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

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Suez-Cide!! or, How Miss Britannia bought a dirty puddle and lost her sugar-plums

Richard Jefferies

*Originally published in 1876 in pamphlet form by
John Snow & Co. of London.*

*‘Ex nihilo—nihil fit.’¹
The Nile? Nothing ever came of it.’
New Trans.*

Dedicated,
WITH MUCH RESPECT,
TO THOSE WHO HAVE PUT THEIR FOOT IN IT.

This is very cosy,’ said Mr. John Bull to himself on a dull November afternoon, as he sat by the fire in his arm-chair, with port wine and walnuts, playing with his toothpick, and dreaming over *The Times*. ‘This will be a Christmas of the merry old sort. My short-horns have all taken prizes. The harvest is over, thank heaven, and the men paid off, and even that agitator, William, has settled down to work, and uses his axe like a man. I’ll just take forty winks.’

But while he was adjusting a silk handkerchief as a soft pad for his bald head, Mrs. Bull flounced in with such a rustle of silk and satin as never was heard.

‘Lor’, John,’ said she, ‘you’re not going to sleep after dinner? ’Tis time you gave up all those vulgar ways. There’s our dear little Britannia—poor girl, she’s been kept penned up at home along with the cows and sheep, till she’s dying of *ennui*. Come, let’s take her out for a holiday.’

‘Very well,’ said John. ‘Go down to Brighton.’

‘Pshaw! That horrid common place. We ought to go up the Nile, John—all the aristocratic people do: and then think, our dear little girl can sketch the Sphinx and the Pyramids, and besides, it’s half way to meet our dear old Ned, who must be on his road home by this time.’

‘Oh, very good,’ said John, knowing very well it was no use arguing.

¹ *Ex nihilo—nihil fit* – translation: ‘nothing comes from nothing’ [Ed].

‘I don’t care —oh, no: anything for peace and quietness.’

So next day they went to Cairo by Cook’s excursion, taking with them Miss Britannia and Cousin Ben. For Miss Britannia cried till they took him, and declared she could not be happy without him. He was so clever at making paper boats and blew such charming soap bubbles, it was delightful to see them shining with prismatic colours in the sun.

They went into lodgings by the Pyramids,² and while the boat was getting ready John took his rod, and fished the *eau de Nil* for trout. But deuce a bite could he get—except a frog or two—and as he sat gazing disconsolately at the river, there strolled up a pleasant-looking and portly gentleman.

‘Why, John,’ said he, ‘I haven’t seen you since we left Eton! And how you have forgotten your geography, to be sure—*Ex nihilo nihil fit*, man; and how can you expect to get anything out of the Nile?’

‘What, is it *you*, Mark?’ said John. ‘Awfully glad to meet you: and how’s Mrs. Anthony?’

‘Hush!’ said the portly gentleman. ‘I’m not married, John—couldn’t afford that luxury—Augustus turned up so horridly rusty. However, I’ve got a very respectable housekeeper, and should be comfortable enough if it was not for her youngster—for she’s a widow. This Kid here—oh! he’s always in mischief.’

After this chance meeting they all spent a pleasant evening together, and the acquaintance increased mightily. Major Anthony’s housekeeper (he had been in the militia) pleased honest John and his wife particularly. There was a subdued air of quality about her as if she had seen better days. [The truth was, between you and me, this Mrs. Tolemy, for such was her name, had been an actress in her youth, and her stage title was Cleopatra. What handsome young widows mean by living with majors I can’t tell!]

‘Such an interesting person,’ said Mrs. Bull, as they drove home in the brougham, ‘and so well descended, though unfortunate. She comes of such blue blood. We ought to patronise such people!’

At Cairo all the world was staying, and Miss Britannia and Master Benny found plenty of playmates on the Sands. Amongst them were Miss Frances, and Master Fritz, and Mrs. Tolemy’s boy, the ‘Kid,’ and that tall overgrown Master Fez, who was weak in his ankles, and had to wear leg-irons. There was another bigger boy, whom they nick-

²A learned traveller gravely informs me that there are no lodgings near the Pyramids. He is mistaken—there are plenty of Arabs thereabouts, who will readily provide him with a sheik-down.

named Teazer, being unable to pronounce his proper name,³ and because he was so rough and rude, and was always pushing people about. Besides, he was so disgustingly dirty, and used to rub his nose with tallow candles, and then try to kiss Miss Frances!

This Miss Frances was something of a tom-boy, and was always quarrelling with Master Fritz, who one day gave her a black eye, so that she was ashamed to play on the sands with the rest. So she coaxed the Kid to stay at home and play with her in the major's garden. The Kid brought out a wooden spade, and they dug a large hole, and got jolly dirty. Next morning this hole was full of water, and made as nice a puddle as any one could wish to see.

'Isn't it beautiful?' cried Frances, and she tore off her shoes and stockings, and began paddling about in it. Then the Kid took off his, and presently Fritz and Teazer splashed in also—all except Master Fez, who was delicate, and afraid of catching cold. Very soon they stirred up the mud in a way that would have done your heart good to see.

But Miss Britannia, who had been brought up respectably, tossed her head at this fun, and stayed indoors all the week with Cousin Benny, who blew the most wonderful bubbles to amuse her. Mrs. Bull was so pleased because she stopped indoors and did not tear her frock, that she gave her a lovely new shining fourpenny-piece, *ust [sic]* fresh from the Mint, to put in her Money-Box against her birthday.

Everybody, however, knows how stupid it is to stay always indoors, and when Britannia looked out of window, and saw all the boys and girls splashing each other, she grew so jealous and fidgetty that Ben could not amuse her any longer, and she slapped his face when he asked her to play at being married for ever.

Now Benny was a precocious young rascal, and, says he, 'Britt, dear, will you kiss and hug me if I get you that puddle all to yourself?'

'Yes, that I will, you darling old Benny, and you shall have half my sugar-plums—and oh! I don't know what you shan't have!'

'Very well,' said Ben. 'You must give me that fourpenny-bit—you haven't put it in the Money-Box, have you?'

'No,' said Britt. 'Tis so pretty to look at, I couldn't put it in. Here; take it. But is it right—what will mamma say?'

'Oh, never mind that—stuff and nonsense,' cried Ben. 'All's fair-oh! in Egypt, my dear,—you shall have the puddle tomorrow morning.'

'You're sure you'll be able to buy it,' said Britt, looking wistfully after the fourpenny-piece, 'you're quite sure?'

³ The Tsar, or Czar.

'Trust me,' said Ben. 'Why, my old uncle Moses drove such a hard bargain with a firm here once that 'twill never be forgotten—I feel quite at home.'

And off he ran with the money. Ben knew that the Kid was awfully fond of playing at marbles in the most extravagant way, and had just lost ten alleys and five tors, and hadn't a halfpenny to buy some more: so he beckons slyly to him through the garden-gate, and the Kid, guessing something was up, slips quietly away from the rest.

'Look here,' said Ben. 'I'll give you a fourpenny-bit if you'll sell Britannia the puddle all for herself. You can easily lock the gate inside, and let no one in but Britt to-morrow.'

'All right,' said the Kid.

So next morning, when Teazer, and Fritz, and all the rest came knocking and hammering, he kept quite still out of sight, and pretended not to hear them, till at last they went away.

'Now, Britt,' cried Ben. 'Now's your time. Take your paper boats and sugar-plums, and slip in quick.'

Miss Britannia stole down into the garden with a lapful of paper-boats, and her nursemaid, a black girl from India, came after, with a bag of bonbons and the kitchen-bellows. Britannia squatted down at one end of the puddle, and the nursemaid at the other. Then the nurse-girl launched the paper-boats, and filled them with bonbons, and blew them along with the bellows to Miss Britannia, who took out the cargoes, and ate them as fast as they came.

'Isn't it jolly?' says Britt. 'And we're quite safe. There's such a high wall all round, nobody can see. Blow away, and send me a bigger one next time.'

Meantime, the Kid looked at the fourpenny-bit, and turned it over, for it was more money than he had ever had in his life before, and he did not know how to make the most of it. At last he bought a couple of twopenny cigars, and was sneaking off to smoke them by himself, when up ran Benny, who had watched him.

'Not so fast, my Kid,' said he. 'If you don't give me one I'll tell the Major, and you'll catch it.'

The Kid was obliged to give him one, and they got under the garden wall outside, round the corner, and sat down and puffed away merrily. While they were all so happy and enjoying themselves, back came Teazer, and all the rest to see if the garden-gate was open yet.

'Where's the Kid?' shouted Teazer. At which the Kid and Ben shrunk closer under the wall, and grinned at each other.

'Give me a leg-up, Fritz,' said Teazer. 'I'll see what they're at. There, that will do. If there isn't that selfish minx Britannia swimming paper-

boats in our puddle!’

‘Punch her head,’ said Fritz.

‘Push her in the water,’ said tom-boy Frances. .

‘Here goes,’ said Teazer, and he dropped over the wall, and opened the gate from inside. ‘Wait a minute, you there—keep still, and I’ll serve her out.’

So they waited and peeped.

Master Teazer stole along on tiptoe so quietly, and crept in and out behind the trees so cleverly that no one heard him coming. He got up behind the black nurse-girl just as she was giving a puff with the bellows, and gave her such a dig in the ribs! She screamed out, and puffed so hard that all the paper-boats turned over and sank, sugar-plums and all.

‘Oh, you nasty, *nasty* boy,’ shrieked Britannia. ‘It’s my puddle, and I will have it!’

In rushed all the others, and there was a scramble for the bonbons in the bag which the black nurse-girl had dropped. While they were struggling, Teazer, who had a grudge against poor Master Fez, tripped him up, and stole his top, and there was such a hubbub.

‘Oh, dear, oh, dear, you’ve torn my frock!’ cried Britt. ‘Oh, my poor boats,’ and down she went on her knees, and tucked up her sleeve to fish them out. Just at this moment honest old John, who had come to pay the Major a visit, looked out of window on the garden and saw, as he thought, Britannia about to take a ‘header’ and dive into the water.

‘Good heavens!’ cries John. ‘There’s Britt going to commit suez-cide.’

He dashed across the garden, swept away Teazer, Fritz, and the rest with the swing of his coat-tails, and dragged Britannia up by her skirt.

‘Oh, papa, papa!’ burst out Britt, crying and sobbing, and at last made him promise not to tell Mrs. Bull about it.

Kind-hearted John smuggled her home, and got her dress changed on the quiet. But next day was Britannia’s birthday, and Mrs. Bull opened the Money-Box.

‘Where’s the fourpenny-piece, Miss?’ said she.

‘It was all that hateful Benny,’ cried Britannia. ‘He got it and gave it to the Kid, and my frock’s torn, and—oh!—oh! dear!’

‘Did he? I’ll trounce him. Benjamin, sir! Come here, sir!’

Poor Ben had to come, looking very pale and seedy, for the cigar had disagreed with him.

‘Take that, sir! and that, sir!—oh, you naughty, naughty boy. Go to bed this minute, sir.’

Ben stamped up the staircase and met Mr. Bull.

‘Why are you wroth, child?’ said he.

‘Cause it’s beyond Baring,’ said Ben. ‘Send me up my night-cap, governor.’

Cheeky urchin!

‘I think,’ said Mr. Bull to the Major, ‘we’d better get rid of that puddle.’

So the Major sent for the sand-boy and had a donkey-load emptied in it: and the upshot was that Mr. Bull had to buy Miss Britt a new frock as usual.

POSTSCRIPT.—Since the above history was written there has been some fear lest this little game of pyramids should be lost, there being symptoms that the scheme had Cave-d in. However, we can always console ourselves with the reflection that we are authoritatively assured there is corn in Egypt!

The author desired to bring out a commentary, explaining the source of the Nile and everything else, but has been reduced to beggary by putting his trust in Turkish *securities*.

Introduction to ‘The Goose-Girl’

Andrew Rossabi

In the last chapter of the second volume of *Restless Human Hearts*¹ Richard Jefferies refers to a poem about a little goose-girl. The passage forms one of the many digressions in the novel, although digression is perhaps not the right word because such authorial asides contain some of the liveliest and most interesting writing. Certainly they are closer in spirit and content to the mature Jefferies than the yellowback story onto which they are awkwardly pegged.

Jefferies says a poem once appeared in a magazine, ‘a piece of the truest poetry with the saddest meaning that was ever written by human pen’. Nevertheless it went unnoticed by the reviews and ‘fell into total oblivion’.² Jefferies identifies neither poem nor author, but it was ‘The Goose-Girl. A Tale of the Year 1999’³ by Eliza Harriett Keary (1827-1918), a Yorkshire poet and children’s writer whose work in recent years has received ‘increasing critical attention from feminist scholars and cultural historians’.⁴

The poem, a dystopian fable set in a future society run on strictly utilitarian lines, fully deserves Jefferies’ plaudits. It tells how a little girl who minds the geese on a common is singing happily as she walks along the road one fine May morning in the year 1999. She comes to a school where the children are busy studying. ‘Horribly scandalised’, they cluster round the goose-girl, wanting her

to learn too, to read and write and pore, as they did, from morn till night,
through spring and summer, autumn and winter, till the face grew pallid
and the shoulders stooped.⁵

The goose-girl doesn’t understand them. She lives in the sunshine, watches the clouds in the sky, listens to the birds singing, and sings herself always. When told this is very wrong, she must work and learn like everybody else, the goose-girl will have none of it. ‘The mills of the

¹ *Restless Human Hearts* (Longcot: Petton Books, 2008; hereafter abbreviated to *RHH*), pp.291-4.

² *RHH*, p.291.

³ Published in the collection *Little Seal-Skin and Other Poems* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1874), accessible online from Indiana University Victorian Women Writers Project, where the year in both title and poem has been changed to 2099 to preserve the future setting.

⁴ Jodi Lustig, article on Eliza Keary in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (OUP, 2004; online edition, May 2006).

⁵ *RHH*, *ibid*.

gods grind slowly,/ But they grind exceedingly small,' she replies. Life is not in books or figures, not spent on a slate, life is in the sun and sky, in the wind and the wood. So the goose-girl pays no heed to the teachers and children, goes away into the sunshine and leaves them to it.

Jefferies says he found 'a deep and sad significance' in the poem and thought the little goose-girl 'wiser far' than the teachers and the schoolchildren. He comments:

We have become so imbued with pen, ink, and paper—we have grown up among figures and calculations, among learning and teaching, till it has become to us a second nature, and we exclaim at the bare idea of the little goose-girl, 'What shocking ignorance!' But think a while, in what does this knowledge consist—this arithmetic for instance, these rows upon rows of figures, which the little goose-girl saw them adding up with such feverish anxiety. This arithmetic—add up ten thousand times ten thousand slates and copybooks, work up forty million sums absolutely correctly—have you *lived* that time you were thus employed? Would not the sunshine, and the air, and the forest, and the clouds in the sky have benefited you more, had you spent the time among them, learning, as the little goose-girl did, that the 'mills of the gods grind slowly', than all this purely artificial labour? Ay, but it must be done; we cannot live without it; we *must* learn and teach, these figures are essential to our modern life. Granted that that is true, and is not this the saddest part of it all, that we cannot all dwell in the sun and the sky—that these artificial labours, these miserable, petty, *unreal* works should be necessary to our existence? I once knew a gentleman, a man of business, who declared and firmly believed that figures were everything; you could do nothing without them, and everything resolved itself into figures; and he meant account-book figures—ledger and day-book marks, literally 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and so on. Poor fellow, what an utter blindness must have possessed him! He forgot that man had a *soul*. Now the little goose-girl was nearer the God of the soul than all the teachers and school-children ever would be. All these vast towns of our day, these millions upon millions of houses, full of millions upon millions of people—these whole provinces built over—what are they but great schoolhouses, in which the men of money, the capitalists (I mean no reflection upon them) are as the teachers in the school, and the workers as the scholars—all of these capitalists and workers hard at it, poring, poring, poring for ever; with their eyes shut to the sun and the sky, and for ever cast upon the wretched earth, with its mud and moisture, its coal-dust and smoke. All arithmetic and no God! The little goose-girl upon her common, with the cackle of her geese coming down upon the breeze, with the light of heaven upon her open brow, with the song on her lips, was happier and far nearer the ultimate search of all men than the whole of these.

But we cannot all be little goose-girls, and there is the sadness of it. We bless the railways, and the manufactories, and the coal, and the iron,

and the cotton; and yet sometimes are we not tempted to think that the men who invented these things cursed their race more than the fatal crime of Adam did? For they have caused the enormous population of our time. There are millions upon millions of human beings, each with a brain, a heart, and a soul; and yet not one in ten thousand has ever the chance to commune with Nature, to walk reverently in the temples she has built, and to know the mysterious awe which falls upon the mind in the near presence of its Creator. I know not what will be the end of it; all I know is that nothing but evil and disaster can ultimately result from it.⁶

*

The passage makes a powerful protest against what Jefferies and many other Victorian writers saw as the increasingly materialist character of their age, blind to anything but number-crunching and the making of money. A nose-to-the-grindstone work ethic was allied to a Gradgrind system of education.

Jefferies sees the school in the poem as a microcosm of society. He paints a vivid picture of the soullessness of modern life—the monstrous machine man has created, its workings ever more complex in order to keep the gargantuan edifice afloat—a world dependent (in Jefferies' day at least) on the production of increasing quantities of coal, iron and cotton. In his critique of the capitalist system he significantly stops short of attacking the capitalists themselves ('I mean no reflection upon them'). He admits the necessity of the system ('we cannot live without it'), acknowledges that we cannot all dwell in sun and sky, but wonders if the men who invented the railways, factories and mines did not curse the human race more than Adam by his sin.

The reader is naturally curious about the identity of the 'man of business' who saw the world entirely in terms of figures, who reduced everything to the ledger-book, to a profit and loss account. Could it have been Jefferies' Uncle William [Hall], chief accountant in the locomotive department of the GWR works at Swindon? According to Hall's son Joseph, the young Jefferies was, much to his annoyance, repeatedly being urged by his Aunt Eliza [Sewell] to 'throw aside "all such nonsense"' [as the writing of novels] and to 'accept the stool' [i.e. clerical post] his Uncle William would surely find him, 'if appealed to,' in the office of which he was head.⁷

⁶ *RHH*, pp.292-3.

⁷ Joseph Hall, 'A Personal Reminiscence of Richard Jefferies,' *Country Life*, vol. 26, 18 December 1909, p.871.

In spite of the animus Jefferies expresses elsewhere against ‘agitators of Communistic views’⁸ his diagnosis has a faintly Marxist tinge, though there is no evidence he ever read *Das Kapital* or was familiar with Marxist thought. In the next paragraph he says that upper-class Society ‘thinks it leads and lays down a model for the people to copy,’ but is in reality merely ‘the elastic representative, the outcome of the populace, or rather the logos of the multitudes’⁹—in other words Society is the spume thrown up by the waves of the system, by the economic infrastructure. It reflects in extreme form the alienation born of capitalism.

Society is bored, restless, riddled with ennui, and runs from one diversion and distraction to the next. Jefferies winds up by saying ‘it is no one’s fault; we did not make the circumstances, we cannot alter them.’¹⁰ In short we are paying for the sins of our ancestors, and piling our own on top of them.

The goose-girl episode is important because like several other passages in *Restless Human Hearts* it shows a real and profound feeling for nature emerging for the first time in some fullness in Jefferies’ work. The poem clearly spoke to a feeling deep in him, a sense of rebellion against the work ethic, coupled with a desire to return to nature as the source. Phrases such as ‘the sweet idleness’ of ‘drinking wind-wine,/Or looking up into the blue heaven’ must have awoken in him a ready response. The man who later said he wanted to know ‘the soul of the [wild] flowers’, their ‘inner meaning’,¹¹ would have found it easy to empathize with one who ‘laid her heart low in the hearts of the flowers’. The parable has added force by coming in the final chapter of the volume.

Jefferies goes on to say that Neville (a thinly-disguised self-portrait) had lived almost the life of the little goose-girl; he had dwelt in the sunlight, lain upon the grass, *inhaled* through every pore of his body the influence of Nature. He had been happy in this.¹²

The romantic poets, following the lead of Wordsworth, experienced in solitary communion with Nature ‘the mysterious awe which falls upon the mind in the near presence of its Creator’.¹³ Nature became

⁸ *The Gamekeeper at Home*, The World’s Classics edition (OUP, 1948), p.54.

⁹ *RHH*, p.294.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ ‘Nature and Books,’ *Field and Hedgerow*, Being the Last Essays of Richard Jefferies, Collected by His Widow [1889] (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1895), p.30.

¹² *RHH*, *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*

the new religion of the Victorian age,¹⁴ and Jefferies was one of its most eloquent prophets or priests. In Edward Thomas's words, 'he unsealed a new fountain of religious joy'.¹⁵

The goose-girl parable relates to Henry LeStrange's discourse earlier in the novel on the neglect of the education of the soul, as opposed to that of the intellect.¹⁶ It looks forward to the grasshopper warning Sir Bevis in *Wood Magic* against following the example of the ants who work hard all their lives but 'never see anything beautiful,' whereas the grasshopper wanders about 'laughing and singing'; to *Bevis* and its message of the unconscious teaching to be imbibed in the open air, in the company of nature; to *The Story of My Heart* and to essays such as 'The Pigeons at the British Museum' on the limitations, indeed futility, of book-learning; and to the passage in *The Dewy Morn* on the education of children and Jefferies' injunction to give them the freedom of the meadows if you want their highest education, that of the heart and soul, to be completed ('they will forget their books—they will never forget the grassy fields'¹⁷). It carries echoes of the Fall ('in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread')¹⁸ and of the mythical Golden Age, when man lived in harmony with nature whose blessings fell on him without need of toil.

¹⁴ On the sense of alienation from nature and the determined attempt of the romantic poets and their successors in the novel to restore the vital connection between man and the circumambient universe, see Roger Ebbatson, *Lawrence and the Nature Tradition, A Theme in English Fiction 1859-1914* (Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd., 1980). Ebbatson's book focuses on the novels of D.H. Lawrence and *The White Peacock* in particular, but includes a chapter on Richard Jefferies among other writers (George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, W. Hale White ('Mark Rutherford'), and E.M. Forster).

¹⁵ Edward Thomas, *Richard Jefferies*, With an Introduction and Bibliography by Roland Gant [1909] (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), p.294.

¹⁶ *RHH*, pp.253-6.

¹⁷ *The Dewy Morn* [1884] (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1900), p.148.

¹⁸ *Genesis*, 3:19.

The Goose-Girl A Tale of the Year 1999

Eliza Keary

The little goose-girl came singing
Along the fields, 'Sweet May, Oh! the long sweet day.'
That was her song.
Bringing about her, floating about, in and out through the long
Fair tresses of her hair,
Oh! a thousand, thousand idlenesses,
Spreading away on May's breath everywhere.
'Idleness, sweet idleness.'

But this was a time,
Nineteen hundred and ninety-nine,
When singing of idleness even in spring,
Or drinking wind-wine,
Or looking up into the blue heaven, was counted a crime.
A time harsh not sublime;
One terrible sort of school-hour all the year through,

When every one had to do something, and do it by rule.
Why, even the babies could calculate
Two and two at the least, mentally, without a slate,
Each calling itself an aggregate
Of molecules.

It was always school, schools all over
The world as far as the sky could cover
It, dry land and sea.
High priests said,
'Let matter be Z,
Thoroughly calculated and tried,
To work our problems with, before all eyes;
Anything beside that might prove a dangerous guide,
Xs or Ys, unknown quantities,
We hesitate not at once to designate
Fit only now and for ever to be laid aside.'
So you see,
Everything was made as plain as could be,

Not the ghost of a doubt even left to roam about free;
Everybody's concern
Being just to learn, learn, learn—
In one way—but only in one way.
Where then did the little goose-girl come from that day?
I don't know.

Though, isn't there hard by
A place tender and sunny,
We can feel slid between
Our seen and unseen,
And whose shadows we trace on the earth's face
Now and then dimly? Well, she
Was as ignorant as she could ignorant be,
And the world wasn't school to her
Who came singing,
'Idleness, sweet idleness,' up to the very feet
Of the professors' chairs,
And of the thousand thousand pupils sitting round upon theirs.
Who all up sprung,
At the sound of the words she sang,
With 'No, no, no, no; no,
There are no sweets in May,
None in the weary day.
What foolish thing is this, singing of idleness in spring?'

'Oh! sunny spring,'
Still sang the little goose-girl, wondering
As she was passing.
But suddenly stayed for a moment, basking
In the broad light, with wide eyes asking,
What 'nay' could mean to the soft, warm day?
And as she stayed,

There strayed out from her
May breaths, wandering all the school over.
But now the hard eyes move her,
And her lips quiver,
As the sweet notes shiver
Between them, and die.
So her singing ceases: she
Looking up crying, 'Why,

Is my May not sweet?
Is the wide sky fair?
Are the free winds fleet?
Are the feet of the spring not rare,
That tread flowers out of the soil?
Oh! long hours not for toil,
But for wondering and singing.'

'No, no, no, no,' these reply,
'Silly fancies of flowers and skies;
All these things we know,
There is nothing to wonder at, sing,
Love or fear.
Is not everything simple and clear,
And common, and near us, and weary?
So, pass by idle dreaming,
And you if you would like to know
Being from seeming,
Come into the schools and study.'

'Still to sing sometimes when I have the will,
And be idle and ponder,'
Said the goose-girl, 'and look up to heaven and wonder.'
'What! squander truth's time
In dreams of the unknown sublime?
No.' 'Then ignorant always,' said she,
'I must be;' and went on her way,
'Sweet May, sad May.'
Hanging her head,
Till 'The mills of the gods grind slowly,' she said,
'But they grind exceeding small;
Let be, I will sit by the mills of the gods and watch the slow atoms fall.'
So patient and still, through long, patient hours,
As she laid her heart low in the hearts of the flowers;
Through clouds and through shine,
With smiles and with tears,
Through long hours, through sweet years,
O years—for a year was only one school-hour in
Nineteen hundred and ninety-nine.

And see,
Who are these that come creeping

Out from the school? Long ago,
When idlenesses out of her tresses strayed the school over.

Some slept of the learners, some played.
These crept out to wonder and sing,
And look for her yonder,
Away up the hills amongst the gods' mills—
And now
'Is it this way?' they say,
Bowing low;
'O wise, by the heaven in thine eyes,
Teach, we will learn of thee.
Is it No, is it Yes,
Labour or idleness?'
She, answering meekly, 'This—
Neither No, nor Yes,
But, come into God and see.'

O the deeps we can feel; O the heights we must climb;
O slow gentle hours of the golden time—
Here, the end of my rhyme.

*

Eliza Keary wrote the poem for the 'Pen and Pencil Club' who met at Aubrey House owned by Peter and Clementia Taylor on Campden Hill, Holland Park. The house, seventeenth-century at core but remodelled in the mid-eighteenth, was for long known as Notting Hill House. By the 1860s it was named Aubrey House after Aubrey de Vere who held the manor of Kensington at the time of the Domesday Book.

Peter Alfred Taylor, Liberal MP for Leicester, was a champion of radical causes, and his wife Clementia a philanthropist and campaigner for women's rights. The Taylors opened the Aubrey Institute in the grounds of Aubrey House to give young people the chance to improve their education: the lending library and reading room had over 500 books. Clementia organised the 'Pen and Pencil Club' where the work of young writers and artists was read and exhibited. Members of the 'Pen and Pencil Club' included the diarist Arthur Munby and the feminists Barbara Bodichon, Lydia Becker, Elizabeth Blackwell, and Elizabeth Malleson.

Barbara Bodichon was a friend of William Allingham, the Irish poet (best-known for 'The Fairies'), husband of the country cottage watercolour artist Helen Allingham (*née* Paterson), and editor (from 1874) of *Fraser's Magazine*, to which Jefferies made several notable contributions in the mid-1870s. At the time of Jefferies' death in 1887 Allingham wrote in his diary:

Richard Jefferies (August)—I never saw him, but had much correspondence with him (then quite unknown) when I edited *Fraser*. I put in various pieces of his, as good as anything he afterwards wrote, but no one took any notice; save indeed that Barbara L.S.B. [Barbara Bodichon] was struck with the truth of his picture or photograph of women in the farming classes [i.e. in 'Field-Faring Women', first published in *Fraser's* in September 1875 and later collected in *The Toilers of the Field*¹⁹].

The passage was cited by Stan Hickerton in the Society's *Autumn Newsletter 2008* (p.15) and by Kedrun Laurie in 'Who Read Richard Jefferies? The evidence of the North fund subscription list' in *The Richard Jefferies Society Journal 18 (2009)*, p.22.

Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-1894) was a leading nineteenth-century feminist and campaigner for women's rights. A friend of George Eliot, who reputedly used her as the model of *Romola*, she was one of the co-founders of Girton College, Cambridge. After studying under William Holman Hunt she became a talented watercolour artist whose landscapes were exhibited at the Paris Salon, where they were admired by Corot and Daubigny, and at the Royal Academy in London. One of her paintings was entitled 'Sisters Working in Our Fields'. Born illegitimate, she married the eminent French doctor Eugène Bodichon.

¹⁹ *William Allingham, A Diary*, Edited by H. Allingham and D. Radford (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1907), p.370.

‘Jefferies Land’ and Kipling’s *Puck of Pook’s Hill* Stories (Part 1)

Janice Lingley

This article is in two parts: the first reviews those aspects of Rudyard Kipling’s own life that may have disposed him to take a particular interest in Jefferies’ writings. The second part will be published in the next Journal and will examine in detail the influence of both Jefferies’ non-fiction and fiction on the formulation of Kipling’s Puck of Pook’s Hill stories.

Kipling and Bateman’s

Introduction: Kipling and Besant

Kipling’s metamorphosis from a young journalist in Anglo-India – working initially on the *Civil and Military Gazette* in Lahore and subsequently on the *Allahabad Pioneer* – into an English country gentleman and a world-famous author had its origins in a pivotal moment in 1886, when the twenty-one year old Kipling realised that he could no longer tolerate the oppressive heat of the Indian climate. In his autobiographical *Something of Myself, For My Friends Known and Unknown*, published posthumously in 1937, he tells us he returned home one evening feeling that he had come ‘to the edge of all endurance’ and that ‘there was no more in me except the horror of a great darkness’. By chance he happened to pick up a novel by Walter Besant entitled *All in a Garden Fair*, featuring a young man who wished to become a writer. Besant’s book was his ‘salvation in sore personal need’ and subsequent re-readings were to him ‘a revelation, a hope and strength’.¹ Sustained by the dream of a literary future, Kipling persevered and eventually returned to the country of his birth and upbringing, with the intention of developing his writing career in the capital of Empire. He arrived in London in 1889, the year following the publication of Besant’s *The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*.²

Kipling met the well-known philanthropist, novelist and founder of the Society of Authors at the Savile Club in Piccadilly, and Besant became the young and inexperienced writer’s friend and mentor. Besant recommended his own literary agent, A.P. Watt & Son, who was to serve Kipling well for more than forty years. ‘Nor,’ says Kipling, on the subject of London’s literary society, ‘did his goodness halt

¹ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself, For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan, 1937).

² Walter Besant, *The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1888).

there. He would sit behind his big frosted beard and twinkling spectacles, and deal me out wisdom concerning this new incomprehensible world.³

Readers of the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal* have the benefit of an excellent article by Andrew Rossabi, profiling Jefferies' first biographer.⁴ Even before Jefferies' widow tentatively wrote to this distinguished man asking him to write a brief account of her late husband's life, Besant had long been a great admirer of Jefferies' writings, having first come across his work in 1876. In the *Eulogy* he wrote:

I remember the delight with which I drank, as a bright and refreshing draught from a clear spring-head, the story of the country life as set forth by him, this writer, the like of whom I had never before read. Why, we must have been blind all our lives; here were the most wonderful things possible going on under our very noses, but we saw them not.

Besant also had the opportunity of conversing about Jefferies with a member of his family, the printer Robert Billing, the husband of Jefferies' sister Sarah, whom he met in the course of business:

Henceforth, therefore, week by week, I followed the fortunes of this man, and read not only his books and his papers, but learned his personal history, and heard what he was doing, and watched him curiously, unknown and unsuspected by himself.⁵

Kipling had formed the habit of prodigious and eclectic reading from the canon of English literature during his schooling at the United Services College in Westward Ho!⁶ The adult writer took a keen professional interest in the work of his contemporaries. Even if he was not already aware of Jefferies' writings, which seems unlikely, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Besant discussed his enthusiasm for Jefferies with his protégé. Another likely source of recommendation is the writer H. Rider Haggard, whom Kipling was also fortunate to meet when he first came to London. The two men became close friends. Haggard was not only a best-selling novelist; he was also, as the squire of a large estate in Norfolk, an expert on farming. His book *A Farmer's Year*, published in 1899, is a classic of traditional English farming. He deplored the decline in the nation's agriculture and campaigned vigorously for its reform. Haggard was a great admirer of Jefferies and

³ Kipling, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84; see also pp. 210-211.

⁴ Andrew Rossabi, 'His First Biographer: a Profile of Sir Walter Besant', *RJSJ* 20 (2011), pp. 26-39; supplemented by a further article, 'Jefferies Praises Besant', *RJSJ* 26 (2014), pp. 30-33.

⁵ Besant, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-168; Rossabi (2011), *op. cit.*, p.27

⁶ Charles Allen, *Kipling Sahib: India and the Making of Rudyard Kipling*, (London: Abacus, 2008; first published 2007), pp. 96-98.

a member of the Kinglake Committee for the Salisbury bust.⁷

‘A Good and Peaceful Place’

It was not until some years later, in the summer of 1902, that Rudyard Kipling, accompanied by his wife Carrie, travelled by train to a little country station in the heart of East Sussex and then through the rural lanes in a hired fly, to view again a property they had first seen two years earlier and had then been undecided about purchasing. This time there was no hesitation, and in September the Kipling family moved into the large Jacobean house on its own estate, just south-west of Burwash village, that was to be their home of the next thirty or so years. This was of course Bateman’s⁸ – ‘a grey stone lichened house AD 1634 over the door – beamed, panelled, with an old oak staircase, and all untouched and unfaked’, as Kipling described the property in a letter to an American friend. He declared that he had not simply acquired a new home for himself and his family, he had discovered a new land: ‘We left Rottingdean because Rottingdean was getting too populated . . . Then we discovered England which we had never done before . . . and went to live in it. England is a wonderful land. It is the most marvellous of all foreign countries that I have ever been in.’⁹

It was perhaps this sense of strangeness and of wonder that provided the initial impetus for the series of magical children’s stories, together with their accompanying poems, that were published in 1906 under the title *Puck of Pook’s Hill*, supplemented in 1910 by a sequel entitled *Rewards and Fairies*. Visitors to Bateman’s can view the book-lined study where Kipling wrote the *Puck* stories. He referred to the many and various titles which provided him with both information and inspiration as the ‘tools of my trade’.¹⁰ Rural England is well represented on Kipling’s bookshelves. Among the titles is to be found, besides a few volumes of W. H. Hudson, a complete set of Richard Jefferies.¹¹

‘Hodge’ and his ‘Masters’

⁷ Kedrun Laurie, ‘Who read Richard Jefferies? The evidence of the North Fund subscription list’, *RJSJ* 18 (2009), p. 19.

⁸ Since Carrie Kipling’s death in 1939, three years after her husband’s in 1936, Bateman’s has been owned and managed by the National Trust.

⁹ Letter to Charles Eliot Norton; Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling, His Life and Works* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1955; revised 1978), p. 59.

¹⁰ Kipling, *op. cit.*, p 231.

¹¹ Adam Nicholson, *Bateman’s: East Sussex* (Swindon: National Trust, 2004, revised; first published 1996), p. 20.

The very fine poem 'Sussex', composed in the year of the Kipling's move to 'the Very-Own House',¹² conveys a joyous sense of a new beginning and of commitment, for the Kiplings had not simply acquired a property, they were now also the owners of a country estate. The countryside lying to the south-west of the walled garden of the Kiplings' new home typified the Sussex Weald – hop-gardens and oast-houses, an old corn mill and pastureland, and, meandering slowing across the valley floor, the little River Dudwell. Kipling readily assumed his new role as a farmer: Michael Smith places due emphasis on this fact in his book *Kipling's Sussex*:

Kipling took a great interest in the ways of the countryman and was able, at first hand to admire their rural skilled craftsmanship. He had long been absorbed by the mysteries of agriculture and had observed Rhodes' enthusiasm for experimental farms to assess best practice for Cape farmers. Back in England his great friend Rider Haggard was considered an authority and he took heed of his wisdom alongside that of a sixteenth-century author Thomas Tusser, whose book *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* he treasured. . . .

Kipling was particularly proud of his 'Sussex' Shorthorn breeding stock which provided animals for fattening. He understood their capacity for growth and fine quality and his eulogy for them is found in *Alnaschar and the Oxen*.¹³

Besides writers on the English countryside, also well represented on the shelves in Kipling's study are books on farming. These include titles such as *Studies in the Art of Rat-Catching*, *Talks on Manures*, *The Complete Grazier*, and *Fences, Gates and Bridges*. There are, in addition, numerous books on the subject of bees and bee-keeping, for Kipling became a bee master. He kept his hives in the Quarry Garden, very near to Bateman's, where he and his children first rehearsed the Shakespearean fairy play that forms the prologue to the *Puck of Pook's Hill* stories (pp. 7-8)¹⁴

In the *Puck* stories, the character of old Hobden the Hedger is based on an elderly Sussex countryman named Isted, whom Kipling came to know well. This man was, in Kipling's words, 'more 'one with Nature' than whole parlours full of poets.' In his younger days a dedicated poacher, Isted spoke much of the past, and 'his sagas were lighted

¹² Kipling, *op. cit.*, p. 176; the heading of Chapter VII. For the poem 'Sussex', see M. M. Kaye, Rudyard Kipling, *The Complete Verse* (London: Kyle Cathie, 1996), pp. 174-177.

¹³ Michael Smith, *Kipling's Sussex* (Brighton: Brownleaf, 2008), pp. 85-87.

¹⁴ The page numbers given in brackets for quotations from the *Puck* stories refer to the World's Classics edition of *Puck of Pook's Hill and Rewards and Fairies*, edited by Donald Mackenzie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

with pictures of Nature as he, indeed knew her,' Kipling tells us. This archetypal countryman became the 'special stay and counsellor' of the newly arrived and inexperienced Kiplings.¹⁵ The conversation humorously featured at the end of the story 'Hal o' the Draft' between Hobden and Dan and Una's father, concerning the grubbing of an old oak (pp. 141-142), suggests a discussion that, plausibly, may have actually taken place between Isted and the tyro landowner Kipling. Kipling the poet commemorates him and his kind, enduring through time and change, in 'The Land'.¹⁶

In the introductions to and conclusions of the *Puck* stories old Hobden's voice and presence informs the narratives with a comparatively mundane 'reality', which complements the magical figure of Puck. But this old countryman is also part of the enchantment, for the first element of his name – 'a familiar or rustic variation of the Christian name Robert or Robin' (*OED*) – is one of the names long associated with Puck.¹⁷ The children, the reader is told, 'felt they could not be afraid of [Puck] any more than of their particular friend old Hobden the Hedger.' (p. 11). Thus Dan and Una's watchtower on the edge of Far Wood is resonant with meaning even before the magical arrival of the young Roman Centurion, Parnesius. 'Volaterrae' is named by the children after the citadel loyal to Rome's defence in 'Horatius', in Lord Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome: From lordly Volaterrae, Where scowls the far-famed hold, Piled by the hands of giants For godlike kings of old.* (p. 83). These lines are quoted as the preamble to the first of the three Roman stories. The children in their pretence are the 'godlike kings' and their 'intimate friend' Hobden the Hedger is dubbed by them 'the Hands of Giants'. The kindly old man has assisted the children's game by piling up brushwood to form the walls of their rustic stronghold.

Kipling the farmer was also acquainted with some young 'Hodges' or Hobdens; he was impressed by their empathy and skill with the farm animals, and their manual dexterity:

We had once on the farms a pair of brothers between ten and twelve. The younger could deal so cunningly with an intractable cart-mare who rushed her gates, and for choice diagonally, that he was called in to take charge of her as a matter of course. The elder, at eleven, could do all that

¹⁵ Kipling, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183.

¹⁶ For the poem 'The Land', see M. M. Kaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 493-495.

¹⁷ Edward Thomas discusses the folklore of this kind of nomenclature in his poem entitled 'Lob'; see Edna Longley, *Edward Thomas: The Annotated Collected Poems* (Tarsset: Bloodaxe Books, 2008), pp 76-79 and the Note, pp. 211-223, which refers to the fairy of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream* and Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill*, p. 215.

his strength allowed, and the much more that ancestral craft had added with any edged tool or wood.¹⁸

The eight-year-old son of a cattle-man, Kipling goes on to recall:

. . . could appraise the merits and character of any beast in his father's care, and was on terms of terrifying familiarity with the herd-bull, whom he would slap on the nose to make him walk disposedly before us when visitors came.¹⁹

It was this young Hodge, perhaps, who obversely inspired one of the images with which the final *Puck* story is brought to a conclusion, that of a bull running wild and causing havoc (p. 174).

The Charter of the River

The Dudwell valley was a wonderful area for Kipling's own two children to explore. In the summer of the year *Puck of Pook's Hill* was published, Elsie and John were presented with a mock medieval document, drafted in Kipling's own hand and bearing the title *The Charter of the River*.²⁰ It formally granted the children navigational rights to that portion of the Dudwell stream 'below Turbine Point and the Great Ash commonly called Cape Turnagain', and declared them 'at all times free to come and go and look and know – whether shod or barefoot – between the two points aforesaid.' This clause of the *Charter* is echoed in the *Puck* stories, where Puck tells Una and Dan: 'By right of Oak, Ash and Thorn are you free to come and go and look and know where I shall show and best you please . . . ' (p. 12). The name Puck survives in English place-names, and the toponyms of Kipling's magical landscape not only reflect their significance in terms of Una and Dan's imaginative play – Volaterrae, Otter Pool, the Fairy Ring Theatre with its audience of Three Cows – but also their historical or quasi-historical significance with regard to the stories identified with them – Weland's Ford for Willingford, for example. The site of the old Burwash Forge is called at various times in its fictional career Cyclops' Forge, Thor's Forge and John Collins' Foundry. Thus Kipling's stories are based on the kind of notional development of topography that Jefferies pioneered in *Bevis, the Story of a Boy*.

Kipling's children had a canoe and a rowing dinghy, with which they played on the pond in Bateman's garden. The dinghy appears in the *Puck* stories under the name of *Daisy*, although in the introduction to the third tale 'The Knights of the Joyous Venture', the reader is

¹⁸ Kipling, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-205

¹⁹ Kipling, *ibid.*, p. 205.

²⁰ *The Charter of the River* is reproduced in facsimile in Nicholson, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

informed that 'for exploring expeditions she was *The Golden Hind* or the *Long Serpent* or some such suitable name'. They have given up being pirates, Una tells the Norman revenant Sir Richard Dalynridge and are 'nearly always explorers now. Sailing round the world you know.' (pp. 45-6) On this particular occasion the children have opted for a voyage up the Amazon, also to include the discovery of the sources of the Nile, which seems to be a nod in the direction of Jefferies' two young blue water explorers, Bevis and Mark, for the brook flowing through the land Bevis' father farms, on which the boys launch their first improvised raft, is considered to be perhaps 'the Amazon, or the Congo, or the Yellow River, or the Nile', before they realise it is really the Mississippi. The tributary feeding the southern part of the lake becomes 'the Nile', whose source they will one day seek. In their ship dubbed *The Pinta* after Columbus' vessel, and aboard their Homeric raft *Calypso*, the two boys intrepidly negotiate the Straits of Mozambique to discover the Indian Ocean. Besides New Formosa or The Magic Land, where they camp, Bevis and Mark also explore and name Serendib, Grey Crow Island, the Coral Isles, Heron Sandbank, and Sweet River Falls. In thus abrogating to themselves as pioneers jurisdiction of 'The Bevis Country,' Jefferies' fictional characters anticipate the 'Liberties, Freedom and Benefits all and singlar' which 'Sieur Rudyard Kipling' confers as of right on Elsie and John in 'The Charter of the River'. Between 'Turbine Point' and 'Cape Turnagain' the children are also declared 'free to name and claim and use for a game all Bays, Points, Bars, Capes, Promontories, Shingles, Shallows, Deeps, Ditches, Drains, Pools and Trees as best shall them please. In this respect the Charter formulates the organising principle of 'The Bevis Country'.

Iden's Garden

Both Jefferies and Kipling had exceptional fathers, and in each case the father's influence on his son's writing was significant.

John Lockwood Kipling (1837-1911) was an art teacher, illustrator and museum curator. While Principal of Lahore's art college, he presided over the education and training of native artisans and their transformation into craftsmen and designers. In retirement, he and his wife Alice returned to England, and in 1893 settled at Tisbury in Wiltshire. In his biography of Kipling's father, Arthur Ankers observes: 'Few fathers have stood in such a close and extended relationship as that enjoyed by John Lockwood Kipling and his son. On Rudyard's own confession they worked together for thirty years, during which time the 'Pater' was his literary mentor and, with his mother,

constituted the only critics to whom he gave serious attention . . .'²¹

In his autobiography Kipling gives a vivid picture of the rapport between father and son in their discussions concerning the development of the *Puck* stories. John Lockwood Kipling particularly liked the seventh story in the series featuring a Renaissance artist and craftsman, the fictitious Harry Dawe, or to give him his eponymous nickname, 'Hal o' the Draft'. The design of Hal's ivory drawing knife was his father's own special contribution to this tale, Kipling tells us, during one of several visits to Bateman's.²²

In the *Eulogy* Walter Besant cites a letter providing insight into the profound formative influence James Lockett Jefferies (1816-1896) had on the development of his son's genius for perceiving and describing the natural world, and furthermore his understanding of the definitive place of the farm in the rural landscape.

The garden, the orchard, the hedges of the fields were always his [father's] chief delight; he had planted many a tree round and about his farm. Not a single bird that flew but he knew, and could tell its history; if you walked with him as Dick often did, and as I have occasionally done, through the fields, and heard him expatiate – quietly enough – on the trees and flowers, you would not be surprised at the turn taken by his son's genius.²³

Besant goes on to inform his readers that Farmer Iden in Jefferies' last novel *Amaryllis at the Fair*, – 'a man full of wisdom and thought' – is 'in many characteristics a portrait of his father'.²⁴ The portrait is a remarkable one. The initial image – that of Iden in a ragged coat humbly planting potatoes with meticulous skill and patience – epitomises the 'very large abilities' of the man who has created a lovely garden about the family home:

No other garden was planted as Iden's garden was, in the best of old English taste, with old English flowers and plants, herbs and trees. In summer time it was glory to see; a place for a poet, a spot for a painter, loved and resorted to by every bird of the air. Of a bare old farmhouse he had made a beautiful home.²⁵

Jefferies also idealises and eulogises his father's achievements in a subsequent passage in which Iden is compared to 'a sort of Pan, a

²¹ Arthur R Ankers, *The Pater: John Lockwood Kipling, His Life and Times 1837-1911* (Otford: Pond View Books, Hawthorn Publications, 1988), p. ix.

²² Kipling, *op. cit.*, p. 188; for his father's influence on the writing of *Kim*, see pp. 139-142.

²³ Besant, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

²⁴ Besant, *ibid.*, pp. 15 ff.

²⁵ Richard Jefferies, *Amaryllis at the Fair* (Longcot: Petton Books, 2009; first published 1887), p. 117.

half-god of leaves and boughs, and reeds and streams, a sort of Nature in human shape, moving about and sowing Plenty and Beauty.' Iden, it is emphasised, is a man of considerable intellect who is knowledgeable and well-read. He knows Shakespeare and Homer well, and indeed he is said to resemble Shakespeare in features since he is possessed of a 'high and noble forehead' and a similar profile.²⁶ Amaryllis, Iden's daughter, is a rural artist, and the novel also memorably features another artist of considerable abilities in Alere Flamma, who leaves London to stay with the family and reacquaint himself with the 'magic power of healing in the influence of the place which Iden had created.'²⁷

In Kipling's story Harry Dawe's apprenticeship was at Oxford, at a time when new colleges were being built. Having learned his work from 'the master-craftsmen of all Christendie – kings in their trade and honoured of Kings' (p. 132), he has become a great man whose skills are in demand all over the country. Harry is a native of Dan and Una's river valley, and the birthplace of this revenant story-teller is Little Lindens Farm (actually Ryegreen Farm). The farmhouse is evocatively presented as an image of rural simplicity, and the narration of the story takes place in the farmhouse garden. 'D'you marvel that I love it?' whispers Harry to the children as they go through the garden gate Puck opens for them. 'What can town folk know of the nature of housen – or land?' (p.134).

Kipling invokes the view from Duck Window in the attic of Little Mill, where the revenant and Puck first appear, to associate Little Lindens with 'the spot where Jack Cade was killed' (p. 132), referring to the rebel who in 1450 led a major insurrection from Kent to London against Henry VI's government. Kipling appears to be referring to the admonitory monument concerning Cade which was set up in the village of Cade Street, near Old Heathfield, in 1794, and the 'strong local tradition' linking Cade's death with the old thoroughfare called 'Iden's Lane' and the Burwash area, despite the fact that ancient chronicles and Shakespeare assert Cade died in Kent.²⁸ In *Henry the Sixth, Part Two*, the reference to Kent is no more than a brief stage direction; the scene of Cade's death is set in 'Kent. Iden's Garden'. The rebel there insolently confronts the country squire of that name, denoted a 'lord of the soil', and Cade is killed by Iden in self-defence. In a preliminary soliloquy Iden rejoices in his state after the manner of

²⁶ Jefferies, *ibid.*, p. 143 and pp. 117-118.

²⁷ Jefferies, *ibid.*, p. 144.

²⁸ Shineen Galloway, Pauline McIldowie, Roy Pryce and Joanna Williams, *Old Heathfield and Cade Street in the Nineteenth Century* (Old Heathfield and Cade Street Society, 2008), p. 149.

Kipling's favourite poet, Horace, who enjoyed an independent rural existence on his small Sabine farm. Shakespeare's audience understands that Cade is not to be much mourned, for in a previous scene he is presented as an imposter claiming descent from the Plantagenets; he rails against the nobleman Lord Say for founding a grammar school, ordering the printing of books, and associating with men 'usually speaking of a noun and a verb and such abominable words as no Christian ear can endure to hear'; the contemned Lord Say is also held to be guilty of speaking Latin.²⁹ In view of the fact that a classical education is a principal theme of the first story in the Roman trilogy preceding 'Hal o' the Draft', and the young centurion Parnesius comes from a rural agricultural background, there would appear to be some justification in assuming that Kipling, who had no scruples about translating names and/or locations, both nearby and distant, into the little river valley of his stories,³⁰ had Shakespeare's presentation of Cade in mind. As a literary name, 'Iden' was unique to Shakespeare's history play until Richard Jefferies chose to apply it to the yeoman farmer of 'Coombe Oaks'. Thus, intriguingly, reference to both Idens appears to be encoded within Kipling's story.

Kipling's improvements to the beautiful gardens that now surround Bateman's for the delight of the visitor – the pond, the Rose Garden and the yew hedges – were laid out to his own design, which can still be seen hanging in his study. These improvements were funded by the money Kipling received for the award of the Nobel Prize in 1907. He also took a particular interest in the semi-wild area beyond the garden which reaches down to the banks of the Dudwell. Trees and flowering shrubs are naturalised in grass which in spring is carpeted with flowers. In his charming poem 'The Glory of the Garden',³¹ Kipling speaks of England as a garden to be carefully planted and nurtured, sentiments of which the man who composed the portrait of Iden in *Amaryllis* no doubt would have approved.

²⁹ William Shakespeare, *Henry the Sixth Part Two*, IV. X and IV, vii.

³⁰ Pook's Hill is named in reality Perch Hill. The name 'Pook's Hill' comes from Park Hill, formerly Pook Hill, which is located to the east of the road between Burwash and Heathfield and nearer Heathfield; see C. W. Scott-Giles, 'Historical Background of some 'Puck' Stories', in *Kipling Journal*, No. 138, June 1961, pp. 15-21. Cherry Clack Windmill was the name of the post mill that was originally built at Three Chimneys, Biddenden, Kent, and moved to Punnetts Town, East Sussex, in 1859. The mill was renamed Blackdown Mill.

³¹ For the poem 'The Glory of the Garden', see M. M. Kaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 603-604.

Melancholy Accident at the Coate Reservoir

Andrew Rossabi

In the *Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard* of 6 August 1870, on the same page as Chapter X of the 'History of Cirencester', there appeared an item headed 'Melancholy Accident at the Coate Reservoir'.¹ Probably written by Jefferies, it reported the drowning (by no means the first such accident)² of a 21-year-old farm labourer named John Wain, a chorister from Down Ampney, the Gloucestershire village now famous as the birthplace of the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams.³

On Saturday 31 July the choir made an outing to Coate Reservoir and picnicked on its banks. Wain attempted to swim from the Swindon side to the spot known as 'the Plain'.⁴ When half-way across he threw up his arms and sank. The alarm was given and there was a race for a punt with a grappling iron. The latter proved lost, whereupon a man ran into Swindon for another. Meanwhile James Luckett Jefferies, who happened to be passing, offered his iron, which was fetched by his younger son Harold, together with one belonging to a neighbouring farmer, Mr Brunsdon.⁵ The body was recovered but

¹ The report was first noticed by Hugoe Matthews and Phyllis Treitel in *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies, A chronological study* (Oxford: Petton Books, 1994), p.41.

² See, for example, that reported in the *Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard* of 12 July 1869.

³ Vaughan Williams was born in the Old Vicarage in 1872. He entitled the tune he composed for the hymn 'Come Down, O Love Divine' 'Down Ampney' in honour of his birthplace.

⁴ The Plain, a large open meadow on the east side of the reservoir, was the site of the mock battle of Pharsalia in *Bevis*, where in Chapter XV it is referred to as 'the chosen battle-field'. On the topography of the battle with maps see Mark Daniel, 'The Bevis Country', *Journal* No. 3 (Spring 1994), pp.17-28. James Luckett referred to the Plain in a letter of 26 November 1896 to Dr Theodore Rake as 'a large Piece of Land call'd the Plain bounded by the Lake on one side always a favourable place to walk over, a bunch of Old Sycamores looking as if they had been there for centuries.'

⁵ Henry [Harry] Brunsdon farmed some 155 acres at Snodshill. In Chapter VI ('The Marlborough Road') of his Swindon history, in support of his belief that the village of Coate had once been larger 'and could show a church', Jefferies stated that:

From time immemorial a cow-pen upon land in the occupation of Mr. H. Brunsdon has gone by the name of church-pen. The reason is obvious. Here are six pillars about eight feet high, by two in diameter, circular, and formed of hewn stone. At present they simply support the roof of a shed; but it does not seem probable that such substantial pillars were originally erected for this purpose. They are nearly east and west. Bones, it is said, have been dug up in the adjacent ground, but such testimony is very unreliable until examined by a person learned in anatomy. (*Jefferies' Land*, p.134)

Wain was by this time dead, no less than three hours having elapsed since his submersion. The corpse was taken to an outhouse of the Sun Inn awaiting the inquest, which was held the following Monday and at which a verdict of accidental death was recorded by the coroner Mr Whitmarsh.⁶

The newspaper report highlighted the weight and unmanageability of the punt; the want of adequate provision against accidents; the unevenness of the reservoir bed, 'suddenly sinking eight or ten feet from two or three'. Notices warning of the dangers of bathing had long disappeared. The reporter blamed the Canal company which owned the reservoir. They should either enclose it to prevent access or make proper provision in case of accident. 'At present it is a disgrace.'

We cannot be certain Jefferies wrote the piece but it seems likely. Though not a campaigning journalist he was shocked and made angry by avoidable accidents. He wrote two articles for *Fraser's Magazine* in the wake of the railway accidents at Shipton, Guildford, Wigan and elsewhere, proposing practical measures for their future prevention.⁷

Drowning appears as a motif in *Restless Human Hearts* and *The Dewy Morn*. In both episodes the drowning man receives no help from those at hand and *in extremis* realises the full intensity of his feelings for the woman he loves. Chapter IX of *Bevis* is entitled 'Swimming' and in it Bevis's father ('the governor') teaches Bevis and his friend Mark how to swim before allowing them to sail on the Long-pond (Coate Reservoir). He takes them to

a place near the old quarry they had discovered, in one corner of Fir-Tree Gulf, where the bottom was of sand, and shelved gently for a long way out; a line of posts and rails running into the water, to prevent cattle

In a letter to Aunt Ellen dated 4 October 1870 Jefferies named Mr Brunsdon as one of the three farmers at Coate affected by an outbreak of foot and mouth disease. According to the 1871 Census he had seven children, the eldest, Henry, aged fifteen. The *Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard* of 7 September 1872 carried a report of a fire at Coate that 'destroyed ricks and cottages of H. Brunsdon'. (Matthews and Treitel, *op.cit.*, p.54)

⁶ Jefferies appears to refer to this incident in Chapter III of *The Story of My Heart* where he uses his sense of communion with the spirit of a dead man buried two thousand years before in a tumulus on the downs to support his belief in the immortality of the soul. He continues:

It happened once that a man was drowned while bathing, and his body was placed in an outhouse near the garden. I passed the outhouse continually, sometimes on purpose to think about it, and it always seemed to me that the man was still living. Separation is not to be comprehended; the spirit of the man did not appear to have gone to an inconceivable distance. As my thought flashes itself back through the centuries to the luxury of Canopus, and can see the gilded couches of a city extinct, so it slips through the future, and immeasurable time in front is no boundary to it. Certainly the man was not dead to me.

⁷ 'A Railway-Accidents Bill,' (May 1874) and 'The Shipton Accident' (February 1875).

straying, as they could easily do where it was shallow like this.⁸

The site remains and is easily found on the east side of Coate Water.⁹ Thomas says the teaching method, if indeed that used by Jefferies' father, 'could hardly have been bettered'.¹⁰ According to Thomas the reservoir was reputed to have a whirlpool.¹¹ The legend, which may have arisen out of the several drownings, would have tapped into Jefferies' reading of the *Odyssey*, where the whirlpool Charybdis is among the perils faced by its intrepid sailor hero.



Coate Reservoir, 1906

⁸ *Bevis*, The World's Classics Edition, Edited with an introduction by Peter Hunt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.68.

⁹ See Daniel (*op.cit.*), pp.22 and 28. The site is marked No 35e on the map on p.27.

¹⁰ *Richard Jefferies*, by Edward Thomas, With an Introduction and Bibliography by Roland Gant (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), p.36.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p.18.

Jefferies à la Carte

Peter Robins

The inventor of 'photography' is still disputed nearly two centuries after it emerged. There were a number of competing image experiments involving light, metal, glass, paper and chemicals in the mid-nineteenth century. Those associated with the craft's origins and development include Nicéphore Niépce, Louis F M Daguerre, William Henry Fox Talbot, F Scott Archer and André Disdéri. The invention that matters most need be neither the first nor the best; it is the one that arrives at the right moment, strikes fertile conditions and leads to practical success and it was the French who seized the moment.

On 7 January 1839, the Director of the Paris Observatory announced to the world that Daguerre had devised a way of fixing a reproduced image. His method combined iodine-sensitised, silvered copper plates and mercury which resulted in a remarkably sharp image on metal. The picture was an original; there was no negative, it could not be copied or printed; it existed once only. The technology spread to other countries and became a commercial success for photographers offering studio portraiture. The image was usually presented in a leather case to protect it from scratches and some were coloured by hand to make them more attractive.

The early processes that followed the daguerreotype were quite different. Fox Talbot's calotype, the first photograph that could be printed from a paper negative was too slow a process to be commercially viable. A third process, invented by Frederick Scott Archer in 1851, employed a glass plate coated with a wet collodion emulsion, generally called an ambrotype, produced a negative image but by being placed against a dark background a positive image was seen. Sharpness approximated that of the daguerreotype but offered unusual softness in tones of grey and almost grainless clarity. Like the daguerreotype, each image was unique, thus Archer's modification lacked the power of duplication but it had the advantage of speed and the sitter could leave with the finished picture, in a protective case or frame, almost immediately.

Two Frenchmen then changed the craft. In the early 1850s Louis Désiré Blanquart-Evrard produced the albumen print which created the first exploitable method of producing a photographic print on a paper base from a glass negative. In 1854 a Parisian photographer, André Disdéri, using Blanquart-Evrard's discovery, contrived a camera

with several lenses and a plate-holder that moved to take up to twelve different exposures on a single plate. A print from the negative could be cut up into separate portraits which could be pasted on to card 4" x 2½"...the *carte-de-visite* was born and brought studio portraiture within reach of all classes. By the mid-1860s the new process had spread throughout Europe and to America, where the smallest provincial towns would often support several photographic establishments with major capitals frequently exceeding one hundred. In London, there were three hundred studios, with as many as thirty-five in Regent Street alone. The *carte* process remained the standard until the early twentieth century with the invention of roll-film and the Kodak Brownie.

*

The photographs reproduced here of Richard Jefferies are from the Society's archive and are shown in chronological order. Some have useful information on the reverse, some have a note relating to them and others are open to interpretation.

Photograph A shows Richard at about the age of seven taken 1885/6. At this time he was living with his uncle and aunt, Thomas and Ellen Harrild in Sydenham. Both sexes at this age, particularly middle- to upper-class children often wore dresses until boys were 'breeched', usually between the ages of four to eight. The dresses for boys were more tailored, opened down the front, were of stronger, darker fabric and featured chunky belts and large, metallic buttons.

The occasion for this photograph may have been a wish to have a permanent record of Richard at the end of this stage in his development, prior to 'breeching'. A biographer of Jefferies, Audrey Smith, informs us that after some initial home-education by Ellen Harrild, Richard was sent to a local day-school at the age of seven, so presumably he attended in traditional boy's clothing, generally short or long trousers, a waistcoat and an open jacket or loose-belted tunic.

The image itself is an ambrotype and, according to its paper label, taken at 'Mr J Lane's Photographic Rooms, 143 Blackfriars Road', just south of Blackfriars Bridge in London. Just across The Thames were the Harrild business premises. Lane opened here in 1855 and flourished until 1867 so Richard was an early client. The label with the glass image claims 'J. L's Photographic Miniatures are warranted not to fade or change in any climate, and are not affected by Light, Damp, or Heat'. Lane spelled out the advantages of the ambrotype over

the perilous daguerreotype. There is some hand-colouring extant to Richard's cheeks, to the flowers on the table and the edges of the book. The cost to include the colouring, a pinchbeck frame and a leather-covered wooden case would have been about 15s to 1gn.

With both sexes dressed alike, photographers usually included a prop to emphasise the sex of the sitter. For boys, surviving photographs show drums, toy rifles, model yachts, hoops even whips. Either Lane was prescient in the choice of a book for Richard or he chose it himself from items available in the studio.

Richard left the Harrild household at the age of eight or nine to return to Coate and was replaced by his sister, Sarah. His education was erratic and he attended at least three different schools. During this time he occasionally returned to the Harrilds where he came to admire the values of piety, propriety and polish for which Shanklin Villa, Sydenham, stood.

With an end to schooling in sight there must have been some encouragement by the Harrilds to persuade Richard to join the family business in London. His cousin, Horton Harrild junior, joined the firm in 1862 at the age of fifteen and presumably the appointment wasn't lost on Richard.

In photograph B, he sits confidently in a conservative suit, perhaps contemplating an imminent career in the City. Photo B is a carte taken at the studio of J. G. Barrable, 244 Regent Street, W. doubtless organised by the Harrilds. John George Barrable had previously offered daguerreotypes and ambrotypes but had quickly adopted the carte process and flourished at this address between 1858 and 1873. When the image has been published it has usually been accompanied by a caption stating that it was taken on 6 November 1862 (Richard's fourteenth birthday). However, on the reverse of the carte, written in black ink, is 'John Richard Jefferies Oct^r 1862' and below it, 'aged 14 years 6 Nov^r 1862'.

The autumn light that October day must have been poor for there is very little contrast in the photograph, except a few highlights in the chair leg and Richard's shiny shoes. The quality of light varied with the seasons and the weather on some bad days meant business had to be abandoned. The better studios had a sloping glass roof, preferably to catch the north light, fitted with curtains and blinds to control and diffuse the daylight. Other establishments gathered light as best they could and at the lowest end of the market, back yards were used.

The Barrable picture shows a plain backdrop, but many studios offered backgrounds depicting stately interiors, sylvan glades and

book-lined studies. Props included curtains, fluted columns, balustrades, tables, desks, and chairs.

The limitations of the photography at the time resulted in some colour distortion and clients would have been advised before their appointment about what type of clothes to wear. Large areas of white and black were to be avoided as detail was lost in the exposure. Red and green appeared black, pale blue became white and dark blue registered a middle range. It is difficult therefore to determine what colour of clothing Jefferies was wearing in the photographs.

As the cameras had no shutters, each exposure was made by removing the lens cap. Photographers had to use their judgement and the average exposure in the summer months was about five seconds, increasing to between fifteen and twenty seconds in the winter. There were a number of experiments in the 1870s to secure a stable, artificial light source using limelight and then flash powder but they proved dangerous and were abandoned. In 1877, Henry Van Der Wyde, 182 Regent Street, devised the first electric light from a gas-driven dynamo and within five years three other leading studios adopted the system, including the London Stereoscopic Company.

Any survey of Victorian portraiture begs the question as to the universal expression of sitters, one of glumness or taciturnity. One factor was certainly the ordeal of posing for the required exposures. However, in Victorian society, the subjects were expected to project a semblance of serious, calm dignity. Smiling in photographs did not begin until the availability of roll films and the Kodak Box Brownie, with its shorter exposure times, in the early twentieth century.

The established studios set the price of a sitting to average 1s per carte with, for example, the London Stereoscopic Company advertising in 1861 'Carte de Visite 20 for 20s. Photographed by an Eminent Foreign Artist in a most superior style'. However, people engaged in all levels of trade recognized that photography was the money-making enterprise of the decade and cheap studios were set up alongside existing businesses such as hairdressers, dentists, watchmakers, butchers, confectioners, grocers and so on. A *Punch* cartoon of the period, capturing the incongruity of this trade, featured 'an exact likeness & a rasher of bacon 6d'. Professional photographers complained to the press of 'cheap jacks' advertising cartes as low as 12 for 3s 6d.



A



B



C



D

It was by one of the better studios in Bristol that photo C was taken. Although previous reproductions of this portrait have been captioned as Jefferies at the age of twenty one, twenty three or just 'as a young man', it was taken in June 1868 when Jefferies was nineteen. In a letter to Ellen Harrild, dated 5 June 1868 he tells her, '...I spent the day in Bristol. I only went for pleasure, or rather for a change. My principal object was to have my photograph taken...I went to a first class artist and hope to have the pleasure of sending a carte to you shortly'. Of the twenty seven photographers operating in Bristol in 1868, Jefferies chose Cyrus Voss Bark. The reverse of the carte states 'C. V. Bark, Late Beattie & Bark, Strathearn House, Clifton, Bristol. Photographer to Her Majesty the Queen and H. R. H. The Prince of Wales [probably a bogus claim].

In blue ink someone has added: 'R.J. as a young man, called by the family 'The Sheep'.' The vignetted portrait reflects Jefferies' new confidence as a reporter on the *North Wilts Herald* with a firm ambition to be a writer. He had abandoned the boyish hair parting, seen in photo B, in favour of swept-back long hair and had grown a chin-curtain beard. Despite criticism from the family of his unconventional appearance, emanating mostly from Aunt Elizabeth Sewell, Jefferies was pleased enough with his image that he gave a locket, photo D, containing two photographs to Fanny Eliza Cox ('Lizzie') to whom he was attracted at the time, though the relationship did not develop. One of the photos was a hand-coloured print of photo C and the other, from the same session, showing Jefferies with his head turned slightly to the left.

Photo E, an oval portrait, was taken some time in the 1870s and there are very few clues to determine an exact date. Elliott & Fry (Joseph John Elliott and Clarence Edmund Fry) established their business in 1863 at 55, Baker Street, Portman Square, London, W. where they quickly earned a reputation for professional portraiture, charging one guinea per sitting. Artists and authors among their clients included Robert Browning, Alfred Tennyson, John Ruskin, H W Longfellow and Charles Darwin.

The reverse of the carte gives only the studio name and address and a hand-written 'R. Jefferies' and a reference number. This plain design suggests the first half of the 1870s as later Elliott & Fry designs were more elaborate and the cartes had rounded corners. From the image itself it can be noted that Jefferies' previously free-flowing hair had been cut shorter and controlled by pomade or macassar oil with a



E



F



G



H

a centre parting, fashionable in the 1870s. His beard had become full but neatly trimmed. Other factors supporting the suggested decade are the clothes Jefferies was wearing; shirt collars were worn up, broad ties had replaced large, loose cravats and the jacket with deep cuffs had two buttons at the seams, all these typical of the 1870s. As Jefferies was staying at Sydenham between April and July 1876, to contact publishers and generally promote himself, this would seem to offer a plausible opportunity for Jefferies to call at Elliott & Fry.

Jefferies' appearance in photo F is similar to that in photo E, his hair and beard, shirt collar and tie are the same. However, the lapels of his jacket differ slightly. This could be another pose from the Elliott & Fry session, with a change of jacket, or an image from another studio, as yet unidentified, taken about the same time. The reverse design is surprising as the carte was issued in Australia by J. Hubert Newman, who had trained in Paris and soon became a leading, prize-winning photographer in Sydney, submitting photographs to London exhibitions in 1871 and 1873. The address on this carte is given as 12 Oxford St. Hyde Park, Sydney, NSW, where Newman flourished from 1875-1894. Elliott & Fry, or another studio, may have supplied a negative to Newman and as the carte in the archive is badly spotted, it may have deteriorated en route or the speckling is from imperfections in the paper. The carte was undoubtedly issued as a celebrity carte for Australian collectors but probably not issued until the late 1870s or early 1880s when Jefferies' books were becoming known there. In many countries, 'cartomania' had grown up alongside the photography boom, boosted initially by the sale of images of royalty, which then spread to men and women of public eminence, bishops, scientists, actresses, artists, writers and so on with friends swapping cartes. Soon no drawing-room was complete with one or more albums, often in tooled leather bindings with ornate clasps.

The penultimate photograph of Jefferies, G, is the most familiar and the most widely published and the basis of William Strang's etching and Margaret Thomas's memorial bust. Here Jefferies sat for the London Stereoscopic Company, 106,108,110 Regent St. W. (there was an additional studio at 54, Cheapside. E.C.). As George Miller has already pointed out, Cyril Wright claimed the date of the photograph was 16 June 1879, Looker put it at 1881 and another writer, Bryn Purdy, at 1882. Indeed, 16 June 1879 is written in pencil on the reverse but by whose hand and when is not known. Designs on the reverse of cartes changed quite frequently to announce royal

patronage, prize medals won in international exhibitions or other declarations to boost status. The Society's example of this carte has a design that was in circulation between 1886 and 1890, signifying that it is a reprint, most likely ordered by a family member after Jefferies' death. Although the 1879 date has not been confirmed by any other source it is the most plausible. Jefferies hairline had receded slightly compared with the Elliott & Fry photo, his beard a little fuller and overall, he appeared more mature, composed and dignified. The photo has a good range of tones and there is an attractive top light to Jefferies' hair and brow.

Less than three years later, Jefferies presented himself again to the London Stereoscopic Company, but in very different circumstances. Photo H is a carte with a hand-written date on the reverse 'April 4 1882'. There is no supporting evidence for this date but the reverse design was current 1880 to 1885, so is credible. In September 1881, Jefferies' health became a concern and by December he had fallen ill of fistula, with pain 'like lightning through the brain'. In the early months of 1882 he agreed to surgery, though it was unsuccessful, Besant claiming he had three more surgical interventions within the year.

Why would a man in a weakened, post-operative state agree to be photographed? In the photograph Jefferies looked ill at ease, distracted and had clearly declined to pose sitting down. This simple act was a serious problem for him after his surgery and it wasn't until January, 1883, that he was able to mention in a letter to C P Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, '...the wounds were well at last. I was free. I could walk and sit – actually sit down. I could work.' The photographer, presumably unaware of Jefferies' condition, may have considered his subject uncooperative, for the three-quarter length stance, with hands withheld, was not in the normal repertoire of studio poses. Man-handling of clients was regarded as a sign of a low-class establishment and one London studio displayed a sign announcing, 'Sitters are requested to place themselves as much as possible in the hands of the artist' but ultimately, power lay with the sitter.

In this image, Jefferies' cut-away morning coat exhibited far too many loose folds, indicating a loss of weight by the wearer. Did a publisher persuade Jefferies to agree to this ordeal or was it his own idea, or his family's, a last memory of London life before moving to West Brighton? Whatever the motive, the result was a disappointment, prompting Jefferies to destroy at least one carte. In the Society's

archive is the top half of one print with a poignant hand-written record on the reverse, 'Torn in half by R.J. because he did not like it. Rescued by my mother E. Sewell (Emily Hall)'. Fortunately, the archive has another, complete print, the last photograph of Jefferies before he died five years later.

During Jefferies' life-time the development of photography remained stagnant, though arguments regarding whether photography was an art regularly appeared in the photographic press. There were those who insisted that the photographer's duty was to recreate his subject in terms of basic reality. Others claimed photography could create art, concerned not with facts but with ideas and emotions. The British writer and photographer Peter Henry Emerson argued for 'naturalistic' photography and recorded country life in sharp detail before experimenting with differential focus. In the first quarter of 1877 Sampson Low published works by both Emerson and Jefferies, from which we may infer that the publisher regarded them as of the same genre. A reviewer in *The Spectator* of one of Emerson's later books, *Wild Life on a Tidal Water*, observed Emerson 'was reminiscent of Richard Jefferies.' Emerson's *Naturalistic Photography*, published in 1889, captured the mood of the moment, advocating use of the camera outside the confines of the studio. Later he recognized the limitations of photography were so great that, though the results could give a certain aesthetic pleasure, the medium would always rank the lowest of the arts. Despite his misgivings his original views greatly influenced the later development of photography as an art form.

When Kodak introduced cheap cameras and roll-film in the 1900s, studio photography went into decline and had largely disappeared by the end of World War One. Even the mighty London Stereoscopic Company closed in 1922. Elliott & Fry did survive, despite their studio being bombed in World War Two with the destruction of most of their negatives, by catering for a wealthy clientele until it merged with Bassano in 1963.

In the modern age, the smartphone, incorporating a lens, offers a means of expression as well as communication and the self-portrait associated with social media is the new carte-de-visite.

Acknowledgements

The photographs reproduced are from the Richard Jefferies Society's archive and were donated over time by different family members. Not all the photographs are originals. The whereabouts of the ambrotype has not been established and only a copy print is available. The locket was donated by May Abbey, Lizzie Cox's daughter circa 1974 and is on

loan to Coate Museum.

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Book Review

Revealed Biodiversity: An Economic History of the Human Impact by Eric L. Jones. World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd. Singapore New Jersey and London. 2014. 257pp. No Illustrations ISBN 978-9814522564. £55.00 hbk

A few days before the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated, precipitating a conflict in which millions of humans died; he had logged the personal slaughter of 274,889 mammals and birds, including 100 eagles, 1,000 chamois, and 6,000 stags. Professor Eric Jones quotes these figures in the opening paragraph of a chapter titled: 'Landscapes of Destruction; the Curse of the Pheasant'.

This chapter heading might seem to indicate a book whose aim is to lament the destruction of 'traditional' habitats, but this inference would be completely false. Eric Jones is an economic historian who has worked in both hemispheres, and has, since childhood been a very keen birder, with more than a passing knowledge of butterflies, as well as other areas of natural history.

The book can be described as an economic history of the environment, but if that makes it sound a dull academic treatise, it is certainly not. Jones sets out to explain how for several centuries, environmental conditions have been substantially the product of economic fluctuations. He demonstrates this by case studies in Europe, (especially Holland and Central Southern England), North America, and East Asia, frequently illuminating the text with his own personal observations.

Jones argues for the establishment of proper baselines in assessing the true degree of decline of species, and illustrates this well in his case study chapter on British Butterflies. He also warns against misinterpreting the upward or downward phases of what are now known to be long-term cyclical fluctuations, such as the population explosion of the crown-of-thorns starfish, and the die-back of *Zostera*.

A major section of the book considers the global spread of Europeans, and the effects of the growth of the South East Asian economy today. The chapter describing the European spread into North America is particularly challenging, as Jones carefully analyses the myths of the 'Pristine Country' and the 'Noble Savage'. He also reminds us that although it is widely acknowledged that 25% of the known avian species have been driven to extinction, it is rarely

mentioned that 20% were wiped out by prehistoric inhabitants of Pacific Islands. With regard to S.E. Asia, he considers the damage done by culinary fashions, male anxieties, and ornament.

Revealed Biodiversity is defined as the biodiversity we see, or from the economist's viewpoint 'consume'. This has become greater with the advent of television and the possibility of relatively cheap long-distance air travel. The possibilities of enjoying nature in the world today are greater than ever, and in the final chapter, 'What Should we Conserve', Jones addresses the choices to be made, and the relationship between natural and cultural heritages.

In a book written for the intelligent reader, I did not expect to find the word 'animals' used as exclusive of birds and butterflies; and the use of 'pounds, shillings, and pence', as a cost measure might confuse the reader under 40. The index is also frustratingly inadequate, dealing only (incompletely) with people and species. These quibbles are only mentioned, however, in order to warn readers not to be deterred by these minor irritations. It is an important, stimulating, and fascinating publication.

The book deserves a much wider readership than is likely to be gained by its having an 'academic' title, an obscure publisher, and a high price. It should be read by all those involved in conservation at any level, who like to be made to think and to have their (conscious or unconscious) prejudices challenged.

John Price

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Eric Jones is Vice-Chairman of the Richard Jefferies Society, and draws on Jefferies' writings in several of his chapters to illustrate agricultural changes, and the effects of the management required of the Victorian gamekeeper. The title of one of Jefferies' essays; *The Sacrifice to Trout* is also used as a chapter sub-heading. There are also many references to examples from the Wiltshire/Gloucestershire/Hampshire/Berkshire area.

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