington can be approached by road from the A419 trunk road and M4 motorway Junction 15. From the J15 roundabout, take the first exit north on the A419 next to the Great Western Hospital and turn right at Commonhead Roundabout taking the B4192 to Liddington. Proceed up the hill and, half-way up, there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

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

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

Return buses from Liddington to Swindon Bus Station:

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



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AGENDA

- 1 Chairman's introductory remarks.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of the last AGM, 5 Nov 2016 (see pp.41-44)
- 4 Matters Arising
 - Richard Jefferies Society & White Horse Bookshop
Literary Prize
 - Jefferies Land Fund: educational projects
 - Rossabi biography of Richard Jefferies
 - Richard Jefferies House & Museum at Coate
 - Broadwater Cemetery
- 5 Annual Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report (see pp.45-46)
- 7 Election of Examiner of Accounts: Rob Brailsford.
- 8 Elections to Executive Council.
 - Eric Jones is due to retire but is prepared to stand again for a
further three-year period.
 - Election of Treasurer for five-year term.
- 9 Motions, if any.
- 10 Any Other Business

A copy of the minutes of the 2016 AGM should be brought to the AGM.

Any motions or resolutions for debate should be sent to the Hon. Sec. before 25 October 2017, as should nominations for Executive Council members. Both should be proposed and seconded.

MINUTES for the Annual General Meeting of the Richard Jefferies Society held at the Village Hall, Liddington on Saturday 5 November 2016 at 11am

PRESENT: Margaret Bathe, Gillian Bromhead, Marie & David Chesham, Simon Coleman, Patrick Dillon, Malcolm Dixon, Roger Ebbatson, Margaret Hunt, Eric Jones, Sylvia & Ray Morse, Michael Parrott, John Price, Andrew Rossabi, Jean Saunders, Barry Sloan, Austin Sparks, and Rebecca Welshman.

1. THE CHAIR – John Price welcomed new faces to the meeting and announced that works on the railways had prevented some regulars from attending.
2. APOLOGIES – Pete Bainbridge, Peter Faulkner, George Miller, Brian Morris, Helen Newman, Duncan Pepper, Mike Pringle, Peter Robins, Tom Saunders, Richard Stewart, David Thackray and Phyllis Treitel sent their apologies.
3. MINUTES – The minutes of the last meeting held on 7 November 2015 were accepted as a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Dave Chesham, seconded by Michael Parrott and carried by Members.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 RJS & White Horse Bookshop Literary Prize – The Chairman briefly discussed the merits of the books on the long list of nominations as published on p.17 of the Annual Report. There had been one further nomination: *Ladders to Heaven* by Mike Shanahan, plus an e-book that was ruled out of the competition. At the AGM, Andrew Rossabi nominated *Six Facets of Light* by Ann Wroe (Jonathan Cape, April 2016) and this was endorsed by others. Mr. Price tabled copies of some of the books for the selection committee. Richard Stewart will issue the final short-list of three books after the end of the year deadline in time for the judges to make their final decision on 4 February 2017.

4.2 Jefferies Land Fund: educational projects – Eric Jones reported that there are three main contenders for the use of this fund: bursaries to assist post-graduate studies on a topic related to Jefferies; to employ an archivist to catalogue and digitise Jefferies' archives; and to assist the production of Jefferies' related publications. The third option has already been used and has generated income or benefits for the Society in their own right. The bursary option of, perhaps, allocating £5,000 a year was discussed. The main problems foreseen were assessing any benefit to the Society, and how research might be fed back. Rebecca Welshman also suggested that funds might be used to assist lecturers presenting papers on Jefferies and to enable them to attend conferences. Simon Coleman estimated that it would cost around £25,000 a year to employ an archivist, but grants are available for archiving work that might boost this option. The end result would be a huge asset to the Society and students. Austin

Sparks suggested another option: to create a wildlife habitat in Swindon, but this would require land and future maintenance.

The matter was given a thorough airing and the outcome of any decision is limited by the fact that there is only a small reserve available in the fund. It was hoped that the discussion might provide some guidance for the Executive Council to decide how to allocate funds.

4.3 Richard Jefferies House & Museum at Coate – John Price announced that now that the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust has been awarded a lease for the museum from Swindon Council, arrangements can proceed to transfer the Society's loan agreement for the Jefferies' museum collection to the Trust. There has been a considerable amount of activity: children's events, poetry courses etc, and there have been many improvements to the garden. However concern was raised about the state of the museum itself on visitor open days. Albeit that these are few and far between in the winter months, Society volunteers have found difficulties showing the public around the museum. Rooms have been in disarray or used for other events.

4.4 Broadwater Cemetery – Michael Parrott reported that he has been tackling the staining and calcium deposits on the cross and kerb stones of Jefferies' grave. He was instructed to use bleach to clean and the glitter is now returning to the marble.

The memorial garden has posed a few problems. The mulberry tree has borne a good crop of fruit but the ground is very dry. Mr. Parrott has attempted to break up the soil below the tree and apply a mulch. The Council's wildflower display was quite disappointing with only poppies blooming. It is hoped that something might be done to improve the Jefferies/Hudson memorial and make the water trough functional; it is invariably without water. There have been a few incidents of graffiti at the cemetery but Adur and Worthing Council is very successful at cleaning away all traces. The Friends of Broadwater are still keen to make the two chapels accessible. Even the Chairman, who is also a Councillor, has been unable to arrange access to the chapel with the Sussex Regiment stained glass window. In the South Chapel, they can make a cup of tea. The cemetery is well-visited and Mr. Parrott tabled a list of events that have taken place this year along with a 'Cemetery Trail' leaflet and guide that had been published using lottery funding.

Mr. Parrott was thanked for looking after Jefferies' grave.

5 ANNUAL REPORT – The content of the annual report was accepted as a true record of the Society's activities. Proposed by Rebecca Welshman; seconded by Patrick Dillon and carried by Members.

6 TREASURER'S REPORT – Pete Bainbridge had apologised that he was unable to get time off work to attend the AGM but was pleased to report that the Examiner of Accounts had studied the accounts. Rob Brailsford noted an anomaly in the financial statement on p.41 of the Annual Report. Under the 'Restricted and Designated Funds' allocations taken forward, £200 should be added to JLF (Jefferies Land Fund) – i.e. £20885 total – whilst £200 should be deducted from the reserves; i.e. £5626.48. There is also a typo in the final reserves column that should read £60,011.48. Other than that Mr. Brailsford signed off the accounts as being correct on 17 October 2016.

Jean Saunders is now authorised to view the Society's Lloyds bank statements online to enable her to check that book sales and memberships have been processed.

Michael Parrott proposed acceptance of the accounts with the relevant corrections, seconded by Ray Morse and carried by Members.

7 ELECTION OF EXAMINER OF ACCOUNTS – Rob Brailsford is willing to continue to offer his services. Jean Saunders proposed his re-election, seconded by Michael Parrott and carried by members along with our grateful thanks.

8 ELECTIONS TO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL – Simon Coleman, Roger Ebbatson and Rebecca Welshman were due to stand-down but prepared to serve another 3 year term of office. Barry Sloan had been nominated by the Executive Council.

Jean Saunders proposed and Ray Morse seconded that Simon Coleman, Roger Ebbatson and Rebecca Welshman should be re-elected to Council from 2016-2019. This was carried.

John Price proposed and Rebecca Welshman seconded that Barry Sloan should be elected to Council from 2016-2019. This was carried.

Mike Pringle had been duly nominated by Margaret Hunt and seconded by David Thackray to be elected to Council from 2016-2019. Members carried the nomination with a show of hands.

9 MOTIONS – The Exec. Council proposed that there should be a slight re-arrangement of the wording to the proposed motion published in the Annual Report. After agreeing the amendment, members voted on the following addition to the end of the first paragraph of Clause 8 of the Constitution:

The Society may elect up to four Honorary Vice Presidents, in recognition of their expertise and long-term service. These Honorary Vice Presidents shall hold office for life but not act as Trustees.

This addition was proposed by Andrew Rossabi; seconded by Michael Parrott and carried by members.

It was proposed by John Price and seconded by Jean Saunders that Sheila Povey and Ray Morse should be formally nominated as Honorary Vice Presidents to replace their current Vice Presidency positions. This was carried.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Programme for 2017

Study Day – June 24. Venue: Richard Jefferies Museum. Rebecca Welshman suggested that the theme should relate to other writers who had been influenced by Richard Jefferies. Members might discuss writers who had led them to Richard Jefferies. Rebecca agreed to lead and give the key talk.

Possible visit to Steep/Bedales to mark the Edward Thomas' Centenary in 2017. This idea was supported by members. Jean Saunders to contact the Edward Thomas Fellowship and the Friends of the Dymock Poets to find out if they were organising events that the Richard Jefferies Society might support (possibly around July 2017 if possible). John Price has details of a community minibus available to charities that comes with a driver.

Roger Ebbatson will give next year's Birthday Lecture. The provisional title is: 'Seeking the Beyond: Materiality/Spirituality in Jefferies & Hardy'.

10.2 Burderop Park development plans. Eric Jones related the result of another consultation event that he attended on 11 October held by City and Country. Essentially the proposal is to build 54 houses in the park (tasteful but expensive), besides converting the House into eight flats, preserving the woodland screen, keeping the former deer park as open space and keeping the walled garden for allotments. There will be some public access for pedestrians and some parking. None of this has been presented as a formal planning application yet.

10.3 The Biography. Andrew Rossabi updated members on the progress of Volume 1 of the Jefferies' biography. He is putting final touches to the last chapter on early mysticism, but the book will still need an Index. He hopes that it will be ready to print next year.

10.4 *The Farmer's World*. There was an excellent review of the book in the *TLS* that boosted book sales.

10.5 'Britain's Ancient Tracks'. Richard Jefferies featured in a TV programme broadcast on 22 October with Sir Tony Robinson as presenter. It covered the Middle Ridgeway. The broadcast lacked content; most disappointing given the volume of information given to researchers about the area by the Society and the authors of *The Middle Ridgeway*. The Jefferies' interest was somewhat saved by an interview with Rebecca Welshman in the garden at the Richard Jefferies Museum.

The Chairman thanked members for attending as well as members of the Executive Council for dealing with day-to-day Society affairs.

The business part of the AGM ended at 1.10pm.

Jean Saunders, Hon. Secretary, 8 November 2016

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT: 2016-7

Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2017

Receipts and Payments Account

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total 2017	Total 2016
<u>Receipts</u>					
<u>Subscriptions</u>	2286.81			2286.81	2020.32
<u>Donations:</u> <i>General</i>	1664.50		2500.00	4164.50	752.40
<u>Book Sales:</u> <i>Museum</i>				0.00	650.00
<i>Others</i>	518.34		176.00	694.34	722.35
<u>Gift Aid Reclaim</u>	627.31			627.31	590.41
<u>Interest received</u>	101.47			101.47	101.22
Total receipts	5198.43		2676.00	7874.43	4836.70
<u>Expenditure</u>					
<u>Publications</u>	1242.56			1242.56	1019.58
<u>Rent/Room Hire</u>	60.00			60.00	120.00
<u>Subscriptions paid</u>	64.50			64.50	62.50
<u>Lecture fees</u>	104.40			104.40	18.80
<u>Administration</u>	1961.49			1961.49	1585.41
<u>Books/ Archive</u>					
<u>Purchases</u>					20.00
<u>Insurance</u>	93.08			93.08	90.10
<u>Equipment etc</u>					182.81
<u>Webb Lit. Prize</u>		1005.50		1005.50	537.98
<u>Jefferies Land Fund (JLF)</u>			2187.29	2187.29	824.00
<u>Gifts: RJMT</u>	2250.00			2250.00	
Total payments	5776.03	1005.50	2187.29	8968.82	4461.18

Excess of receipts over payments **-1094.39**

Bank/B.Soc/Paypal/cash

as at 30 June 2017 58917.17

as at 1 July 2016 60011.56

Statement of Assets

			Biography	14470.00
			Webb Lit.	24024.50
			Journal	250.00
Cash				
funds:-	Bank	17954.67	JLF	9423.71
	Paypal	273.40	Bursary	2000.00
	B/Society	40,689.10		50168.21
		58917.17	General	3500.00
			Reserves	5248.96
				58917.17

Notes to the accounts

1. The JLF (Jefferies Land Fund) reserve is 'restricted' to ensure that any disposal is for educational use.
 - An annual allocation of up to £250 is allowed for research for the *RJS Journal*.
 - An annual allocation of up to £2000 is allowed for the Bursary.
 - The start-up fund of £2000, to assist the printing of *Middle Ridgeway*, was repaid in full into the Land Fund as a 'restricted donation'. The balances from sales of *The Farmer's World* were repaid into the Land Fund. The majority of books were distributed for educational purposes.
 - £9000 has been made available to the Biography Fund to cover production of all three volumes. Receipts arising from sales will be returned to the Land Fund. Please note that, in an act of extreme generosity, Andrew Rossabi has donated all his commission for writing the Jefferies' biography towards the production of the first volume. N.B. The original fee for the commission was not funded by the RJS but by three members.
2. There is a stock of publications worth around £1000 that are an asset of the Society but which do not appear in the Society's accounts.
3. The John Webb legacy is 'designated' for the annual RJS and White Horse Bookshop Literary Prize award. The White Horse Bookshop donated £500 for their share of the award and this is recorded in the 'restricted donations'.
4. General Reserves cover the essential running costs of the Society.
5. The residual Reserves are available for unexpected expenses, gifts etc.
 - The Richard Jefferies Museum Trust was awarded £2,250 to purchase a computer and upgrade the library in the former Parlour at the Coate museum. Half of this donation was provided by a Society member.
6. The Society has retained its annual membership to the Alliance of Literary Societies and to the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society.

Jean Saunders
Acting treasurer
9 August 2017

The Society's Executive Council has approved the acting Treasurer's Report. Rob Brailsford, Examiner of Accounts, has checked the accounts, confirmed that the accounts are correct and signed his report to that effect on 15 August 2017.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2017-2018

2017

Sat 4 Nov AGM and Birthday Lecture.
 Venue: Liddington Village Hall
 Time: 10.30am-4.30pm
 Birthday Lecture: Speaker – Roger Ebbatson.
 Title: ‘Seeking the Beyond: Materiality versus Spirituality in
 Jefferies & Hardy’
 Further information is detailed on p. 37ff.

2018

Sat 7 April Joint meeting with the Friends of Alfred Williams.
Venue: Richard Jefferies Museum, Marlborough Road, Coate,
Swindon SN3 6AA.
Time: 2.00-4.30pm

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

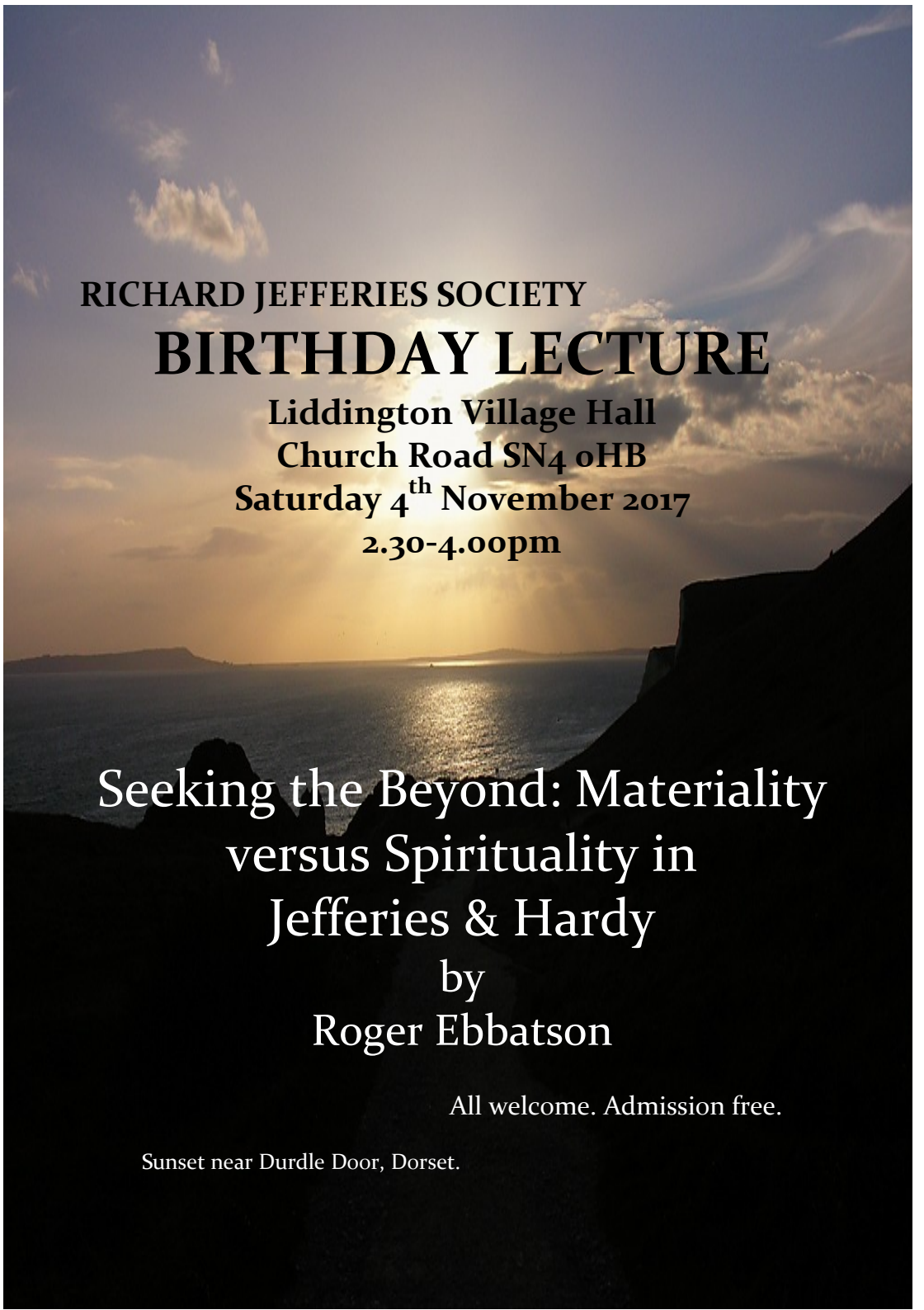
Sat 23 June A Study Day.
Venue: Richard Jefferies Museum
Time: 10.30am-4.30pm.
Theme: Samuel Looker and Richard Jefferies.
More information in the Spring 2018 newsletter.

Sat 27 Oct AGM and Birthday Lecture.
 Venue: Liddington Village Hall (to be confirmed)
 Time: 11.30am-4.30pm
 Birthday Lecture: Speaker – TBA
 Title – TBA
 More information in the Autumn 2018 newsletter

Meetings are open to the public and free to attend. See p.39 for map.

The Spring newsletter will be despatched in March 2018 and the Summer *Journal* in June 2018.

The Society's Executive Council will be meeting on 3 February, 2 June and 22 September 2018 at the Richard Jefferies Museum to discuss business matters.

A scenic photograph of a sunset over the sea, with cliffs in the foreground and a bright sun low on the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds, and the sun's reflection is visible on the water's surface. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY

BIRTHDAY LECTURE

Liddington Village Hall

Church Road SN4 6HB

Saturday 4th November 2017

2.30-4.00pm

**Seeking the Beyond: Materiality
versus Spirituality in
Jefferies & Hardy**

by

Roger Ebbatson

All welcome. Admission free.

Sunset near Durdle Door, Dorset.