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The Guild of St George

The Companion

No. 16 (2016)

Beautiful
Peaceful
Fruitful

Front cover: 'New life in the Wyre Forest', photograph by Lynne Roberts, 2015.

The Companion is edited, designed & published by the Guild's Communications Officer, Dr Stuart Eagles.

GUILD of St GEORGE

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The Editor would like to thank all contributors to this issue of the magazine—writers, photographers and illustrators. Special thanks are due to the editors of *American Notes*, Jim Spates and Sara Atwood. Sara has also proofread the entire magazine, as have Martin Green, Chris Eagles, James S. Dearden, Peter Miller and Clive Wilmer. All of them have been painstaking in their attention to detail. Ruth Nutter has provided valuable help with the pages dedicated to the *Ruskin in Sheffield* project. Everyone has been unfailingly generous and endlessly patient. *The Companion* is a collaborative effort that relies on the goodwill and co-operation of a team of people working together to record the Guild's activities for posterity. Thank you. All errors are the responsibility of the Editor (sincere apologies). Readers' feedback and contributions are always welcome.

Please direct any queries about *The Companion* and the Guild of St George to the Communications Officer, Dr Stuart Eagles <enquiries@guildofstgeorge.org.uk>,
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Please note that all references to the Library Edition of Ruskin's writings—*The Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols. (London, 1903–12) are in the form of vol no. and page no. only (x.x) to save space.

TREASURES OF THE RUSKIN COLLECTION

One of the motivations behind my *Calendar of Treasures of the Ruskin Collection*—the daily selection of images I have been sharing on social media—is purely selfish. I have felt for a long time that I ought to know more about the Ruskin Collection. I realised that I could satisfy this need and at the same time add usefully to what is known about some of the artists whose work is represented in it. When I read in the online catalogue put together with meticulous care by Louise Pullen, Curator of the Collection, that, 'Little is known about [Frank] Randal' (1852-1917) -– an artist who, with at least 137 works in the Collection, was vital to its identity and history – I realised that the challenge had been set. I may not have found out much in my subsequent diggings in the genealogical soil, but I can assert with some degree of confidence that Randal's family history throws some light on his upbringing.

Members of his extended family seem to have come together in a closer-than-usual union in the face of adversity, principally as a result of a number of premature deaths. This undoubtedly had an impact, because as a consequence Frank found himself surrounded by his more artistic relatives.

Frank Randal was born at 2 Marlborough Place, Harrow Road, Paddington, and was baptised at Holy Trinity Church on September 8th 1852. He had an older brother, Charles Randal (1851-1928) and a younger sister, Fanny Scott Randal (1856-1941). The boys lost their younger brother, the infant Arnold Randal, in 1855, but it must have been an incomprehensible tragedy also to have lost their mother, Frances Randal née Arnold (1828-1857) when Frank was not yet five years old and she was only 30. Frances's death in June 1857 was the result of complications from childbirth; worse still, the baby boy, named Arthur, died four months later.

'At Vignetta, near Lecco, Italy' (1885), one of dozens of beautiful studies by Frank Randal in the Ruskin Collection.

The three children continued to live with their now widowed father, Charles Hayter Randal (1823-1906), who was a Collector of Rates for a Gas Company. The evidence of the 1861 census is that he drew in his extended family to help him care for the children. Both Charles's mother, Mary Randal, née Bromley (c. 1796-1878), and his maternal aunt, Sophia Wilson, née Bromley (1787-1869), came to live with them at their new home in Woodfield Terrace, Paddington. Sophia gives the first indication of the extended family's artistic nature, as she was (or, more likely, had been) a dance teacher. A sister-in-law to Charles, Gertrude Arnold, was also living with them: she was 19 and no occupation is listed for her. Possibly the most significant member of the extended family residing with them, though, was Charles's sister: Elizabeth Maria Randal (1828-1906) was working as a teacher of music and singing, and probably continued to do so until her marriage to William Bowles, a widowed house steward, in 1879. We know from the 1851 census that she taught piano. When she died a widow in 1906, the executor of her will was her nephew, Frank Randal, the artist represented in the Ruskin Collection, so we can speculate that the two were close.

Ruskin and Frank Randal, detail of a sketch in a letter from Frank's brother, Charles, to Fanny Randal (1882).

To some extent, history had repeated itself in the Randal family. Frank's paternal grandfather, John Randal, seems to have died before 1841, thus beginning a pattern of family life which brought distant relatives under one roof. John Randal's premature death threw together his widow, Mary, and her sister, Sophia, many years before Frank's own mother died so young. John Randal was apparently remembered as an artist, at least on his children's marriage certificates, filled in at a time when he was of course deceased. What type of artist he was I have been unable to ascertain. His children's baptism records make for interesting reading, as they track his changing status. He shifted from being a self-declared Artist living in Marylebone in 1819, to life first as an 'Attorney' in 1821, then as a so-called 'Gentleman' living in the district of St Pancras in 1823 (when Frank's father, Charles Hayter Randal was baptised) to life as a 'Law Writer' living in Gower

Enjoy the daily posts from the Ruskin Collection on social media, and download the free monthly PDF Calendars of Treasures from the Guild's website <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>.

Street North in 1828. John and Mary's daughter, Sophia Maria Randal (1818-44) who died before Frank was born, had been, like the maternal aunt after whom she was named, a dance teacher. And John and Mary's son, John Lawrence Randal (1821-1890) was an architect; it is tempting to think that Frank learnt a lot from him in view of his splendid watercolours and drawings of buildings in France and Italy that survive in the Ruskin Collection.

Frank and his brother Charles both became artists, though Charles's preferred medium appears to have been sculpture. It was in a letter to his sister Fanny that Charles drew the sketch of Frank with Ruskin and W. G. Collingwood, calling it 'Modern Artists'. It's one of the more comical items in the Ruskin Collection.

Frank also had a half-sister, Emily Hayter Louise Randal (1876-1945), the issue of Charles Hayter Randal's second marriage, to Emily Gatsell (*sic*) (b. 1834). Like Frank, neither of the half-sisters married, and the 1911 census shows that Fanny, a dressmaker in partnership with Catherine C. Blaskett, had her half-sister Emily living with her at 27 Talbot Road, Paddington, Emily then being a clerk in the civil service. This was the house in which Fanny died thirty years later. Fanny bequeathed her entire estate to her half-sister, so it seems likely that they remained close for the rest of Fanny's life. Such details of an individual's family background reveal little of their personal motivations and preferences, but they do tell us that Frank lived among artists of different kinds in his extended family, and we might speculate how far the legend of his paternal grandfather, John Randal, might have inspired his life choices.

One artist about whom I have been able to find out nothing is Charlotte C. Murray, responsible for so many exquisite works in the Ruskin Collection. Her flower studies, in particular, are strikingly beautiful and remarkably detailed. Many others besides me would be delighted if anyone reading this had any information about her life and background. I live in the hope that I have inspired someone to make it their business to find out! Rise to Louise's challenge and help us to enrich the Ruskin Collection by telling the story of its artists, subjects and donors. In the meantime, enjoy its treasures both in the Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, and online.

Stuart Eagles

Stuart Eagles and Companion Paul Dawson in conversation. Photo: Kay Walter.

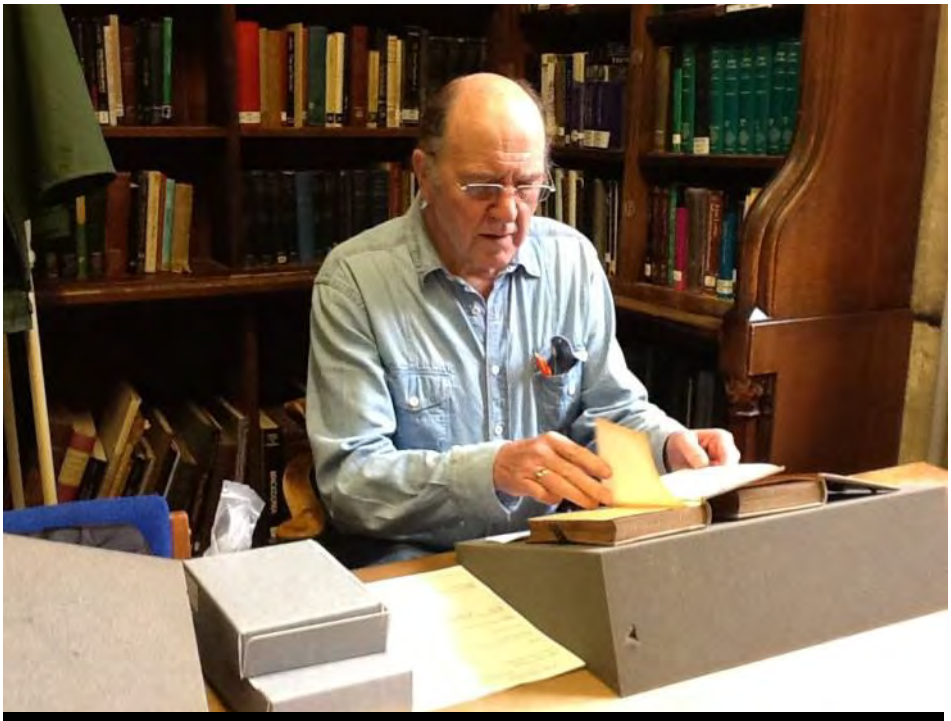
A Letter from the Master of the Guild

Dear Companions,

When our former Secretary Cedric Quayle became a Companion in 1969, he was (he tells me) one of just nine Companions. In those days, there was no Board of Directors and, apart from the Master and Secretary, no officers. In truth the Guild had never been a large organisation—certainly nothing like the utopian league that Ruskin had imagined when, in 1871, he set up St George's Fund.

But it had done good work. St George's Museum in Walkley had been an early success, as is amply demonstrated in a recent and much-recommended Guild publication: *Benjamin Creswick* by Companions Annie Creswick Dawson and Paul Dawson. That booklet tells the story of a young knife-grinder who, inspired by the Museum, went on to become a successful sculptor. In Worcestershire the land donated by George Baker in 1877 went on to nurture an agricultural community that was genuinely Ruskinian. One of those early Companions was Cedric's grandfather and, through the Quayles, something of their original idealism has been carried on into our work in the Wyre Forest today. In the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century well-wishers donated property in Barmouth, Westmill and Sheepscombe. The Barmouth cottages were eventually sold to the local council (for a little over £5000 as the Guild Report for 1972 notes) but the other two properties remain in the Guild's care. So, in 1969, though Ruskin was largely forgotten in the culture at large and though the Walkley Collection had lost its Sheffield home—it was at Reading University, and most of it was in store—the Guild and its ideas were still alive. They were just not terribly visible.

It was in the late 1960s that Ruskin's reputation began to revive, thanks largely to two Americans, Van Akin Burd, whose death at the age of 101 we record and lament in this issue, and John D. Rosenberg, and to one Englishman, Jim Dearden, my predecessor as Master, who like his friend Cedric retired from the Board in 2014. In 1975 the Board of Directors made the momentous decision to sell the Guild's most valuable possession: *The Virgin Adoring the Christ Child* by Andrea del Verrocchio, a painting bought by Ruskin for St George's Museum. I think most of us agree that the Guild should do all it can to avoid the loss of such things, but it has to be admitted that, without that sale, the Guild would not be in anything like such a state of health as I am happy, as Master, to report on now. This year, many of us have, to our great delight, seen the Verrocchio hanging in Sheffield again, on loan from the National Gallery of Scotland for the six-month duration of our third and last Triennial exhibition, *In the Making: Ruskin, Creativity and Craftsmanship*. Special congratulations for obtaining it are due to the Curator of the Ruskin Collection, Louise Pullen, who is currently on maternity leave. The Verrocchio's presence in the exhibition struck me as a symbol of the Guild's revival: its recovery from the vast neglect of Ruskin in the mid-twentieth century. That recovery is I think due to the depth and vitality of Ruskin's teaching, especially as embodied in the Guild.



The Master scrutinises a volume of Ruskin bound by William Morris when he was a student at Exeter College, Oxford, in whose library this photograph was taken (June 2016).

The revival would not have been possible without some sense of continuity with our origins. This was most obviously exemplified on June 27th 2015 when we met in Walkley to unveil two new plaques of Cumbrian slate, one on Ruskin House where St George's Museum was originally located, the other on the grave of the museum's first Curator, Henry Swan, in Walkley's semi-rural cemetery. The placing of those plaques, designed and cut by Richard Watts (a local craftsman, a key figure in the late twentieth-century regeneration of central Sheffield and now a Companion), served to focus the significance of the Guild's main project of 2015, *Ruskin in Sheffield*, planned, nurtured, guided and energised by the wonderful Ruth Nutter. The first phase of *Ruskin in Sheffield* with its emphasis on craftsmanship and the meaning of wealth concluded with the exhibition I have mentioned, *In the Making*, and has since embarked, still steered by Ruth, on its second phase, with 'Make Good Livelihoods' as its title.

It seems to me that the achievement of *Ruskin in Sheffield* has been to show that the Ruskin Collection *belongs* in Sheffield—that its presence there is not merely arbitrary. Ruskin's choice of Sheffield as a home for his Museum was inspired by both its beauty and its ugliness, by the majesty of the Peak District surrounding it and by the squalor of the industrial wastelands, from which he wanted to liberate the local craftsmen. He admired the metalworkers, seeing Sheffield cutlery as justly famous—which it was and still is all over the world—but he did not believe that fineness could long survive the misery of working people when their lives were cut off from the very beauty that to outsiders so evidently surrounded them. So nearly a hundred-and-forty years ago, he took action. He did so in a surprisingly modest way, but what he did has had a profound impact. What we in the 21st century Guild have done in Sheffield is to uncover the effects of Ruskin's action. We have dug

deeper into the place and found his work still living beneath the surface.

The evidence is to be found in what has followed. I was able to announce at last year's AGM that 24 Sheffield people had applied to become Companions. Most of them were present to sign the roll along with a good number of other new Companions. In all, last year, we elected a total of 44 Companions, bringing the total roll-call to more than 200. It now stands at 220.

The Triennial exhibition included three works of craftsmanship commissioned by the Curators, Kirstie Hamilton, Alison Morton and Louise Pullen: a large decorative drawing by Hannah Downing, stained glass by Amber Hiscott, and an installation by Sheffield artists Mir Jansen and Henk Littlewood. All three works were inspired by the beauty of the Guild's land in Worcestershire – the work by Jansen and Littlewood, indeed, is made from all the wood of a Wyre oak tree. The connection between rural Bewdley and urban Sheffield is one I want to deepen, and in the coming years our work in the Wyre is in place to develop as energetically and as radically as that in Sheffield. Director John Iles has built up a loyal team of local volunteers who appear to be working enthusiastically on a wide range of projects, in the environment, in craftsmanship, in education and in matters of social conscience and social responsibility. Companion Tim Selman has taken over the leadership of the Wyre Community Land Trust and collaboration with the Trust is deepening. (Watch this space!) Other Companions, Lynne Roberts and Neil Sinden, are living at St George's Farm and working on various Guild projects. Neil is recording the movements of life there from day to day in a blog, *News from Ruskin Land*, which you can access from the Guild's website homepage. One field at the Farm has now been turned over to wildflower meadow and another has been planted with fruit-trees, very much along the lines of the orchard that was there when the Guild first owned the land. We shall be installing a small saw-mill on what was long a waste part of the land to maximise the income we derive from the sale of timber and, before too long, we hope for cultural activity on the site: a library and study-centre perhaps— there is also hope for some craft workshops, too. Already the educational activity in the Ruskin Studio at Uncllys Farm is developing into a full programme.

So the Guild is growing and, as far as the Master can see, growing happily. The policy is to dig deeply into the assets we have, but also to be open to the world around us. We have already created some bonds between Bewdley and Sheffield. John Iles has long been committed to Care Farming, the process whereby marginalised and psychologically challenged people are encouraged to recover their sense of hope and worth by working in the countryside. Inspired by Companion Bernard Richards, we hope to approach a range of related problems by making our land available to (in particular) children cut off from the benefits of life in the natural world. Nothing could be closer to Ruskin than that!

In my own life as Master I have been lucky enough to share Ruskinian ideas and the Guild's values with many friends abroad. Most of you will be aware that I have been building up connections with Venice. Last year, I spent five months in that city as a Visiting Professor at Ca' Foscari University. This year I have spent a further two months there as a schoolteacher: teaching the history of Venetian art to 13 and 14 year-olds at the Liceo Marco Polo, just round the corner from the Accademia. Importantly for the Guild, we have been forming a close relationship with the Scuola San Rocco, the charitable institution whose building was so lavishly decorated by Ruskin's hero, Jacopo Tintoretto. This year, on February 19th, a delegation of 25 *confratelli* and *consorelle* (brothers and sisters) of the Scuola came over to Sheffield to see the Ruskin Collection and the Triennial exhibition. They stayed for a colloquy, which was addressed by both their Master, Franco Posocco, and myself, by our Sheffield Director Janet Barnes, by Companion Emma Sdegno (also a consorella) and by our Acting Curator Hannah Brignell. They then went on to see the Cathedrals of York and Lincoln.

And then there is North America. Our transatlantic branch is developing fast under the guidance of Companions Sara Atwood, our North American co-ordinator, and Jim Spates. We have had two symposia in Berkeley, California, and one in Roycroft, New York State. Last year I paid two visits to California to address new and potential Companions there. In September I was invited to Los Angeles by the Ruskin Art Club (which incidentally dates back to 1888) to lecture to them on 'Ruskin's Language'. While there, I gave another lecture on Ruskin and the Environment at the University of Southern California. The Club's Director Gabriel Meyer and its President Ron Austin, have since become Companions, as have three of their colleagues: Edward Bosley, Elena Karina Byrne and David Judson. I then went on to lecture to our friends (led by Companions Gray Brechin, Tim Holton and Jane McKinne-Mayer) in Berkeley and San Francisco. In December I went out to Berkeley again to speak in a programme I arranged in collaboration with Companion Nicholas Friend. We held four meetings there with two lectures (one by him, one by me), a poetry reading (by me) and a dialogue between the two of us. One marvellous connection I have established for us is with the Swedenborgian Church in San Francisco, an Arts and Crafts building of profoundly Ruskinian character, where I have now spoken three times. Swedenborgianism influenced a number of important Americans in the nineteenth century, including several with Ruskinian sympathies: for instance, the first Minister of the San Francisco church, Joseph Worcester, who together with the Arts & Crafts architect Bernard Maybeck probably designed it, and such famous names as the philosopher Emerson and the explorer and naturalist John Muir. After my last talk, to my great delight, the Minister of the church, the Rev. Junchol Lee, asked to become a Companion of the Guild. Junchol is American but a native of South Korea. It was wonderful to talk the language of Ruskin to someone whose outlook had its roots in Buddhism and Taoism.

I am conscious that I have not even mentioned important aspects of the Guild's work over the last year. I think, for example of this year's John Ruskin Prize exhibition, shown at the New Art Gallery, Walsall, and then at Trinity Buoy Wharf, and of the symposium on economics organised by our Treasurer Chris Harris and Companion Catherine Howarth of ShareAction. More recently, in June, we enjoyed a Companions' Weekend in Sheepscombe and Bewdley and, a fortnight later discussed, at a roundtable organised by Director Rachel Dickinson in collaboration with Manchester Metropolitan University, Ruskin's influence on aspects of sustainability. Neil Sinden and Lynne Roberts have recently run a series of varied consultation seminars in which aspects of the planned developments on Ruskin Land have been discussed. Two of these took place at the Ruskin Studio at Uncllys Farm. The first engaged people in the community art world, especially those from Sheffield. The second was aimed at education providers in the Wyre region. A third seminar took place at the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, and those involved in the region's arts and culture services took part. Finally, the Campaign to Protect

Rural England hosted a seminar at their offices in Southwark, which involved nationally prominent environmentalist organisations, plus media and arts people. There is also much else. Such events are either discussed elsewhere in this issue or will be in next year's. I wanted, myself, to talk about what I think of as the encouraging growth of the Guild. I think we have much to celebrate this year.

Before I sign off I would like to mention some personal matters. We have lost a number of Companions since our last issue: Van Akin Burd, Peter Emmett, Derek Hyatt, Michael Hudson, Suzanne Varady and Asa Briggs. They will be greatly missed. I send warm congratulations to Louise Pullen and her husband on the birth of their son, Leo. And I'm sure I can confidently speak for all of you when I praise our former Secretary Stuart Eagles not only for his dedication, imagination and industry but for the extraordinary courage and determination he shows in the face of adversity. Now our Communications Officer, he is responsible for our website and social media and, of course, edits this magazine, the very existence of which is a mark of his perseverance. Stuart remains your first point of contact as a Companion or friend of the Guild. I would also like to welcome to our team Martin Green, who joins us as Administrator.

Good wishes to you all,

Clive Wilmer.

JOHN RUSKIN'S BOTANICAL BOOKS: NEW DISCOVERIES AND WORK IN PROGRESS

David Ingram

In August 2015 the Secretary wrote to Companions with the exciting news that the Guild had purchased two sets of botanical books, which had once belonged to John Ruskin. The books were subsequently transferred, temporarily, to the Ruskin Library in Lancaster [1] to enable me to carry out a preliminary survey, but they are now permanently housed in the Guild's Ruskin Collection in Sheffield, and some volumes are currently on display in the gallery.

The first set turned out to be a missing link in the chain of Ruskin's botanical studies, which ultimately found full, idiosyncratic expression in the two volumes of *Proserpina* (*Works* 25). It comprised the six volumes of a 2nd edition of *British Phaenogamous Botany* [Flowering Plants], by William Baxter (Curator, Oxford Botanic Garden), published between 1834 and 1843. Ruskin's copy (**Fig. 1**), which is listed in James Dearden's catalogue of Ruskin's Library (2012), and mentioned by Collingwood in *Ruskin Relics* (1903), is also referred to by Ruskin in a letter dated 1855, to Jane Carlyle, in which he says that while writing *Modern Painters* '… I became dissatisfied with the Linnaean, Jussieuan, and Everybody-elsian arrangement of plants, and have accordingly arranged a system of my own; and unbound my botanical book, and rebound it in brighter green, with all the pages through other, and backside foremost…and am now printing my new arrangement in a legible manner, on interleaved foolscap. I consider this arrangement one of my great achievements of the year … … '.

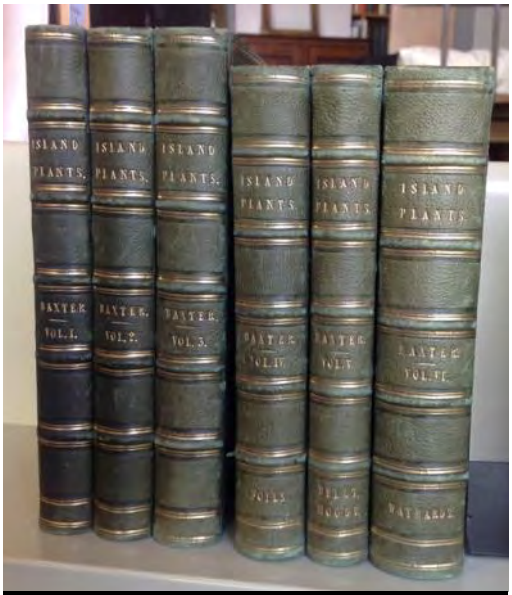


Fig. 1. The re-ordered and re-bound volumes of **Baxter.**

The copy of *Baxter* I studied was indeed bound in bright green morocco, the individual volumes being numbered and lettered in gilt on the spine. The contents, if not 'backside foremost', were certainly not as Baxter intended. His original six volumes included all the plates, arranged in the random order in which they had been produced, with each being followed by a description of the species illustrated. A series of indexes in the final volume then unified the whole work, taxonomically and alphabetically. In Ruskin's copy, all the descriptions had been separated from their corresponding plates and bound together in Volumes 1 to 3, in their original order and with their original page numbering. The coloured plates were bound separately, in Volumes IV to VI (*sic*), and had been completely re-ordered and re-numbered.

It was evident that the volumes had at one time been owned by Ruskin's mother, Margaret, since several of the early pages of Volume 1 had been signed by her in black ink and dated 1837 (**Fig. 2**). Some of these signatures show evidence of cropping, which presumably occurred during Ruskin's rebinding of the work. The signatures have been confirmed to be those of Margaret Ruskin by Stephen Wildman and James Dearden, who compared them with signatures on two letters in the Ruskin

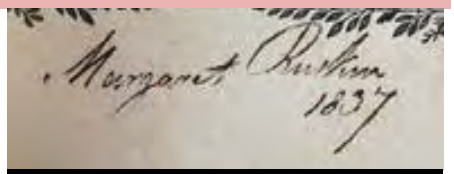


Fig. 2. Margaret Ruskin's signature in Vol. 1 of Baxter.

Library, written during the 1860s. Although the *Baxter* was signed over thirty years previously, there is no doubt that the signatures were by the same hand.

Ruskin clearly intended that the re-ordered *Baxter* should be put to good use, for he took great care in numbering and cross-referencing the descriptions and plates. He retained the original page numbers of the descriptions of genera and species in Volumes 1 to 3, which were sequential throughout, but gave each a two-part cross-reference number comprising the new volume and plate number for the illustration of the genus or species referred to. Moreover, since the plates in volumes IV to VI had been re-ordered, each was given a new plate number and a two-part cross-reference number, the latter leading the reader back to the relevant volume and page in Volumes 1 to 3.

Thus, for example, page 1 in Ruskin's Vol. 1 of *Baxter*, which carries the description of Fritillary, has the cross-reference number 5.8. This leads the reader to Ruskin's Volume V, Plate 8, which is a coloured engraving of the typical chequer-patterned flowers of Snake's Head Fritillary. The accompanying cross-reference number 1.1 then leads the reader back to the description of Fritillary on page 1 of Volume 1.

For me, the most thrilling discovery was that the plates in Volumes IV to VI had been re-arranged by Ruskin into entirely new Classes and Orders with interleaved sheets of pale blue foolscap paper cut to size, just as he says in his letter to Jane Carlyle.

Although he had retained the Linnean genus and species names (the binomials) used by Baxter, he completely ignored existing taxonomies for the higher levels of classification and grouped the plates into five Classes of his own devising: I. Foils (flowers with un-joined petals); II. Bells (with bell-like flowers); III Hoods (with hooded flowers); IV Grasses (true grasses and plants that look like grasses); and V Waywards (plants which he could not fit into the previous four classes). Each of these Classes was then subdivided into 'Orders', the equivalent of modern plant Families, on the basis of a variety of unrelated, idiosyncratic and subjective criteria including, variously: petal number, shape and colour; plant size or form; habitat (dry/wet land or water); flower form or similarity to the apparel of particular people; inflorescence structure; uses, especially as medicines or food; undesirable properties (e.g. poisonous, weedy, spiny); and supposed representation of particular human traits or conditions (e.g. chattiness, spitefulness, gender or old age). Explicitly male (stamens) and female (pistil) characters, which were used in all scientific classifications at the time, were completely ignored.

Most of Ruskin's characteristics were too variable, too subjective and therefore too unreliable to be used as the basis of a scientific classification that takes proper account of biological relatedness among families, genera and species. Nevertheless, the scheme does provide a witty and picturesque, rough and ready set of criteria that a non-scientist or young person trying to put a name to an un-named plant specimen might find useful.

It is not possible to reproduce the details of the whole of Ruskin's new classification scheme, but **Fig. 3** gives a sense of how the descriptions were laid out on the pale blue interleaved pages. The following transcription of the Orders included in the class 'Hoods', however, gives a glimpse of Ruskin's 'medieval fantasy' (and somewhat offensive) taxonomic language of knights, dragons and monks.

Class 3. Hoods
Orders:

1. Monk's Hoods. 'Apt to be dangerous, and connected with Snaps of Dragons, and Gloves of Foxes. Type, the Arum; when … [unreadable word] … and well hooded as the Arum, very beautiful.' [E.g. Monk's-hood and Purple Foxglove.]

2. Knight's Hoods. 'Known by the attached Spurs.' [E.g. Columbine].

3. Sailor's Hoods. 'Arranged in clusters on Masts, above leaves set like Mast heads on "Tops".' [E.g. White dead-nettle].

4. Monkey's Hoods. 'Having a strange gift of Imitation.' [Mainly Orchid family; e.g. Bee Orchid and Monkey Orchid.]

5. Clustered Hoods. [E.g. Blue-bottle (now Cornflower).]

6. Branching Hoods. [Common Marjoram.]

7. Old Ladies' Hoods. 'Generally stooping or creeping; and very good for making tea, or medicinal draughts.' [E.g. Wild Thyme.]

8. Young Ladies' Hoods. 'Generally pleasant to behold, and serviceable in households [e.g. Dyer's Green-weed]; but apt to be very troublesome in the form of Tares [e.g. Prickly Rest-harrow]. Sometimes showing inclinations towards gay bonnets' [e.g. Everlasting Pea].

The pages of *Baxter* are also scattered with cross-references and marginal and textual notes written in black ink in Ruskin's unmistakable hand. The most common, over forty, are cross-references to what is cryptically referred to as 'F' (Fig. 4). These are always in the form of a number sequence, but written in various ways, including, for example: F.6.922; F. V. 722; F.972 (6); F. 758/V; F.V.722; F. 7. 1/90 [=1090]; and F. 8. 1266. The identity of 'F' was a puzzle to begin with, for it could refer to any one of a number of floras and other botanical books in Ruskin's library, but by a process of elimination I found that it always referred to a plate in *Flora Danica*, a flora of great beauty in which most of the plants illustrated are reproduced life-size. I was able to find a copy of this enormous, classic work, edited by G. C. Oeder between 1776 and 1865, in the Library of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. Moreover, the plates in this copy were grouped in exactly the same volumes as in Ruskin's own copy. The reasons for these cross-references were rarely given, but most were to a plant of the

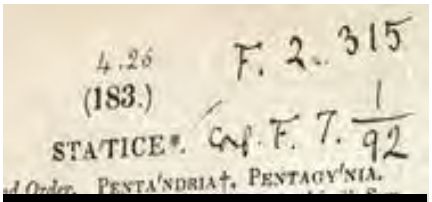
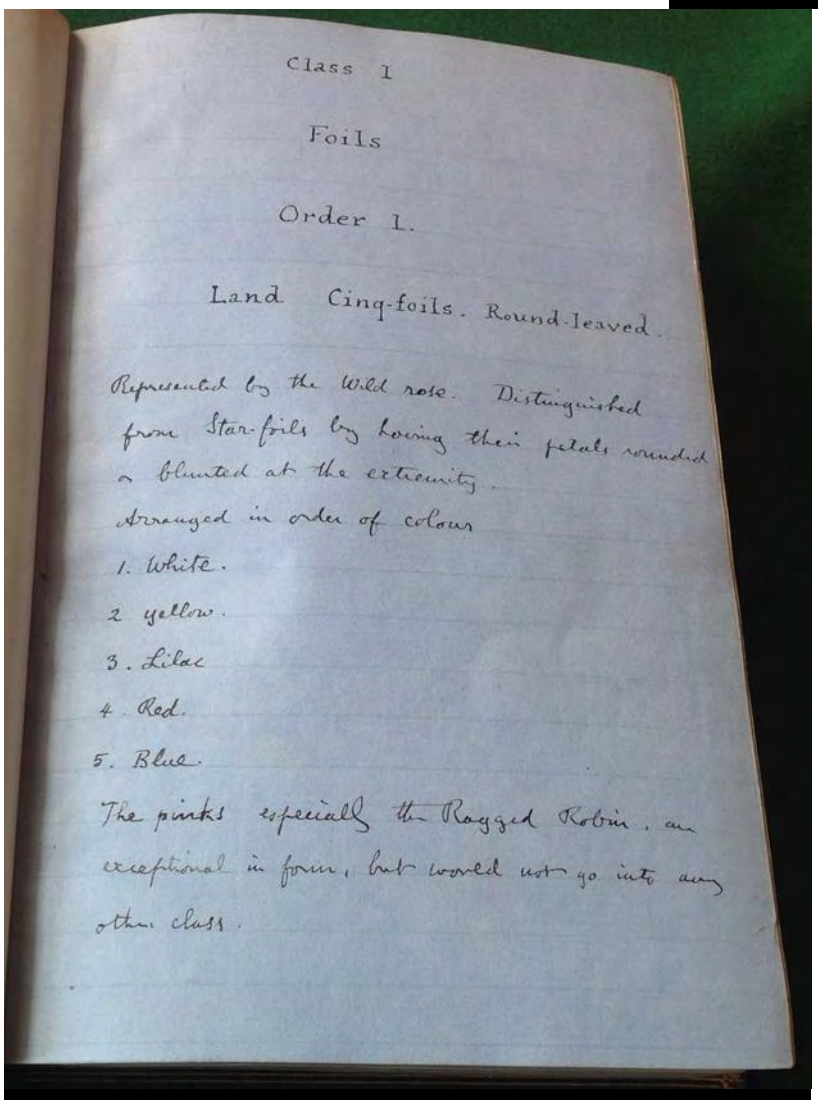


Fig. 4. Two cross-references to 'F' in Baxter. Also note the cross- reference 4.26 above the page number, indicating that a plate of 'STATICE LIMONIUM' (Sea Lavender) may be found on page 26 of Volume IV.


Class 1

Foils

Order 1.

Land Cinq-foils. Round-leaved.

Represented by the Wild rose. Distinguished from Star-foils by having their petals rounded & blunted at the extremity.

Arranged in order of colour

1. White.
2. yellow.
3. Lilac
4. Red.
5. Blue.

The pinks especially the Ragged Robin, are exceptional in form, but would not go into any other class.

Fig. 3. An interleaved page of foolscap in Baxter showing the description of the first of Ruskin's new Orders.

same genus as that described in *Baxter*. 'Conf.' and 'conf.', which sometimes precede 'F', presumably mean 'Confirmed', referring maybe to an identification, etymological derivation or idea. Since Ruskin did not acquire his copy of *Flora Danica* until 1866, it is presumed that these cross-references were inserted during or after 1866, more than ten years after the volumes were re-ordered and rebound, perhaps during a period of feverish botanical activity following his acquisition of *Flora Danica*.

Most other cross-references and annotations in *Baxter* were to other botanical or Classical works in Ruskin's Library (as listed by Dearden, 2012) or are comments on the text, sometimes in Greek script. Most concern the origins of botanical names or terms, a popular subject of study at the time, as evidenced by the large number of Baxter's own etymological footnotes. Others concern the medicinal or practical uses of various species or are aesthetic observations. I will quote just a few that stand out in my mind.

A typical etymological cross reference may be seen on the plate of *Andromeda polifolia*, Marsh Andromeda, where Ruskin has written ' … Named Andromeda by Linnaeus, because its haunts [mountain marshes] are so exposed and desolate … For account of it, see Loudon's Arboretum p. 1105.'

A most delightful non-etymological cross-reference is to Ruskin's first edition of *Gerarde's Herball*, published in 1597. On page 334 of *Baxter*, which deals with the genus *Rubus* (Blackberry [*R. fruticosus*] and Raspberry [*R. idaeus*]), Ruskin has written: ' … Gerarde 1089. Note his odd taste 1090. 1.' Again I located a copy in the library of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and much enjoyed the privilege of looking up Ruskin's reference in this legendary herbal. On Page 1089, Gerarde refers to 'Of the Bramble or black Berrie Bush' and '*Rubus ideus* (*sic*) The Raspis bush, or Hindberrie.' In the first note, on p. 1090, he alludes to the taste of 'Bramble' as being 'between sweet and sower, very soft and full of grains' and the taste of 'Raspis or Framboise' as 'of taste not very pleasant'. Odd taste indeed, as Ruskin suggests.

The most intriguing cross-reference is to 'My Flora 1.21', on the page of *Baxter* that deals with the Genus *Delphinium*. No reason for the cross-reference is given. The fact that no author is mentioned suggests a personal collection of pressed plants or botanical drawings. It is not, however, the *Flora of Chamouni*, the only book of pressed plants by Ruskin that I know of, nor, so far as can be ascertained, to his *Savoy Flora*, referred to in the diary notebook for 1856-9. The identity of this work therefore remains a mystery.

An example of an internal cross-reference forms part of the description on p. 201 of the genus *Drosera* – the Sundews – which are carnivorous plants. Beside Baxter's footnote about the [protein degrading enzyme] exudates from their leaves Ruskin has written in the margin 'Conf 209', a reference to a page concerned with another genus of carnivorous plants, *Pinguicula*—the Butterworts. At the top of this page Ruskin has written 'Conf. Drosera. 201', taking him back to *Drosera*. This is notable for being one of the very few annotations suggesting any scientific curiosity and also because several plants of *Pinguicula*, one with characteristic violet flowers, appear in the bottom right foreground of the portrait of Ruskin by John Everett Millais, started in 1853 during their ill-fated trip to Scotland and completed in 1854.

A nicely calculated insult to an artist occurs on p. 177, verso, where a footnote marked by Ruskin tells the story of how the seventeenth-century French artist Charles Le Brun left a painting with a thistle in the foreground to dry outdoors, resulting in the canvas being eaten by a passing donkey. The writer suggested that Le Brun well deserved this high praise from nature, but Ruskin clearly disagreed and added: '!! Of Le Brun of all men! The least able or willing to do a bit of still life.'

In addition to the annotations on the text, twenty-four plates are annotated to greater or lesser extent, in particular the first few plates in Volume IV. Ruskin's hand-written notes and comments are fitted around the illustrations and mainly relate to the habitat, the origins of names or uses. A typical example is shown in **Fig. 5**. It seems that having written comments on these few plates Ruskin lost interest in the enterprise or found another, more attractive project to absorb his energies.

Conspicuous by their absence in the annotations and cross-references in the re-ordered *Baxter*, or in the new classification itself, are any references to the works of the many eminent late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century plant taxonomists. By turning his back on earlier classification schemes and the work of contemporaries, and by failing to recognise and build on their strengths, Ruskin missed the opportunity, both in re-classifying the plants illustrated in *Baxter* and later in writing *Proserpina* (1875-86), to make an enduring contribution to plant taxonomic study. However, as Collingwood observes in *Ruskin Relics*: '[His botanical books all

Fig. 5. Annotated Plate 12 of Lily of the Valley in Baxter. Note the cross-reference 1.78, indicating that the description of this species may be found on page 78 of Volume 1.

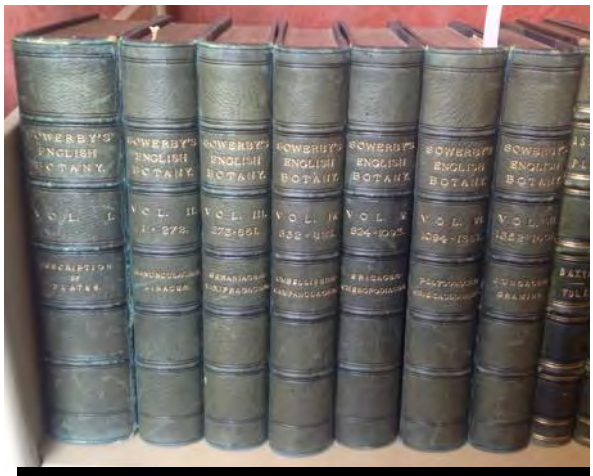


Fig. 6. The re-ordered and re-bound volumes of Sowerby.

showed] his purely artistic and unscientific interest in natural history', and it is Ruskin's plant classification from the point of view of a nineteenth-century artist, rather than a scientist, that makes the re-ordered *Baxter*, and the two volumes of *Proserpina*, so fascinating and revealing.

The most significant cross-reference of all appears on p. 14 of the descriptions, which is devoted to the Willowherbs, where Ruskin has written 'Sowerby 4. 495 … '. This leads us to the second set of books purchased by the Guild: the first seven volumes (dealing with flowering plants) of a second edition of J. E. Smith & J. Sowerby's *English Botany*, published in parts between 1832 and 1840, and usually known simply as *Sowerby* (**Fig.6**). Ruskin is known to have owned first and third editions of *Sowerby*, but this second edition has not previously been listed. Bound with the *Sowerby* is a seventh edition of *The London Catalogue Of British Plants*, published in 1874 by The London Botanical Exchange Club, showing that the *Sowerby* cannot have been re-ordered before this date. This short work of only 32 pages, with each species listed being numbered in sequence, was edited by the great taxonomic editor, H. C. Watson, and was intended as a standard for botanists, especially amateurs, assembling and classifying their own herbaria and collections and exchanging specimens with fellow enthusiasts.

Volume I of the re-ordered and re-bound *Sowerby* comprises, firstly, the unaltered *London Catalogue*, followed by the descriptions of the genera and species of all the flowering plants included in the first seven volumes of *Sowerby*, in the order in which they were originally printed, but with all the plates removed. Each of the pages of descriptions has been numbered, in pencil, in a hand that resembles that of Ruskin, in sequence up to number 646.

Volumes II-VII contain all the plates of the flowering plants described in Volume I, but rearranged in the order in which the species are listed in *The London Catalogue*. Each plate has been given a number, in pencil, this being the number in *The London Catalogue* of the species illustrated. The numbers appear to be in Ruskin's hand, the distinctive sevens and eights being particularly useful in coming to this conclusion.

Bound in at the end of Volume I are several narrow-lined manuscript pages divided into columns with faint pencil lines. Listed in these, in black ink, in 'Ruskin's best hand writing' (according to Stephen Wildman) are all the Genera, in alphabetical order, together with the number of the Volume in which the plates for the genus may be found, the plate number of the first species of that genus illustrated and the page number in Volume I where the genus is described (**Fig. 7**).

There are also numerous, scattered marginal annotations written lightly in pencil in Volume I and on the plates in Vols. II-VII. Many of these refer to places close to Cambridge and appear to be in the hand(s) of someone other than Ruskin (**Fig. 8**).

Perhaps, by 1874, all Ruskin's creative and critical botanical energies had been exhausted in the writing of *Proserpina* and by illness, so that he was willing to accept without challenge H. C. Watson's elegantly uncomplicated and pragmatic, but certainly not simplistic, 1874 scheme of classification of plants in his *London Catalogue*. Whatever the reason, he was apparently prepared to re-order a second edition of *Sowerby* according to its recommendations and to devote considerable time and energy to compiling a

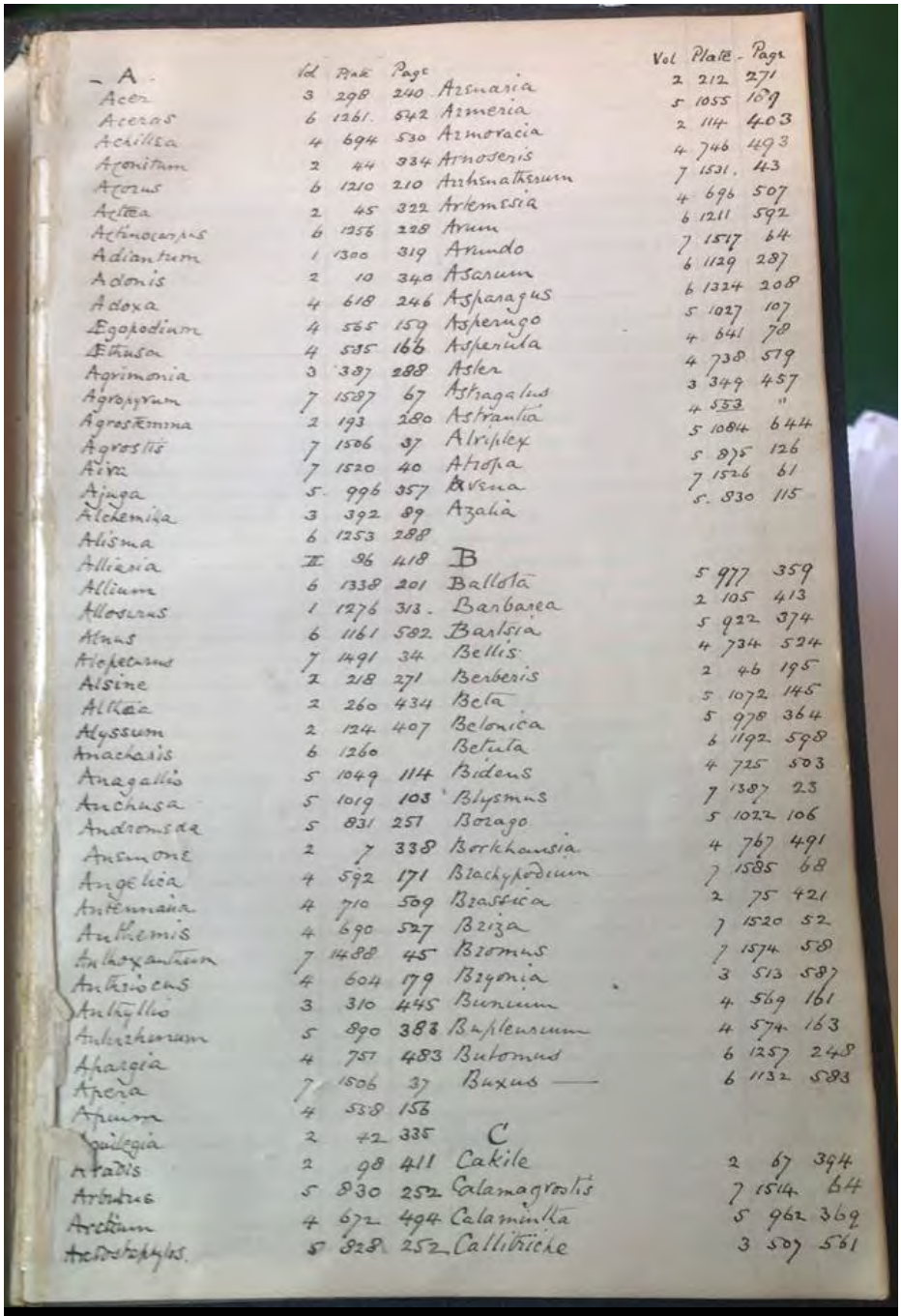


Fig. 7. The first page of the hand-written index at the end of Volume I of Sowerby.

Fig. 8. A plate of Pasque Lily in Sowerby. Faintly visible at the top of the page is a pencil note that this species was observed on the chalky dyke of the Devil's Ditch, near Cambridge.

detailed, comprehensive and neatly written index to facilitate the use of the volumes. In short, the re-ordered *Sowerby* seems to provide a gentle and clear end point to Ruskin's botanical explorations.

To return to the significance of the *Sowerby* cross-reference in *Baxter*, which had been re-ordered in 1855 or earlier: this is a reference to Plate 495, of Chickweed Willow-herb (actually in Volume 3, not 4 as Ruskin mistakenly wrote) in the re-ordered second edition of *Sowerby* purchased by the Guild. The cross-reference in *Baxter* must have been inserted after 1874, the earliest date for the re-binding of the *Sowerby*, and provides strong evidence to support the assumption that Ruskin owned and re-ordered the volumes of both *Baxter* and *Sowerby*. A previous owner of the books has noted this important cross-reference, for a note on a slip of paper has been inserted at plate 495 of *Sowerby*, which reads 'Cross-ref. from Baxter 1.14.'

Finally, and intriguingly, slipped into one of the volumes of *Sowerby* was a separate, four-page, hand-written letter, dated 'October 3rd 1920', addressed to 'Dear Frank' (who seems to have been a Cambridge botanist) and signed 'W.G.R.', of Aston Botterell, Salop. Most of the text is taken up with lists of plants, which were found while the writer was with the recipient between 'Aug 26 and Sept 11'. Some species are marked with a 'w', which the writer says 'stands for Wicken' (a fen near Cambridge). It is possible that 'Frank' was responsible for some or all of the pencil annotations in *Sowerby*, many of which link particular species with locations close to Cambridge (e.g. **Fig. 8**), but this cannot be concluded with certainty. The identities of 'W.G.R.' and 'Frank' (there were at least four eminent botanists named Frank with Cambridge connections alive in 1920) remain to be discovered, as does the authorship of the pencil annotations in *Sowerby*—work still in progress.

NOTE

1. I thank the Master and former Secretary for making the transfer possible and the staff of the Ruskin Library for their invaluable help and support throughout the period of study, and the staff of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Library for access to early botanical books. A full account of the research was published in the Spring 2016 issue of the *Ruskin Review and Bulletin*.

David Ingram is Honorary Professor, Edinburgh and Lancaster Universities.

The Guild extends its thanks to David for his work on these volumes and to all Companions and friends who contributed to their purchase.

FORTHCOMING LECTURE

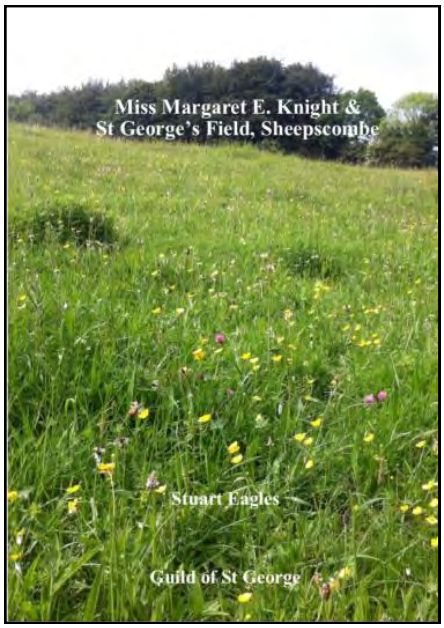
Some of these volumes are currently on display at the Ruskin Collection gallery in Sheffield. Professor Ingram will be giving a talk on 'John Ruskin and Flora' at the Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, on October 3rd 2016 at 1pm. See the events page on the Guild website for further details: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/events/forthcoming/>.

Stuart Eagles, *Miss Margaret E. Knight & St George's Field, Sheepscombe.* (York: Guild of St George Publications, 2015).

It must have been in the summer of 1990 that Jill and I were pottering about in deepest Gloucestershire. One night we stayed at a little Bed & Breakfast on the side of that peaceful valley at Slad. The following morning we drove back up to the main road, and passed the pub which had been Laurie Lee's local. Here the landlord stocked copies of *Cider with Rosie* for visiting pilgrims to buy. 'Mr Lee, sitting over there, will probably sign it for you if you ask him nicely.' I remember the story of the American bookseller who advertised for sale 'a rare *unsigned* copy' of the book!

That morning we were heading for the other side of the valley to visit Ian Hodgkins's bookshop. He specialised in Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites, and I'm sure I bought something! Then I was taken downstairs to meet the then very unwell Mr Hodgkins. Nearby he had a tottering pile of the paper-bound introductions to the Ruskin Library Edition which were distributed to the press as review copies. He wouldn't sell them to me because he hadn't decided what he was going to do with them. But he did show me a collection of box-wood engravings for illustrations in some of Ruskin's later books, and he gave me the line block used to print the vignette of the Botticelli roses on the title page of *The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*.

We drove on to nearby Sheepscombe because I knew the Guild owned a field here, and I wanted to see it. All I knew about it was that it had been given to the Guild in the 1930s by a Miss Knight. We stopped at the pub for a sandwich and asked for directions to St George's Field. I explained that I was a Companion of the Guild and we owned the field. 'Oh no,' said the landlord, 'it's owned by the village; that's where we get our mushrooms.' I didn't argue, and we were directed up a lane, somewhere behind the pub,



which would take us to the cricket field. We had to cross this field and next to it was ours.

The cricket field had been given to the village by Laurie Lee and it was fairly steeply sloped. I was reminded of the account of the cricket match in *England, their England,* with the bowling blacksmith appearing over the horizon just a couple of paces before delivering the ball! As bidden, we crossed the field, and there was St George's Field—even more steeply sloped. There was, at that time of year, little to see, but we admired it, and retraced our steps to the pub car park.

I was next at Sheepscombe several years later in company with a number of directors of the Guild and two representatives of Natural England. Again we lunched at the Sheepscombe pub and then in two 4x4s we drove to the field. We were directed to drive to Far End. My perverse sense of humour immediately linked this to the buses/trams in Sheffield which advertised that they went Half Way'! Having arrived at Far End, where the lane finished, we then turned left and climbed up the hillside to our field. As I remember, it was a very wet day but an enjoyable visit during which we spotted a number of wild flowers and butterflies.

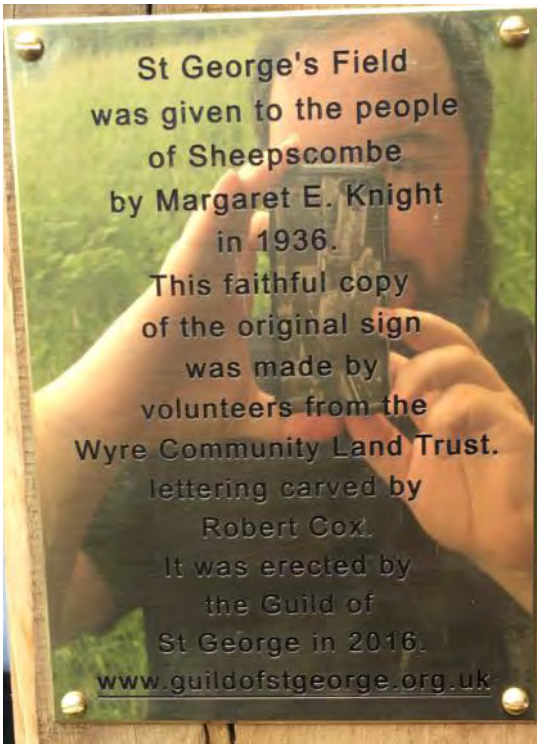
Several times over the years I had *wondered* who Miss Knight was, and why she had given us the field—but now I *know.*

In his fascinating booklet, Stuart Eagles, who is a painstaking and successful researcher, reveals how he finally discovered that Miss Knight was related to the Knight's Castile Soap family. She finally settled in rural Sheepscombe. Writing in his 1936-7 Master's Report, T. Edmund Harvey reported that the field 'was in danger of being utilised for the erection of unsightly shacks'. Miss Knight wanted the field to be preserved as an open space 'for the benefit of the people of the village'. She bought it and gave it into the care of the Guild.

Over the years the field was let to local farmers for grazing. Because of the way it has been managed over the years it has become a limestone grassland with an exceptionally rich habitat of herbs, grasses and butterflies. Its importance was recognised in 1971 when it was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. In the following year we leased it to the Gloucestershire Trust for Natural Conservation. It is now managed for us, with other properties in the area, by Natural England.

I can heartily recommend this fascinating booklet to you. Both Cedric Quayle and I are honoured to have it dedicated to us.

James S. Dearden



On June 11th 2016, Companions celebrated the 80th anniversary of St George's Field being given into the Guild's care. A copy of the original sign that welcomed visitors to this wildflower meadow was commissioned by the Guild, and made of Wyre oak by carpenter Mac Wassell, with lettering by Robert Cox. Mac and Robert are pictured right and centre in the image (left) with Stuart Eagles far left. Photo: Marcus Waithe. Above is an image of the brass plaque on the back of the sign, marking the occasion. You can see the Editor's reflection in the brass.

RUSKIN IN SHEFFIELD 2015
AN INTRODUCTION AND A SUMMARY

Janet Barnes

In 1875, John Ruskin chose Walkley in Sheffield as the hillside home for St George's Museum. For fifteen years, it housed the remarkable collection of paintings, drawings, architectural casts, books and minerals personally assembled by Ruskin himself. Its purpose was to educate and inspire the metalworkers of Sheffield, whose skill he declared to be the best in the world. A year later, he bought a farm in Totley for a group of Sheffield working men to live and work on. Both of these ventures were experiments—the one primarily educational, the other ostensibly agricultural—and they were equally radical in their conception. They were pragmatic expressions of Ruskin's ideas about 'wealth' and a 'better life' which he had been exploring in print in *Fors Clavigera* (1871-1884), his monthly letters 'to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain'. It was in that work that he developed his plans for a utopian society which became known as the Guild of St George, initiated expressly in order to slay the dragon of modern, industrial capitalism. It was a means of providing exemplary alternatives to contemporary practices—suggesting other ways to live and work. His Sheffield projects were central to that mission.

Although Ruskin hoped that the Guild would establish a national network of St George's museums, the Sheffield museum was the only one that was successfully realised. It was therefore an attempt, possibly unique in British culture, to 'seed' in an environment of undoubted technical skill, examples of Europe's great cultural achievements with the purpose of stimulating a culture that could proudly stand alongside them. This truly makes the St George's Museum culturally a 'Sheffield experiment' that continues to this day.

The *Ruskin in Sheffield* project was first discussed in 2011 by two Directors of the Guild, the Master, Clive Wilmer, and a former Curator of the Ruskin Collection, Jacqueline Yallop. Although the Collection had a prominent place in the city, being on display in the Ruskin Gallery in the Millennium Gallery, both felt that a deeper awareness of Ruskin's connection to Sheffield might be fruitfully awakened in the city.

Given that historically Ruskin's main connections with Sheffield were in Walkley and Totley, both now suburbs of the city of Sheffield, it was agreed that these two communities and their surrounding areas would be the focus of the *Ruskin in Sheffield* project.

The main aims of the project were to reassess the interest in Ruskin and his impact on these communities during the late 19th century. In addition, it was to show how Ruskin's values could inspire people today. The Guild hoped that the project would encourage a new and informed audience to explore the Ruskin Collection at the Millennium Gallery.

The Guild is an independent charity run largely by the Directors on a voluntary basis, so professional skills were required. We were therefore delighted to appoint Ruth Nutter in 2013 to be the Producer of *Ruskin in Sheffield* which, under her leadership, emerged as a community heritage project. Ruth had a great deal of experience in creating and running events and activities which brought together artists and diverse communities.

At this preliminary stage of the project, the Guild had only a basic idea of what the public programme might look like, but it was understood that it would have to be delivered in partnership with other community and cultural organisations within Sheffield. The Guild was only able to pay for the post of Producer, so external funding had to be sought. One of Ruth's key skills was in fundraising, however, and she was successful in an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £67,100, which enabled the project to go ahead.

During 2014 Ruth developed an exciting and wide-ranging public programme which reflected the reasons why Ruskin had originally placed his collection in Walkley. The events and activities, most of which were free, were created out of the collective enthusiasm of many volunteers, community groups and cultural organisations in Sheffield.

The main programme of events in the project's inaugural year took place from May to November 2015 in Walkley, Rivelin Valley, Stannington, Totley and the city centre. The project sought to explore Ruskin's legacy in the city in Sheffield in terms of the environment, education, craftsmanship and social responsibility. It was achieved by collaborating with many voluntary hosts, historians and artists, including InHeritage, Freeman College, GrowTheatre, Totley History Group, Rivelin Valley Conservation Group, Walkley community groups, Cabaret Boom Boom, Poly-Technic, the University of Sheffield and Museums Sheffield. The Guild would like to thank everyone who became involved.

The attempt here is merely to summarise the 2015 programme, but you can explore much more about individual events online at <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/ruskin-in-sheffield/> and some of the key participants write in greater detail about their involvement in later pages of this magazine.

Ruskin in Sheffield was launched at Walkley Community Centre on 1st February 2015. A talk later that month by Dr Marcus Waithe revealed the full context of Ruskin's relationship with Walkley. The Pop Up Ruskin Museum, often

WOW 24/7

How Ruskin lives

FESTIVAL

BY IAN SOUTAR

The people of Sheffield are being invited over the coming months to rediscover the legacy and spirit of John Ruskin in the city.

A programme of walks, talks and events running from May to November is launched on Saturday with the opening of a Pop-Up Ruskin Museum in Walkley.

In 1875 Ruskin chose Walkley as the location for the St George's Museum to house a remarkable collection of paintings, drawings, architectural casts, books and minerals with the aim of educating and inspiring the metal-workers of Sheffield, whose skill he declared the best in the world.

But the Rediscover Ruskin in Sheffield event will reach out beyond Walkley and it will reveal his connection also to Stannington, Rivelin Valley and Totley in

This sculpture was constructed from oak and slate by local furniture maker Robert Almond and is based on a flower press, reflecting Ruskin's fascination with natural history. Kate and Steve will fill the press

Photo: Steve Pool

Celebrat John Rus

Over the next two y Abbeyfield Park Hou programme including placement and works the Victorian thinker a John Ruskin.

Artists Kate Genever and Ste successfully applied for fundi produce new work about Rus encouraged people to see cle imaginatively and act boldly. established the Guild of St G create better places for peopl work. He went on to create a collection of visual art, natura specimens and manuscripts t and educate nineteenth centu workers in Sheffield.

Live music keeps the crowds entertained

Maia, Jack, Rosa and Albie d

rait of an idealist

VANT: He was a writer, artist and social campaigner, but w cy in danger of being forgotten, **Stephen McClarence** report serve his place in history. Main pictures by **Scott Merrylees**

t Barnes with the De Croy Book of Hours, her favourite object in the collection

LY the name on the terpost offers a clue bout what used to go on here – 'Ruskin House' it says in bold, no-nonsense letters. Though now converted into flats and other houses, the building d place in Sheffield history. ep hillside in the suburb House was once St all, sturdy villa ion of pictures, e built up artist

by £67,000 from collection tween

influenced Gandhi, Tolstoy and the Labour Party, admired the skill of the city's cutlery and tool-making craftsmen.

He was dismayed, however, by the impoverished conditions – social and educational – in which they lived. "The city some of the worst slum conditions untry," says Ruth Nutter. "He to be a good craftsman you

Having fun in the sun crowds flock to festiv

support a unity. They n food, make a and generally ilde. The events rmance led by songwriter Sally n Ruth Nutter, dience and get kin, to engage- tive, practical.

first curators ably the very , photographer, ist, pioneer boomerang- n't catch on). p impact n Creswick, ds from the knife-grinder. Ruskin. al sculptor. al Academy. o good use. frieze for the the City of r craftsmen in g knives and rn road

ep fa

of clas es, birds show all f h a bouncy ting and a Pun

TELEGRAPH FEATURE

Cultural icon left his mark on our city

WIDENING HORIZONS: Louise Pullen, curator of the Ruskin Collection, with the massive picture of St Mark's Basilica in Venice painted by JW Bunn

e Ridgeway Carnival

Punch and Judy entertain the children

Ruskin Honey and different types of Ruskin Bread were available from Gerry Pert, of Gerry's Bakery, Walkley. Photo: Ruth Nutter.

the community hub for the project and its anchor, was opened in Walkley on 16 May. Walks, talks and events continued through to November.

The Pop-Up Ruskin Museum, situated on South Road, the main road running through Walkley, was a temporary neighbourhood space which attracted lots of local people who contributed objects, drawings, and photographs for display in a sort of people's museum that attempted to marry local memory and cultural experience with Ruskin's values and interests as exemplified in the Ruskin Collection. The museum thus became a significant place where visitors found out about Ruskin and his influence on Walkley. Over the months a local treasure-trove of artefacts, curiosities and creations was brought together. Open three days a week, with a programme of drop-in activities, workshops and special events, there were over 2000 separate visits. The Pop-up Ruskin Museum was embraced immediately by local people. In celebration of the project, a local bakery—Gerry's, also on South Road – created a loaf inspired by a sentence of Ruskin's: '*Bread of flour is good, but there is bread sweet as honey…*'.

In May, Dr Mark Frost gave a talk on the first curators of the St George's Museum, Emily and Henry Swan, who set up the museum in 1875 and ran it until Henry's death in 1890. He was an adventurous character who was interested in many things including photography, bicycling and boomerangs. In June the Guild unveiled a commemorative plaque on the building that incorporates the old St George's Museum, which expanded in the Swans' time, and has been substantially built on and altered since. Honouring Ruskin, the Swans and the Museum's many visitors, the piece of carved Lakeland slate can be seen from Bole Hill Road.

Henry Swan was commemorated separately by a plaque made of the same slate on his grave in Walkley Cemetery. Swan's grave had been lost until rediscovered by Revd. Ron Frost who had been encouraged to search for it by his son, Mark, who composed the Guild's new inscription. The grave was found to be in need of restoration, which the Guild commissioned and funded after winning the approval of the diocesan council. Both plaques were designed and carved by local craftsman Richard Watts. Richard, who had worked with the Council designing public spaces had first been inspired to seek a career change and become a stone carver due to the impact that a visit to the Ruskin Gallery had had on him during the 1980s.

Visitors to the original St George's Museum – their names are known from the visitors' books, which date back to the 1880s—were researched by volunteers. Their lives, and where they lived in Walkley, were the subject of a professional guided walk and a self-guided trail. This local-history project, called *Ruskin's Reach,* was devised and led by Bill Bevan, a local heritage expert. Beeches of Walkley made their shop-window available for an exhibition about the lives of the nineteenth-century visitors.

In September there was a specially commissioned promenade performance *Desperately Seeking Ruskin*, by Cabaret Boom Boom, street-theatre artists who brought to life the characters of Emily and Henry Swan, and others people intimately associated with the early history of the Museum such as Benjamin Creswick, the local knife-grinder who, by his association with Ruskin and the Museum, went on to be a distinguished sculptor. The performance took place at key locations in the story of Ruskin's association with Walkley, including the site of the Museum and the houses Creswick and others had lived in.

Cabaret Boom Boom joined forces with St George, acrobats, and characters from Walkley's past* Desperately Seeking Ruskin *in September 2015. Photo: Cabaret Boom Boom.

One of the most memorable walks was from Walkley to Stanning-ton. It was led by Bill Bevan. This 6-mile walk via the Rivelin Valley concluded at the Freeman College Bio-Dynamic Garden, which was holding its first ever Open Day on July 18th. The tour focused on the cultural heritage associated with this beautiful route, which was much admired by Ruskin. Other events in Rivelin Valley included: a Dawn Chorus Walk, led by Chris Baines and Roger Kite; a Rivelin Valley Artists' Colony drawing day; a ramble led by local poet Fay Musselwhite which traced the river's industrial legacy, its unique ecology, and its relationship to Ruskin and the city, by means of Fay's own poetry and that of others.

The Freeman Bio-Dynamic Garden, in collaboration with GrowTheatre, organised a series of workshops called *Crafting the Land: Seed to Table*. Participants were encouraged to make a hand-forged copper trowel, to learn about the seasonal growing cycle and to bake bread. Over a hundred people took part. The site, which is owned and managed by Ruskin Mill Trust, is a most wonderful place situated at High Riggs, Stannington, overlooking the Rivelin Valley. It provides a glimpse of the unspoilt landscape Ruskin would have known when he first came to Sheffield. At the Open Day talks were given on subjects relating to *Ruskin, Land and Livelihoods.*

Working the land—the idea of living a self-sustaining life in harmony with nature—was the subject of a talk by John Iles, who manages the Guild's woodland and farmland in the Wyre Forest. An outdoor, 'perambulatory' play which took place around St George's Farm and other locations in Totley, explored the history of the commune Ruskin's followers ran there in the 1870s and 80s. Called *Boots, Fresh Air and Ginger Beer* and researched and written by local writer, Sally Goldsmith, it involved a rural walk through time starting in 1877, and meeting *en route* the radical thinker Edward Carpenter, fruit grower George Pearson (who eventually bought the farm from the Guild) and Ethel Haythornthwaite (who was instrumental in the founding of the CPRE and dreamed of a Peak District National Park). Captured on film, it was later screened at Totley Library, and is available for viewing on YouTube: (see article pp. 21-23).

One of the key partners in *Ruskin in Sheffield* was the University of Sheffield's Festival of Arts & Humanities. We worked closely with them on a programme of talks, walks and discussions entitled *Wealthy Cities; Re-Thinking Sheffield's Parks and Public Spaces.*

As one of the main aims of *Ruskin in Sheffield* was to encourage more visitors to the Ruskin Collection, it was therefore appropriate that Louise Pullen, Curator of the Collection, made a particular feature of the origins of St George's Museum in its summer display. Some of the Collection's most popular pieces were displayed alongside exhibits that would have been known to its Museum's 19th-century visitors, as well as new artworks and items from the community projects that had formed a key part of *Ruskin in Sheffield.*

The exhibition, *Ruskin Re-Viewed*, which was held in the Millennium Gallery from 31st October to 8th November, sought to bring together all strands of the project and to provide a visual narrative of the year-long project. It consisted of the artworks, everyday objects and new discoveries that had been exhibited in the course of the project in the Pop-Up Museum. Crucially, exhibits related to the legacy and enduring spirit of *Ruskin in Sheffield*—in Walkley, Totley, the Rivelin Valley, Stannington and the city centre. On the final day of the exhibition, when Companions of the Guild were in the city to attend our AGM, many of the key *Ruskin in Sheffield* partners were present to give an account of their part in the project. These acts of personal explication provided an echo of the museum practices espoused by Ruskin and carried out by the Swans—early visitors to St George's Museum were given private tours of the collection.

Ruskin in Sheffield has demonstrated that there is a genuine interest in Ruskin's relationship to the city. Over 4000 people were involved in the project. It has also shown that the Guild has the continuing potential to encourage and support creative projects all over Sheffield, but especially in Walkley and High Riggs.

As you have already seen this year, and as you will see in the build-up to Ruskin's bicentenary in 2019, the Guild continues to raise awareness of Ruskin's legacy to the city and further afield. We will organise further programmes of events, working with both established and new partners.

Always at the core of the project are the values we believe were most important to Ruskin: wellbeing; a sense of connection to the natural world; the role of art and craftsmanship in creating social, economic and environmental wealth; and our interdependence in a society of mutual respect.

Inspired by Ruskin's personal motto, our task now is to concentrate on 'To-Day' and Ruskin's enduring relevance to us in the 21st century.

'On returning home that evening I started using the information I had gathered that day to research the work of Ruskin and his reach into the contemporary world, and I have to say, I was shocked at the extent of work the man did in his lifetime and how far his reach still carries. Every time I do an internet search for something Ruskin related I get a dozen more ways in which his work is creating opportunities for community growth today.'
—Samantha Williams, Review of *Ruskin Re-Viewed* at Sheffield's Millennium Gallery.

Review RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD 2015 at <www.ruskininsheffield.com> *and at* <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/ruskin-in-sheffield>.

Ruskin in Sheffield and Freeman College Bio-Dynamic Garden at High Riggs, Stannington

Carole Baugh

Introduction

Freeman College is part of Ruskin Mill Trust, a UK-wide charity specialising in education, therapy and residential care for young people with a range of learning disabilities, emotional needs and challenging behaviours. The Trust knows how far the health, personal and emotional well-being, and the social skills of young people with learning difficulties improve when they work with artists and craftspeople on purposeful tasks rooted in nature. Our experiential curriculum, Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE), is tailored to the individual student. These activities enhance the students' ability to engage creatively with positive challenges, to meet the world with confidence and to develop their capacity for personal initiative, all of which foster responsible behaviour.

Everywhere the Trust has a presence, it looks to the local historic, social and economic environments to inform the type of traditional craft practices taught in the different colleges. Metal work is therefore the signature craft in Sheffield. However, the work at Freeman College is not intended primarily to train young people to become silversmiths and craft-workers. So the question arises, what *are* we teaching our students? This form of craft-based education is a way of re-imagining traditional craft process as educational methodologies.

Students are taught in traditional workshops and experience tacit learning by working next to skilled craft-makers. This experiential method engages all of a student's faculties; thinking, feeling and doing are equally important in the process of making. Working in this manner engages the hand, head and heart, a vital practice that appealed to both John Ruskin and the other influential pedagogical figure in the Trust, Rudolf Steiner.

A further example of Ruskin's influence on the teaching methodology of the Trust is in our belief in the usefulness of art and crafts. Usefulness can be understood at each stage in the craft-teaching method. Students are encouraged to make useful craft objects—a spoon, stool, scarf and so on. These objects may be described as by-products of the PSTE method. The usefulness of the method consists in how a student makes *themselves* through the process of making the object. The usefulness of the object serves on its completion to reward the student for her or his achievement and provides evidence of their progress.

Usefulness is not, therefore, confined solely to utilitarian notions, nor is it based on the price that the object may command in the market-place. Rather, it is the vital role— the life-giving properties—of craft process in society as a whole that is important. Students at Freeman College, once engaged in a craft, are working with serious purpose. The process itself requires students to respond creatively to the materials they are working with, giving them an opportunity for self-expression.

Freeman College and Ruskin Mill Trust share in Ruskin's values, believing in the efficacy of arts and crafts, the benefits of fresh air and respecting creative work. We think of art as a means to change ourselves and, by extension, to change our world.

Ruskin and High Riggs

If Practical Skills Therapeutic Education provides a point of connections with Ruskin's thought, then the Bio-Dynamic Garden at High Riggs, Stannington, roots Freeman College in the practical work of Ruskin's Guild of St George. Ruskin purchased a 13-acre farm in Totley, on the edge of Sheffield, in the 1870s, to be run collaboratively by Sheffield working men and their families earning a living by farming, gardening and making boots. Until 2013, the 9-acre site of the Bio-Dynamic Garden was a Garden Nursery. Looking at the land and its best use for Freeman College and its surrounding city communities, both staff and students began the task of transforming the land into a bio-dynamic site to grow organic fruit and vegetables. Satisfying both educational requirements and social enterprise criteria, this new small-scale market garden would also include a meadow with a 50-tree orchard.

The land was registered for organic use in 2014. This was achieved by a lot of hard work, clearing the site and building up the soil's fertility to make it suitable for a market garden. The hard digging paid off and now fruit and vegetables grown at High Riggs supply organic and some biodynamic food for the Freeman College kitchens, Freeman's public café, Fusion, and an expanding Veg-Box Delivery Service.

High Riggs continues to develop and provide meaningful education, training and practical work for Freeman College students. The blend of craft, horticultural and nature-based activities gives it a very special context, while improving the students' well- being and providing opportunities for them to reimagine and develop their potential.

Freeman College had previously helped to institute a biodynamic exploratory project at John Ruskin's home Brantwood, in Cumbria. Led by the head gardener there, Sally Beamish, it ran for a period of seven years from 2007 to 2014.

Crafting the Land

When Ruth Nutter took on the role of Producer of *Ruskin in Sheffield* it quickly became clear that High Riggs was the ideal location for a collaborative public workshop project in 2015. *Crafting the Land* offered a chance to discover and interpret the legacy of John Ruskin in Sheffield and embed the relevance of his philosophy of connecting land, craftsmanship and livelihoods through practical activity.

We wanted to be inclusive of the local community and take the opportunity of inviting target groups on to the site. In order to offer full access to the site we proposed a week of free community open days for people to experience a range of activities, including growing, cooking, craft-work, plus outdoor workshops in trowel-making. The project was a creative collaboration between GrowTheatre, an outdoor youth theatre company, Freeman College and *Ruskin in Sheffield* and ran from Monday 13th July concluding with talks and an open day on Saturday 18th July.

Seed to Table

Seed to table encapsulated a crucial aim of the teaching at Freeman College: the importance of the growing cycle, soil health and the social interaction necessary for harvesting, cooking and eating together. *Seed to table* addressed the aims of *Ruskin in Sheffield* by reconnecting local families with arts, crafts and the land. It provides a vital link with the Guild's late 19th-century experiment at Totley, and its work at Ruskin Land in Worcestershire today. They also anticipated and paved the way for *Ruskin in Sheffield 2016: Make Good Livelihoods* by encouraging self-confidence, personal fulfilment and personal aspiration, something witnessed by each of us working on the public-access side of the project.

The main craft focus was on making hand-forged copper trowels with a foot-treadle-turned green-wood handle. It is both beautiful and useful, in particular useful to the aims of the project; it is craft with a purpose, making a functional tool for use on the land. It is a physical manifestation of the project as a whole.

Copper-forger, Andy West, and green-wood worker, Neil Trinder, set up workshops on the High Riggs site. Forging was in the blacksmith's and wood turning in a dedicated outdoor workshop. The popularity of these workshops grew throughout the week, and participants returned to complete their trowel.

Complementing the craft activities was the bread-making. Built for the project, the bread oven provided the focus at the heart of each day. Cooking in the outdoors on a wood-fired bread oven was both a workshop activity and a means of supplying food for the whole team at High Riggs. Daily picking of seasonal vegetables was led by the Freeman Bio-Dynamic Garden Manager, Peter van Vliet and a group of enthusiastic visitors. The fresh produce was then taken to the wood-fired oven and added to flat breads or simply cooked in olive oil. Baker, Mike Quille, served us all with culinary delicacies and prepared food in the most simple, yet delicious manner.

In addition to the public visitors, we invited groups to attend the workshops, including Sheffield Alcohol Support Service and local primary schools, Shooters Grove Primary School and Nook Lane Primary School. Two classes of nine-year-olds visited for craft activities led by GrowTheatre, and seasonal picking, again led by Peter. This, along with the bread oven, are an important part of the legacy of *Ruskin in Sheffield 2015*.

On Saturday, 18th July, we hosted a public Open Day, offering the local and wider Sheffield community an opportunity to learn about *Crafting the Land*, Freeman College and *Ruskin in Sheffield*. Many of the schools and workshop visitors returned to celebrate the success of the project. The day started with speakers including John Iles, from the Guild of St. George, Peter van Vliet and Carole Baugh from Freeman College and Stannington Councillor, Vicky Priestly, who formally opened the event.

During the day Peter van Vliet gave a guided tour of the 9-acre site to some of the 350 visitors. Craft-makers demonstrated blacksmithing and wood-turning, with some dedicated trowel makers returning for those last finishing touches. Late in the afternoon, those on the Ruskin guided walk arrived. Having set off from Walkley, this journey connected with Rivelin and Stannington. Reflecing the various initiatives and activities of *Ruskin in Sheffield 2015*, Heritage Interpreter and co-project leader, Bill Bevan, masterminded a walking narrative of connections between historic and contemporary arts & crafts in the local environment.

By opening up Freeman College's land for a wider public to engage with creative tasks in the fresh air, we hope to have broadened visitor engagement with John Ruskin's values, Freeman College and the arts, crafts and the land that we cherish.

Peter van Vliet giving tours of the Garden on the Open Day. All photos on pp. 17-18: Carole Baugh.

On Lecturing at Walkley and Totley

Mark Frost

It is a commonplace among scholars that archival research is a lonely, arduous pursuit and that bringing your research into direct contact with members of the public is fulfilling and energising. Whilst my own experience makes me sceptical about the former claim, I can heartily endorse the latter.

Having devoted five years to a research project that endeavoured to find new sources relating to the early history of the Guild of St George and that took me to many archives in the UK and the US, my immersion in the abundance of correspondence and other traces left by our early Guild pioneers, was in fact a distinctly gregarious experience. Although I spent many weeks almost entirely without company in various archives, I never felt alone. Instead, my attempts to transcribe the letters, articles, and newspaper contributions of early Companions immersed me in a community of distinctive individuals – a Companionship – of which I felt a part.

However, historical figures glimpsed through correspondence only slowly emerge as distinctive individuals – the touchy, long-suffering, proud William Buchan Graham, the eccentric intellectual William Harrison Riley, the unbelievably kind and admirable John Guy, Susan Miller, who just would not give up fighting injustice, and, of course, the immeasurably complex John Ruskin, amongst a whole host of others. Overhearing conversations, imagining voices and faces, tracing connections, uncovering plots, plans, and ploys, and revealing the ongoing dramas of the early Guild companionship was all the more vibrantly felt for my direct contact with the material remains of the past – the pale blue notepaper Ruskin used, the terrible handwriting of Albert Fleming, the crammed sheets, corrections, blotches, and last-minute insertions in many letters – all of these drew me in, redoubled my sense of purpose, sent me to the next archive with renewed zeal and a somewhat obsessive look in my eye. It all entirely confounded the notion that archival scholarship is an isolated and isolating endeavour.

Mark Frost at Totley (above) and Walkley (below).

It is of course the case that the pleasures, pains, triumphs, and tribulations that attend this kind of abnormal and obsessive activity are even greater if their findings can be shared (after all, what's the use of finding a new group of friends if one cannot introduce them to others?). Scholarly research is of value in and of itself, but yields most when it results in various forms of tangible impact. This is sometimes measured by scholarly citations and peer esteem, but increasingly universities are recognising the importance of bringing research out of the campuses and into the community.

It was wonderful, therefore, to be invited by Ruth Nutter, the energetic and far-sighted Producer of *Ruskin in Sheffield*, to contribute to her packed and ever-extending programme of events for 2015. Not content to work only in Sheffield's Ruskinian heartland of Walkley, Ruth found or forged connections across and beyond the city. Companions will be familiar from these pages, from the web and hopefully from personal experience of the dazzling liveliness and inventiveness of the programme of events that began in late 2014. My small contribution was a couple of public talks bringing the findings of my research to a receptive public – firstly in Totley Library on May 20th 2015 and then two days later in Walkley Community Centre. Both of these events were helped by other activities going on around this time – not least the unveiling of plaques relating to the Guild's early history in the city, and the then recently-opened Pop-Up Ruskin Museum.

As an academic one is used either to lecturing to university students, an audience of sometimes attentive, sometimes jaundiced, and very often sleepy individuals who may or may not know why they are there; or to one's fellow academics at scholarly conferences and symposia, an exacting audience composed of individuals with frightening, but often deeply helpful and supportive, levels of perceptiveness, insight, and knowledge.

One of the many pleasures of speaking to a public audience is the unexpected range of knowledge and interest that one finds, and one is also deeply appreciative that these people have not, like students, been compelled to attend but have given up their own free time and well-earned rest to turn out on an evening for some unknown speaker. It was touching, therefore, to see a packed audience at both events, to hear a range of fabulous and often testing questions afterwards, and to experience the depth and intensity of interest in Ruskin and Sheffield's local history. The reputation of the city and the region for a strong educational and cultural appetite is clearly well-deserved.

At Totley, I was preceded as a speaker by Sally Goldsmith, a wonderful member of the Local History Group who, with

Dorothy Prosser, has been using my recent monograph as a starting point for further research on the individuals and places I had discussed in my attempts to revise and make sense of the Guild's complex early history. This also led Sally to produce a walking performance, *Fresh Air, Boots, and Ginger Beer*, dramatizing the area's radical local history. My talk was an attempt – perhaps too ambitious – to cover all of the early phases of the Guild's activities at St George's Farm, Totley, from its inception as a loose agricultural and shoemaking collective encouraged by the Guild's first Guild Museum curator Henry Swan, through its early chaotic (and shoemaking-free) phase under the United Friends' Association (known to all ever since as the Sheffield Communists), and the poorly-understood next phase involving the firebrand Republican-Temperance advocate and Christian Socialist, William Harrison Riley, and Ruskin's forbidding gardener, David Downs. Given the amount of information to impart I was delighted with the audience's enthusiastic response to the presentation. Using Powerpoint slides and plenty of visual material is a must anyway, and not just in public talks, but it is particularly helpful when talking about historical and cultural matters. Here, as at Walkley, the talks were filmed in order to leave a longer-term record, and it was a new and not entirely comfortable experience to find myself being wired for sound by the adept young filmmakers recruited by Ruth, or to have to stay so very still while talking to remain in frame.

The second talk, at Walkley, concerned the less tempestuous, more harmonious, and deeply productive early history of the Guild's museum, set up in Bell Hagg Road in that district of the city. Here and at Totley, it was a particular delight to be able to speak near the scene of the events being described, and Walkley Community Centre was a fitting venue, a rather beautiful small civic building with a long history of local events, both educational and entertaining. One of the strengths of Ruth's approach to the *Ruskin in Sheffield* activities was her ability to encourage a host of people in Walkley to make connections between their own biography and family history, and the imprint Ruskin has made. My talk benefitted from being in and around other events, including those around the Pop-Up Ruskin Museum just around the corner from the community centre, to the guided walks by Bill Bevan that took locals to the houses of those who visited the museum.

I hope that my talk encouraged local residents to think about the contributions made by the Swan family, the first custodians of the Guild collection so generously and obsessively amassed by Ruskin for the benefit of Sheffielders; and that whenever they are in the centre of town they'll consider nipping through the Winter Gardens to have a quick – or hopefully not-so-quick – look around the latest exhibition of the Ruskin Collection at the Millennium Gallery. It's a wonderful thing that the collection still exists and is still available, even if none of us can ever experience the delights of being accompanied by the wonderful Henry Swan at the original cramped but idiosyncratic quarters of St George's Museum at Bell Hagg Road.

Watch both lectures on the *Ruskin in Sheffield* 2015 page on the Guild's website: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/ruskin-in-sheffield/>.

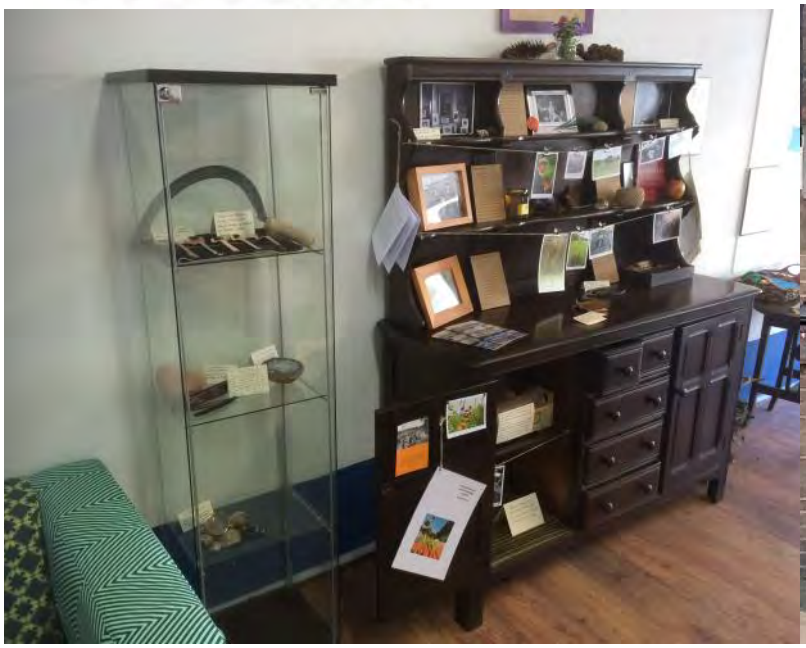
Mark Frost's lecture, Curator and Curatress: the Swans and St George's

POP-UP RUSKIN MUSEUM, WALKLEY

Ruth Nutter

If *Ruskin in Sheffield* breathed new life into Ruskin's legacy in Sheffield, then the Pop-Up Ruskin Museum was its beating heart. In the course of five months, over 2,500 children and adults wandered in, read about Ruskin, shared stories and anecdotes with Museum Hosts, brought items in for display, drew, sewed, painted, and made it *their* museum.

A stone's throw away from the location of the original St George's Museum, the Pop-Up Ruskin Museum on South Road in Walkley was created in the premises of a former second-hand furniture shop. The purpose was to raise awareness of the history of the museum, engage people hands-on with arts, crafts and nature, and to provide a space in which people could share memories and ideas about Walkley. Inspired by Ruskin's principles about local museums, a group of



volunteers, Pop-Up Museum Manager Malaika Cunningham and I set out to curate a space along Ruskinian lines which would be 'an example of perfect order of elegance' with 'no superabundance and no disorder' for the use of the local community. Together with a permanent 'heritage cabinet' and reading corner, wall-displays were changed regularly to reflect developing local interest, and artworks and the results of research from *Ruskin in Sheffield* projects in Totley and Stannington were shared with visitors.

The museum was the starting point for Bill Bevan's *Ruskin's Reach* walk, a trail tracing the homes and lives of visitors to St George's Museum. A collection of paintings by a colony of artists based in the Rivelin Valley between the world wars curated by Chris Baines drew visitors from across Sheffield. An exhibition of Walkley artists' work drew friends and families in to the Museum. A *Stones of Walkley* photographic exhibition captured images of local buildings taken by residents in the neighbourhood. The files on aspects of local history grew as people donated sets of plans, booklets and newspaper cuttings about Walkley. Sunflower seeds sown by visitors inside the museum were transplanted outside in summer to brighten up the pavement.

As the Museum quite literally took root, people offered to run their own events and activities there, and happily all of them are now Guild Companions. Gerry and Gareth Pert, local bakers, supplied dough for children to make dough sculptures during the summer holidays. Suzie Doncaster presented a talk on the engravings of Thomas Bewick. Mary Musselwhite created a stunning tapestry for the museum. Fay Musselwhite initiated drop-in poetry salons and a poetry reading evening.

The museum's Hosts were at the heart of the success of the Pop-Up Museum. Carrie, Eliza, Jodie, Suzie, Helen, Liz P, Liz G, Paul, Mary and Mika shared their creativity and knowledge in a generously sociable and welcoming manner throughout the project, and thus made a place which became part of many people's daily lives. Nearly all of the Hosts are now Companions of the Guild, among them visual artists, historians, a graphic design student and a local sixth form student.

'Fun. We only went out for some milk but ended up staying an hour!'
'This is like meeting Ruskin and starting to know a bit about him.'
'Wonderful. A real sense of history and shared values. A fantastic community resource.'

A few abiding memories of the Pop-Up Ruskin Museum remain with me. Hosts, during quiet moments, sewed tapestries or poured over the books in the reading corner. At the end of the Pop-Up launch event, I recall my delight in looking at the Benjamin Creswick cast of 'The Village Blacksmith' perched on top of the Walkley cabinet of curiosities (the Walkley Wunderkammer), surrounded by an array of vegetable sculptures people had made of themselves—a symbol of the 'spirit of connection' we were trying to draw between St George's Museum and the creative self-expression of the community today.

When the contents of the Pop-Up Ruskin Museum were packed into a van and installed at the Millennium Gallery for the culminating event of the project, the *Ruskin Re-Viewed* exhibition, I wasn't sure whether the spirit of Walkley would survive the transition. My fears were soon allayed when a familiar face came in with his elderly mother to show her the picture on display drawn by her husband, which was still sitting on the Walkey Wunderkammer's shelves.

Although the Pop-Up Ruskin Museum is no longer on South Road (all Pop-Ups have to pop down) the legacy of community spirit—of memories revived and creativity unleashed—still thrives in Walkley, as contributions to this year's Walkley Festival (which have focused on Sheffield's *Year of Making*) have revealed, but that is a story for next time …

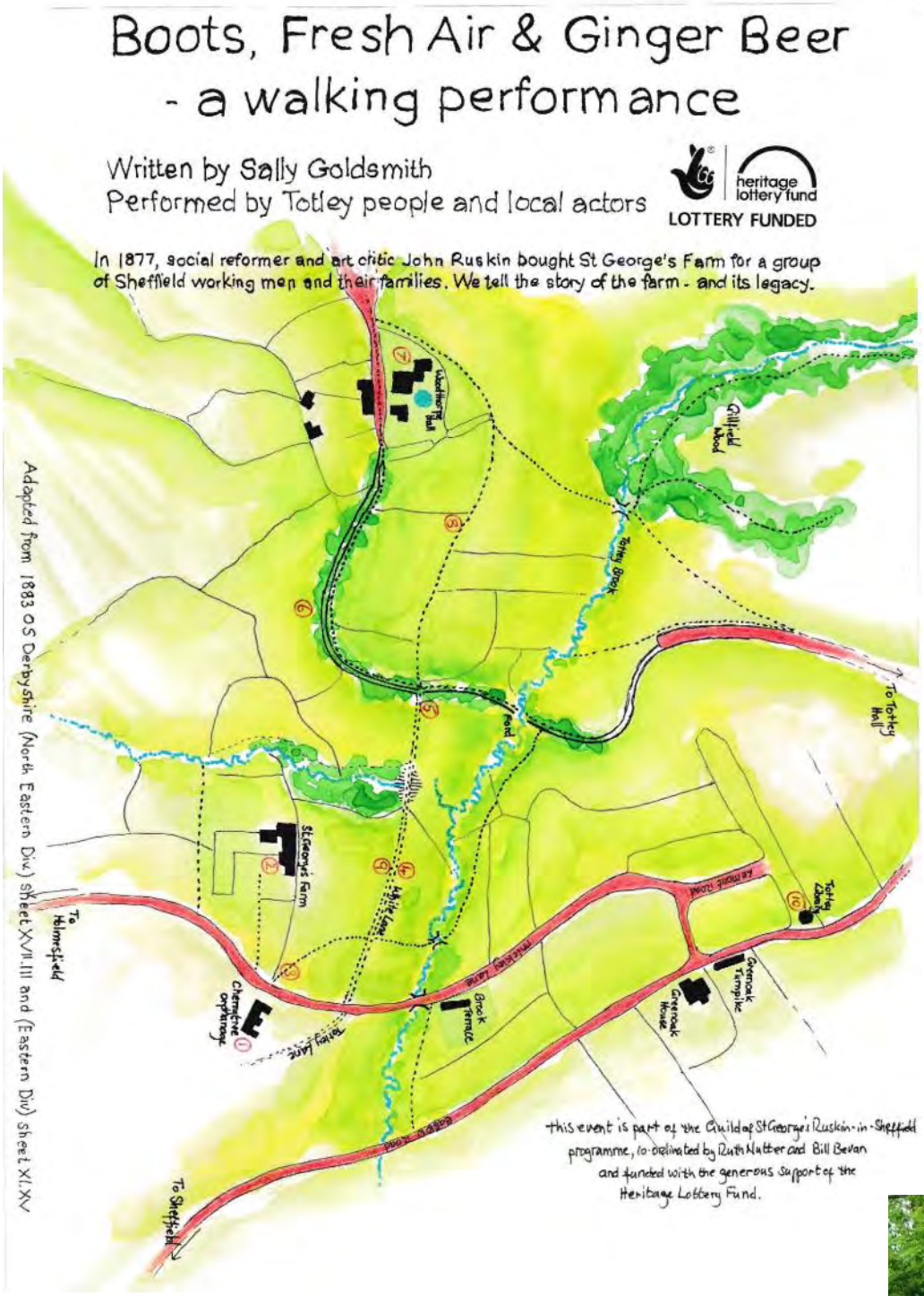
Photos: Ruth Nutter.

BOOTS, FRESH AIR AND GINGER BEER
A walking performance about St George's Farm, Totley
Sally Goldsmith

Smack bang in the middle of the view from the window of our home in Totley is St George's Farm, that site of utopian dreams. We've often joked that we live on a wonky socialist ley line – St George's Farm, to Holmesfield Church where Joseph Sharp—harpist, socialist and one of the original group renting the Farm from Ruskin—is buried, and down the other side of the ridge in the Cordwell Valley, the house of Edward Carpenter—gay writer, socialist, original radical sandal wearer—who knew the farm and its occupants. Our everyday routine dog walk takes us along an ancient track just below the farm. Carpenter regularly took it too, from Dore and Totley Station on his way home to his back-to-the-land smallholding—with working-class friends in tow or some of the most celebrated progressives of the day—George Bernard Shaw, William Morris, Siegfried Sassoon, Olive Schreiner, and E. M. Forster, for starters.

I first went to take a look at St George's Farm over thirty years ago as a young woman, fresh from my own spot of utopian, if argumentative, commune-dwelling. I was, appropriately enough, on my bike. I'd learned about the Farm from an evening class taught by socialist-feminist historian Sheila Rowbotham. She told us how socialists a hundred years before had ridden bikes, much like most of us attending the class in the radical-vegetarian-lets-all-wear-dungarees 1970s. They had grown their own food, worn smocks, and had tried (and sometimes failed) to live collectively.

Despite living only with my partner now, I still believe in some of those



values. I have an allotment, I'm an overly fanatical recycler, I believe that inequality matters, that people-power is best and that women's rights have a long way to go. I'm also a poet, a script-writer, an environmentalist, an occasional broadcaster who believes in making creative stuff out of so called 'ordinary' people's words and I trust in involving 'amateurs' in telling these stories. So when Ruth Nutter, the *Ruskin in Sheffield* Producer asked me to contribute to last year's celebrations of all things Ruskin, I jumped at the chance to tell the cranky story of St George's Farm and its not insignificant legacy.

Though I sort of knew the story, none of the accounts of what had happened there quite made sense to me. Most of them also said that it failed. Mark Frost's new book, *The Lost Companions*, shed new light on it all, dished dirt on Ruskin and, for the first time, revealed the names of the Guild's early tenants. I roped in the Totley History Group to help with research on these people—the self styled 'Totley Communists.' I found that none of them were quite who the books said they were. Their leader was not a bootmaker but a Quaker friend of Henry Swan's (the curator of St George's Museum in Walkley) and an early building society director. I found that Edward Carpenter had written to Walt Whitman, the American poet, telling him he wanted to live there, too. I learned, too, that the land was not poor, as Ruskin later claimed, and that later—for around sixty years – it was run very successfully as a market garden thank-you-very-much, by a socialist friend of Carpenter's, George Pearson, and his family. Along the way, I got some of Henry Swan's early Pitman's shorthand translated, read the biography of Harry Brearley, the inventor of stainless steel who had lived nearby when poor and unknown, I met the farm's present owners and found old bootmaking equipment in the barn. And I started to write and to gather a cast of local actors.

Now, in the spirit of Ruskin and his love of fresh air, and, of course, of Carpenter (who thought nothing of walking miles using a sort of funny goose step and wearing sandals he'd made himself) I knew that the piece had to be a promenade performance. Our routine dog walk, up past the Farm to Woodthorpe Hall with its view over Totley and the moors and back, had to be it. That landscape could tell the story in itself – of the Farm and its self-sufficiency/ campaigning/ trespassing/ environmentalist legacy. It would be a sort of flash mob, nobody quite sure who would pop up as an actor out of the audience. Brearley would join us by the allotments, late, but 120 years too early. Joseph Sharp would play his harp, with lyrics by Shelley ('We are Many, They are Few'). Gobby Mrs Maloy of the Totley Communists would pontificate and sell strawberries and ginger beer ('We're all strictly Temperance'), an Indian Carpenter (played by our friend Rav) would join us, spouting his poetry and telling us about the Bhagavad Gita. Bert Ward, arch trespasser and King of the socialist Clarion Ramblers, would browbeat his wife in an ancient holloway. A modern LGBT choir would sing Carpenter his happy-ever-after gay dreams for the future. Bert and CPRE's Ethel Haythornthwaite would save the moors from the creep of housing and help to create the National Park. We'd end at Totley Library for tea and cake. And it would be in verse – with some sort of free-form rhyming to weld it all together.

Master of the Guild of St George (not Ruskin) fell over in the mud. We hip hoorayed and thanked the people who'd done so much to love and open up our countryside, to keep it green. There's a little video – an edited version of the performance on YouTube that you can access from the Guild's website: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/ruskin-in-sheffield/>.

Later this year, my book—*Ruskin and Totley*— will be published by the Guild.

Onward to Utopia!

A walk through time and space: Sally Goldsmith and her band of players leading keen Ruskinians and locals on a tour of Totley—scenes from* Boots, Fresh Air and Ginger Beer*, the first two of which are clearly in evidence. The photograph at the top of the page shows St George's Farm at the top of the slope.

Opposite page (top) map drawn by Shimell (bottom right) Rony Robinson of BBC Radio Sheffield with playwright Sally Goldsmith (as Joseph Sharp and Mrs Maloy respectively) singing Shelley.

Photos: Ruth Nutter.

Marking St George's Museum, Walkley, and Remembering Henry Swan

Richard Watts

It was a happy surprise in November 2014 to be contacted by Ruth Nutter, Producer of *Ruskin in Sheffield*, telling me that the Guild of St George would like to discuss two possible commissions, one to mark the site of St George's Museum which was established in Walkley by John Ruskin in 1875, and the other to remember the Museum's first curator, Henry Swan—on the site of his sadly dilapidated grave in Walkley Cemetery

Ruth invited me to a meeting with the Master of the Guild, Clive Wilmer, on November 14th and we discussed the ideas for these commissions over a cup of coffee, a stone's throw from the home of the Ruskin Collection in Sheffield city centre. The Ruskin Gallery had played an important part in my career, so it felt a real privilege to be invited to discuss these commissions with the Guild itself. Back in the 1980s and 1990s, I was a regular visitor to the Gallery, located then on Norfolk Street, and it was there, at a calligraphy exhibition, that I encountered Calligraphy North and ended up attending a six-month part-time course which reawakened my long-standing interest in calligraphy and the art and craft of stone sculpture and letter cutting, which I had inherited from my father, Peter. I remember well, how, after the magnificent Ruskin Gallery slate produced by the Kindersley Workshop was unveiled, I would regularly stand and admire it—what a tremendous source of inspiration!

At our meeting, Clive and I looked at photographs of my previous work and discussed the approach to the commission and we quickly agreed on the idea for two plaques, to be carved in Cumbrian slate with all those resonances of the Lake District landscape that were so dear to the heart of John Ruskin. In some small way, we also hoped that we could achieve some sort of 'connection' with the Kindersley slate. A few days later, I visited the sites with Ruth and we pondered on what would be appropriate in terms of type of slate, scale and legibility. For Ruskin House (the original home of St George's Museum), the challenges were twofold. Firstly, it was important that the plaque should be of sufficient size to be readable from the public pavement and, secondly, that the plaque should read, as far as possible, as an integral part of the architecture of Ruskin House itself. To achieve the latter we decided that the plaque would be best vertically aligned with the existing arch-topped windows on the south facing gable, and that the slate should be slightly recessed into the stonework. I suggested that the arch form would be recreated at the top of the plaque by the insertion of spandrels with oak leaves, oak being the dominant native forest tree of the Rivelin Valley and a major feature of Walkley Cemetery—especially beautiful in their golden autumn colour. As Ruth pointed out, Ruskin had said: 'PAINT the leaves as they grow! If you can paint a leaf, you can paint the world.' As the lintels and stringcourses on the sandstone elevation on the building had weathered to a dark grey, I suggested using grey Cumbrian slate for this location. For Henry Swan's grave, I suggested that we use green Cumbrian Slate with its slightly softer tone to harmonise with the natural environment of the site.

It was an immense privilege to be allowed to carry out these two commissions in my home city and I was of course pleased that the plaques seemed to be liked by the people of Walkley and those from further afield who attended the unveilings. It was also a great honour to be invited, after the completion of these commissions, to become a Companion of the Guild of St George. During my previous career, working for the City as a Landscape Architect, I was fortunate to work amongst a talented team of designers and city planners who believed passionately in the importance of bringing the beauty of nature and craftsmanship into the lives of the citizens of our beloved city. It is now a privilege to be elected a Companion of the Guild of St George, which holds this same vision and works so hard to promote it, both in the life of Sheffield and beyond.

Remembering Henry Swan: plaque, in the workshop, and **in situ** *on the Swans' restored gravestone(Walkley Cemetery). Photos: Richard Watts & Ruth Nutter.*

Marking the Foundation of St George's Museum

A speech at Ruskin House, Walkley, by Clive Wilmer, June 27th 2015

In 2010, shortly after I became Master of the Guild of St George, I happened to meet a young woman who worked in the museum world. She had grown up in Sheffield in the 1980s and '90s and become interested in art as a result of visiting the Ruskin Gallery, then in Norfolk Street. I was fascinated and asked her how as a child she had discovered the Gallery. 'My parents used to take me,' she said. 'And what sort of people were your parents?' I asked. 'They were foundry workers,' she replied. I confess I had expected her to say they were teachers or artists or professionals of some kind, and I thought rather ill of myself for that automatic reaction. She was, after all, telling me something I should have expected, for Ruskin had created the Collection—— St George's Museum, as it originally was—not for those who already know about art, but for the working people of Sheffield, above all metalworkers.

Ruskin created the Museum in this very house, now known as Ruskin House, in 1875. He had founded the Guild of St George four years before in despair at the condition of England, blighted (as he saw it) by industrial capitalism. He was appalled by the operations of the market that had made the nation theoretically wealthy and left most of its people in poverty, oppressed by mechanical labour and living for the most part in inhuman conditions, often without access to clean water and fresh air. He was equally appalled by the impact of industry on nature itself—the pollution of air and water and the violation of natural beauty. Ruskin wanted to restore a flourishing rural economy in which working people lived in a healthy relationship with the world around them.

But the Guild was also concerned with art and craftsmanship. Ruskin believed that beauty in design was only possible if the craftsman was acquainted with natural beauty. Great art and fine craftsmanship derived from appreciation of the world God made for us. The collection in St George's Museum was a teaching collection, designed above all to teach the workman by example and, in so doing, to satisfy his need for fresh air and green fields, beauty and justice, all of which Ruskin saw as related to one another. 'The mountain home of the museum,' he wrote – meaning the hills above the Rivelin valley (he was fond of such exaggerations) – 'was originally chosen, not to keep the collection out of the smoke, but expressly to beguile the artisan out of it.'

In 1875 he paid a visit to his friend Henry Swan, who had recently moved from London to this house. In the late 1850s and early '60s Ruskin had taught drawing at the Working Men's College in London. The College had been founded by philanthropists like himself to provide free education for men who through poverty had missed out on education. Swan was a journeyman engraver who had turned up in Ruskin's class and the two men became friends. Ruskin not only liked Swan but admired him too, and it was in his house that the setting for his Museum first came to him. He had been thinking about it for some time and had drawn up plans to build it in rural Worcestershire, where the Guild has land, but he had begun to consider that an industrial city—particularly the rural edge of an industrial city – would be more appropriate. The setting here, with the Rivelin valley visible from the windows and smoky Sheffield far down the hill behind it, seemed to him almost ideal, especially when he realised that Swan and his wife Emily would be willing to run it for him. Sheffield was right too. The hills around the city reminded him of Florence and even—rather extraordinarily—of the Alps, and he had long been an admirer of Sheffield craftsmanship. The little mesters making cutlery in their workshops were the public he most valued.

St George's Museum plaque in the workshop. Photo: Ruth Nutter.

So the Collection was set up here, and metalworkers made their journey up the Bellhagg Road to see it in large numbers, their names recorded in the Visitors' Book. Among the most frequent visitors, to give a notable example, was a young knife-grinder named Benjamin Creswick. Swan soon discovered that Creswick wanted to be a sculptor and recognised real talent in his work. He recommended him to Ruskin, who commissioned a bust from him, and then recommended him to friends in Birmingham. Creswick soon moved to Birmingham, where he became famous as a sculptor of public monuments and got involved in the Arts & Crafts Movement in London and elsewhere. He founded a small dynasty of artists, one of whom, his great-granddaughter Annie Creswick Dawson, is with us here today.

What we have sought to do with the project called *Ruskin in Sheffield* is to show that that same Sheffield spirit which Ruskin called forth in 1875 is alive in Sheffield today. I think we have succeeded. That we have done so is a huge tribute to the project Producer, Ruth Nutter, but it is also due to the people of Sheffield who are still ready and willing to campaign for beauty and justice.

I would like to express the Guild's thanks to several people:

—to Ruth Nutter for the wonderful work she has done under the banner of *Ruskin in Sheffield*, and to those who have worked with her;

—to John and Joy Smith, landlords of

Ruskin House, for their willingness to accept this plaque and, indeed, their enthusiasm for it;
—to John O'Brien, building manager of Ruskin House, for his constant willingness to help and his interest in the project;
—to Richard Watts, who worked for many years on planning the public spaces of central Sheffield, for designing and carving this beautiful stone, very much in the traditions of craftsmanship which Ruskin taught;
—to Marcus Waithe, who set up the website *Ruskin at Walkley* <www.ruskinatwalkley.org/> for providing the words on the plaque and contributing skills as a scholar and lecturer to *Ruskin in Sheffield;*
—to the tenants of Ruskin House for their tolerance and understanding, and especially to Jonathan Rawling for his ongoing support of the *Ruskin in Sheffield* project;
—to everyone in the Walkley community who has supported *Ruskin in Sheffield* from the outset;
—and since what we are celebrating is something that lives on after its founder's death, to John Ruskin, who created St George's Museum, bought this building to house it and lives on in the values of this city and its people.

The Master addresses Companions and local residents at the unveiling of the plaque at Ruskin House, Walkley. Photo: Ruth Levene.

REMEMBERING HENRY SWAN
A Speech at Walkley Cemetery by Clive Wilmer, June 27th 2015

There's a fresco in Siena called *The Allegory of Good and Bad Government*. It's by the fourteenth-century artist Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Ruskin admired it a great deal. A crucial section of the picture shows how good government is associated with a healthy, productive interchange between city and countryside, and the picture at that point focuses on the place where the city ends and the country begins. I am reminded of the picture by this place: when you come here, you feel you have reached the limit of Sheffield and you look out across the trees and the fields. I think it was precisely that feeling that Ruskin had when he looked from Swan's house to the hills beyond, now of course covered with building.

Appropriately enough, this is where Henry Swan is buried. It's a pity he is not here with his wife Emily, because as Dr Mark Frost has shown us, she was very much his co-curator at St George's Museum, but she died long after him and in another place. The Swans had four children, one of whom is buried here with his father—Laurence Swan, who died sadly young.

Henry Swan was a bit of an eccentric—some people thought him a crank—but he was warm, humorous, loyal, original and careless of the opinions of others. When he met Ruskin at the Working Men's College he was a journeyman engraver. In that role, he had worked for Isaac Pitman, the inventor of what is now the most widely used system of shorthand. He was interested in spelling reform and new systems of musical notation. He valued traditional crafts—he was a skilled illuminator, for instance—but he was also keen on innovations—on photography, for instance—and he was one of the first people to own a bicycle. Unlike Ruskin, he was a Quaker, a pacifist and a vegetarian.

At Walkley Cemetery, down the steep slope to the Swans' grave. Photo: Ruth Nutter.

For many years the site of this grave was unknown. It was only recently re-discovered by the Rev. Ron Frost, the father of Companion Mark Frost. Mark had been studying the working-class men and women who worked for Ruskin and the Guild, and his father, a retired clergyman who lives in Sheffield, decided to help. The gravestone he found was broken in two, the ground had subsided and the lettering on the stone had been effaced beyond recall. We in the Guild decided that the grave should be restored, the soil built up again and a memorial placed over the stone to record Swan's presence there, with tribute duly paid to one of the Guild's earliest and best employees.

In some sense this recovery and restoration of Swan's memorial and the plaque set on the wall of Ruskin House are symbols embedded in the programme we call *Ruskin in Sheffield*. They signify that though Ruskin and Swan were forgotten or for periods of time disappeared, they are present among us here in Sheffield: present in the good work they did and present in the continuing life that drew that work out of them. The social and economic climate of their time was harsh, and they stood against it. They spoke out or acted for the needs and dignity of common people, who have a right to claim beauty and justice as human needs. As the life of our own time grows harsher, as I believe it is doing, they continue to stand for those values as these stones do for them.

On behalf of the Guild of St George and *Ruskin in Sheffield*, I would like to thank the following:

—the Rev. Melanie Fitzgerald, Irving Smith and Hugh Waterhouse for their support, help and enthusiasm, and the work they did to secure permission for the new gravestone;

—Ruth Nutter of *Ruskin in Sheffield* for leading this effort and my colleagues in the Guild for supporting her;

—Richard Watts, again, for designing and carving a beautiful stone, a model of fine craftsmanship;

—Ron Frost, for re-discovering the stone, and his son Mark for writing the text that is carved upon it, as well as lecturing for the *Ruskin in Sheffield* project;

—Mick Searcy, for restoring the grave and mounting the new stone;

—everyone in the Walkley community who has supported *Ruskin in Sheffield* from the outset;

—Henry and Emily Swan for living and working among us. Let us remember them with honour and gratitude.

COMPANIONS' DAY, SHEFFIELD, JUNE 27TH 2015

Jacqueline Yallop

In the display in the Ruskin Gallery last June, there was a lovely case full of clouds: not actual clouds, unfortunately, but, among others, Bunney's watercolour of the 'cloud-topped hills near Serravalle', Randal's study of the clouds breaking over the mountains in Lecco, and evocative engravings after Turner, made for *Modern Painters.* Featuring the kind of loose, blue, slightly dreamy skies not often seen over Sheffield, even in summer, these seem to summon another world—but the Saturday when the Companions gathered in Walkley was a day of just such lovely vistas as we'd seen in the exhibition, and the perfect day for a celebration.

And celebratory it was.

At the Pop-up Ruskin Museum on South Road, where volunteers had been wooing visitors for months with Ruskinian ideas, we rummaged among objects brought in by locals, from shells and drawings to a facsimile of the Kelmscott Chaucer; we planted seeds or tried our hands at printing bright simple designs inspired by the pub signs and brick patterns and weedy back alleys of the street outside. In the crowded little shop, dressers and shelves overflowed with beautiful things made by people and by nature, and all around there was talk of Ruskin: someone had moved to Walkley, they said, entirely because of the Ruskin connection; someone claimed their aunt was given the middle name Ruskin as an act of homage.

At midday, I teased myself away from the treasure box that was the pop-up museum to join a guided walk led by the archaeologist and historian, Bill Bevan. We met by Ruskin Park, on the lower slopes of Walkey, which was awash with daisies. There were lots of us, but I was the only Companion. Most of the walkers were only beginning to discover Ruskin: some were Walkley locals who wanted to know more about where they lived, some had come from as far afield as Wakefield and Chesterfield; many had been to other *Ruskin in Sheffield* events. We were undeterred by Walkley's sometimes daunting topography, and off we went, up and down, stopping in the ordinary domestic streets to hear the often extraordinary stories of those who had visited the St George's Museum at Walkley in the 1870s and 1880s. Bill and his team of researchers had wheedled human tales from the simple signatures in the visitor books, and on the steep slopes overlooking the industrial remains of the city, he conjured for us glimpses of the stories of those who had lived, and sometimes died, in these cottages.

I've seen the visitor books before, and I've read the names inscribed there, but it wasn't until I was standing on the pavements and outside front doors that I began to understand thoroughly that these were not just names and dates, but real people who visited the early museum: the boys from

(Above, L-R) Stuart Eagles, Melanie Fitzgerald, Annie Creswick Dawson and Clive Wilmer at St Mary's Church taking part in the Walkley Festival Well-Dressing preparations. (Below) Bill Bevan (centre) leads the Ruskin heritage trail.

neighbouring streets who called for each other on the way to Bell Hagg Road; the craftsmen and women whose skill earned them a neat, spacious house in which to live. There were family mysteries, too – puzzling legacies and lost histories – and we loitered for a while outside the plain stone terrace cottage at 158 Fulton Road where Ruskin stayed for a few days in October 1879, lodging in biblical fashion with a carpenter named Joseph, complaining of 'too much china' but savouring the bacon and Cheshire cheese.

While some of us were walking, there was a chance for others to contribute to the well-dressing at St Mary's Church which celebrated Ruskin in Walkley by recreating some of the most important scenes in flowers and seeds. Well-dressing is something you see often in Derbyshire parishes throughout the summer, a way of giving thanks for natural springs and the communities that have evolved around them, but it is less common in Sheffield and its urban churches. We were reminded later in the day, however, as we gathered in the graveyard to visit Henry Swan's grave, that Walkley is still a place (as it was when Ruskin chose it for the location of St George's Museum) that straddles city and country, industry and nature, the tamed and the wild. On a June afternoon the memorial stones were half hidden by tall summer grasses, the trees cast deep shade over the graves, birds sang and just beyond us, the Rivelin Valley stretched out onto the moors.

Marking St George's Museum and Swan's grave with their new carved slates was, of course, the serious business of the day. Everyone came together for these two moments of joy and respectful reflection.

Eighty of us gathered to hear Clive Wilmer and the vicar of St Mary's, Melanie Fitzgerald, remind us why Walkley was special to Ruskin, how Henry and Emily Swan continued to make it special, and why it remains resonant today. At Ruskin House we were lucky to have the company of John and Joy Smith, who now own the building and who spoke with fondness of discovering its history: they kindly allowed us to tramp round the back to see the original frontage of the Museum. Standing among the washing lines and plantpots of the current residents, we could look out over the buildings that have grown up in the last 150 years, and glimpse something of the view that would have greeted the original visitors, pushing their way through the wicket gate, beguiled out of the smoke of the foundries and curious to see what this place might be about.

Both of the slates are beautifully carved by Richard Watts, and fully deserving of the attention they attracted on the day of their unveiling. Having fully admired the first, we made our way down the hill from Ruskin House to the cemetery and filed along a narrow path mowed through the willowherb, brambles and ivy to where a patch by the wall had been cleared and Henry Swan's grave is once again visible. Set horizontally but on a slight incline, the new stone there has a lovely greenish patina and deep, clean letters; we scattered wild seeds on the soil around and talked, in hope, of tracking down Emily's grave, too, so that it can also be marked in some way.

Companions' days, in my experience, are always cheerful affairs, with ideas shared and friends made and Ruskin hovering like a benign chaperone. They are testament to the work the Guild is still doing, and the liveliness and variety of its activity. And nowhere could have been more lively nor showed more variety than this little corner of Sheffield one Saturday in June: we should be enormously grateful to the residents of Walkley for embracing Ruskinian ideals with such infectious enthusiasm, and welcoming us with such openness and delight. We should marvel that the skies were bright, the views expansive and the clouds high and fine, so that we could see, quite clearly, why St George's Museum came to be here in this special place.

Photos: Ruth Nutter.

(Left) Custodians of the Ruskin Collection past and present: (L-R) Jacqueline Yallop, Janet Barnes and Louise Pullen in Walkley.

Fay Musslewhite was among the poets taking part in the Longbarrow Press residency at the Pop-Up Ruskin Museum at 381 South Road, Walkley, Sheffield, throughout September 2015. The salons, free to attend, took place every Wednesday and Thursday between 1pm and 3pm. Poets led discussion of several Ruskin-themed topics with reference to their own and others' poetry. The residency concluded with a collective reading at the Museum on September 30th, collated by Brian Lewis, featuring Fay Musselwhite and poets Matthew Clegg, Angelina D'Roza, Pete Green and Chris Jones.

THERE IS NO WEALTH BUT LIFE
RUSKIN, POETRY, AND THE POP-UP MUSEUM

Fay Musselwhite *(with photographs of the Rivelin Valley by* ***Mary Musselwhite****)*

The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something and tell what it saw in a plain way… To see clearly is poetry, prophesy and religion, all in one.

—John Ruskin, *Modern Painters III*

Nature, art and work define the prism through which John Ruskin examined man's place in the world, and he combined them with mathematical elegance. Art and work require nature as raw material, and through study and further engagement, art and nature will ask of the mind what work takes from the body, while nature and work, for Ruskin, provide the perfect subjects for art.

The last of these equations is demonstrated by the critical interest Ruskin took in the Pre-Raphaelites, and in JMW Turner. Born and raised at the poor end of the Thames fishing trade, Turner's close observations of 'black barges, patched sails [and] weedy roadside vegetation' were highly praised by Ruskin, who could see no other painter able to depict 'the natural way things have of lying about.'[1] This sensitivity, and the rallying cry of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, to paint from nature and to reject classical and artificial notions of composition and beauty, chime with Ruskin's revelation, aged twenty-one, which overturned much of the nine-years' schooling he'd had in 'the mannerisms and tricks' of making a painting. One afternoon, 'with no prospect whatever but a small aspen tree against the blue sky', he saw the charm of 'composition' in the existing world, and the holistic learning journey of capturing it. 'At last the tree was there, and everything that I had thought before about trees, nowhere.' [2]

The poets and visual artists featured and discussed in this essay embrace this clarity of sight in their spark and rigour. Seamus Heaney's sonnet, 'The Forge'[3] begins: 'All I know is a door into the dark.' Through the doorway, all we see and hear, such as 'The unpredictable fantail of sparks / Or hiss when a new shoe toughens in water', make the nearby 'traffic flashing in rows' sound tinny and ineffectual; while the juxtaposition of the modern road, where the blacksmith 'recalls a clatter / Of hoofs', provides a surface under which we seem to peer, as if through time, or perhaps not through time at all, but through our own surface layers, into what we are still made of.

'Coming Close' by Philip Levine invites more direct contact, with a woman working the night shift at a buffer wheel.[4] The work is dirty, hard and heavy, and has taken its toll on her body. She's three hours, and many years in, her work is steady and conscientious, yet she'd resist it in a moment, should the chance come. Just before the end of the poem, we're asked to imagine this:

… if by some luck the power were cut,
the wheel slowed to a stop so that you
suddenly saw it was not a solid object
but so many separate bristles forming
in motion a perfect circle …

Then she laughs and touches 'the arm of your white shirt to mark / you for your own, now and forever.'

Philip Levine was born to a middle class family in Detroit in 1928.[5] When his father died, twelve years later, the insurance company found an excuse to deny the major part of the claim, and Levine saw his mother worn out by the effort of keeping the family fed, clothed and sheltered. When they were fourteen, he and his twin brother vowed never to 'participate in the corporate business of this country, a business that appalled us by the brutality of its exploitation of the people we most loved.'[6] Poetry had taken hold of Levine a year or so earlier, when his burgeoning lust for words fused with feelings of deep resonance that arose from delving into backyard soil to make things grow, and nights spent in woodland. So nature and work were implicated from the start, and 'Innocence', a poem from his 1991 collection *What Work Is*, sets them in bitter opposition to each other. A team of workers have prepared an oak wood for a road to come through it, foliage and branches have been removed, then:

earthmovers gripped the chained and stripped trunks,
hunched down and roared their engines, the earth
held and trembled before it gave, and the stumps
howled as they turned their black, prized groins
skyward for the first times in their lives

Soon after the vow with his twin, Levine began working part-time in a soap factory, and for many years supported his higher education by road building, factory and delivery work, until writing and teaching at last provided a living. His poetry remains fascinated by the streets and people of Detroit. In *What Work Is*, we journey with 'the faces on the bus … each sealed in its hunger / for … a lost life'[7] to places where someone must put on 'wide rubber hip boots, / gauntlets to the elbow, a plastic helmet / like a knight's but with a little glass window' [8] or yearn to 'climb the shaking ladder to the roof / of the Nitro plant and tear off / my respirator and breathe the yellow air',[9] then to school, where the monoculture sets in:

These are the children of Flint, their fathers
work at the spark plug factory or truck
bottled water in 5 gallon sea-blue jugs
to the widows of the suburbs. You can see
already how their backs have thickened. [10]

In his youth, Levine believed that manual labour would leave his 'mind and imagination free for writing'.[11] This mirrors Ruskin's desire for St George's Museum in Sheffield to inspire tired workers with 'what is lovely in the life of Nature, and heroic in the life of Men.' Situated on Walkley's north-facing hillside, where the furthest view looks northwest over the Peak District, 'the mountain home of the museum'—as Ruskin described it—was chosen to draw local grinders up from the toxic air of Rivelin, Loxley and Neepsend valleys. [12] However, some knew a more sustained escape was needed.

By his mid-twenties, Levine had his share of residual minor injury, was disgusted by the divisive practises that drove industry, and the prospect of a life there, unassuaged by his dream to make poetry pay, would have been intolerable. Instead, for many decades until he died in February last year, writing and teaching gave him:

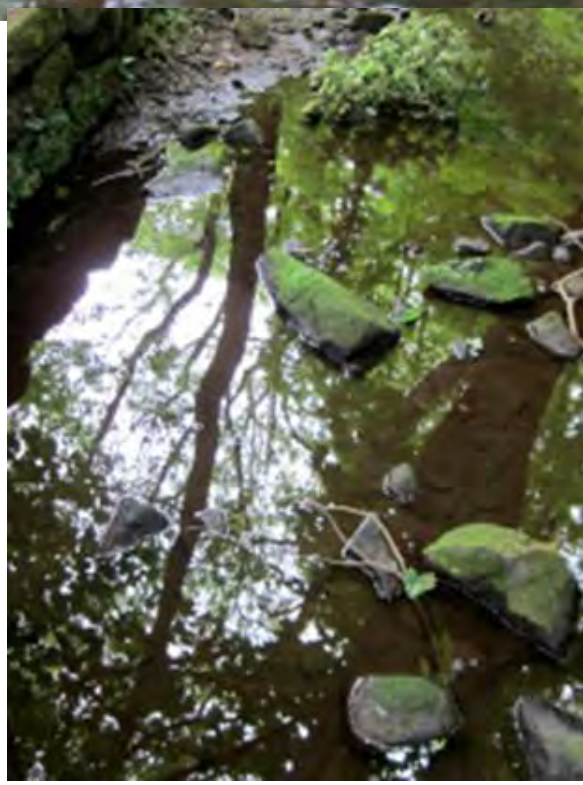
… some work
to do, something useful
and hard, and that they might please

their own need to be doing. [13]

A hundred years before Levine worked in factories, Sheffield grinders suffered severe damage to their respiration, digestion and posture; many were physical wrecks with terminal illnesses by the age of nineteen.[14] Rivelin knife-grinder Benjamin Creswick was impeded by the symptoms of his trade while his family grew.[15] When St George's Museum opened in 1875, he was twenty-two, and its exhibits spurred him to try his hand; he discovered a talent for sculpture and invested in lessons. Before long he drew the attention of John Ruskin, who tutored him, helped find commissions, and paid him, weekly, for as long as necessary. Creswick became a sculptor of great national renown. He played a leading role in the Arts & Crafts Movement, and held a senior position in Birmingham Art School for decades. Completing many public and private commissions, he made art from terracotta, marble and bronze, often portraying characters at tasks he'd performed and observed during his early working life.

It's a credit to the zeal for authenticity that Ruskin passed on in his training, that with at least six children to support, Creswick initially turned down a major commission to illustrate the manufacture of hats, saying he knew nothing of the process. He was persuaded, after being allowed several weeks of study in the hat factory; and the friezes he made for the high-street shop-front, and factory entrance behind it, have been called 'a magnificent piece of Socialist realism, modelled without sentimentality but with great dignity.'[16] The hatters' building no longer exists, but the scenes depicted on the Cutlers' Hall frieze in London show the same strength and dignity.

Creswick's great granddaughter, visual artist and Companion Annie Creswick-Dawson, has said that the visual impact of the men's stances, within sections and from one frame to another, remind her of the flow of the Rivelin. I find this comparison thrilling for the way it taps into the parallels between man and nature that I strive to illuminate in poetry. From the realisations voiced by the teenage couple in 'Star', to the potency of how Sheffield's fast rivers brought its famous industry to town, the connections flow. Poems of mine such as 'Here I spill' and 'Memoir of a Working River' imagine a river's life in terms of a person's, tracking attitudes and behaviour as they mature, suggesting also the harnessed power of a



workforce. In poems like 'Impasse' and 'Contra Flow' the river stands in for the mind's ability to break through and move on. 'Flood Triptych: The Loxley' brings these notions together: as the harness breaks, human ingenuity turns against humanity, and devastation wrought by the river echoes a body's internal struggle.

John Clare's poetry pulls you into the midst of nature, where the work of flora, fauna and river seems never to be done. People are often peripheral: a cowboy on a gate, a distant seed-man sowing grain, or where 'the cottage roof's-thatch brown/ Did add its beauty to the budding green'. [17]

Clare observes from pathless land, inside a thicket, or by 'little brooks that hum a simple lay / In green unnoticed spots'.[18] Removed from human lore, his poetry reveals the long rhythms of nature, while melding the immediacy of life, for its creatures and vegetation, with the breathless joy of the recorder. In 'Sudden Shower', a bee is one of the 'little things around, like you and I', who hurry for shelter, and his allegiance is palpable in this stanza from 'Autumn'.

While from the rustling scythe the haunted hare
Scampers circuitous with startled ears
Pricked up, then squat, as by
She brushes to the woods
Where seeded grass breast-high and undisturbed
Form pleasant clumps through which the suthering winds
Softens her rigid fears
And lulls to calm repose.

Born in 1793, to a peasant family in the Northamptonshire village of Helpston, Clare grew up in similar poverty to Turner, with the same kind of exposure to his future material.[19] He went to school until he was eleven or twelve, after which money and location left no possibility for further education; yet Clare was a voracious scholar. He borrowed, or saved to buy,

books on history, music, botany, maths; everything, that is, except Latin and grammar which he disdained. Already in the thrall of reading, writing and story, when he read *The Seasons* by James Thompson in his early teens, he was seized by the urgent desire to record his world as poetry, and did so obsessively from then on. His early inner life also has parallels with Levine's, and the poetry of both are underpinned by deep-rooted threads of human equality and nature's supremacy. They also share the endearing strategy of telling you their tale as though you were stood beside them. Here are some lines from Clare's 'The Nightingale's Nest':

Hark! there she is as usual—let's be hush—
For in this blackthorn-clump, if rightly guessed,
Her curious house is hidden. Part aside
These hazel branches in a gentle way
And stoop right cautious 'neath the rustling boughs

The fields and gardens where Clare worked weren't the factories of Creswick or Levine, yet in 'The Lament of Swordy Well' he bears witness to the appetites of the revolution already under way in cities:

And me, they turned me inside out
For sand and grit and stones
And turned my old green hills about
And picked my very bones.

In poems like this, dedicated to the horror of land ownership which the Enclosure Acts ushered in, Clare rails at length against its fences, stop signs, 'Grubbed up trees, banks and bushes'. [20] The packaging of land came to Helpston in 1806, Clare's thirteenth year, and in 'The Moors' there's the sense of him having caught the last moments of 'one eternal green / That never felt the rage of blundering plough', whose 'only bondage was the circling sky', where boys picked mulberries, and shepherds found lost sheep. Intact forever, until 'Enclosure came and trampled on the grave / Of labour's rights and left the poor a slave'. This and a similar line in 'The Village Minstrel', where he 'Marks the stopped brook and mourns oppression's power'—a line that could have been written somewhere in the world any year since—typifies his fluidity between a lost detail and the irrevocable hijacking of resources. His way of speaking for and as the landscape and its creatures makes his politics always personal, yet he is usually shedding light on an ugly facet of his nemesis. When 'The Fallen Elm', which always grew comfortingly close to his home, and 'murmured in our chimney top / The sweetest anthem autumn ever made', was felled without any warning, he notes the dangerous rhetoric of those who 'Bawl freedom loud and then oppress the free'. He goes on:

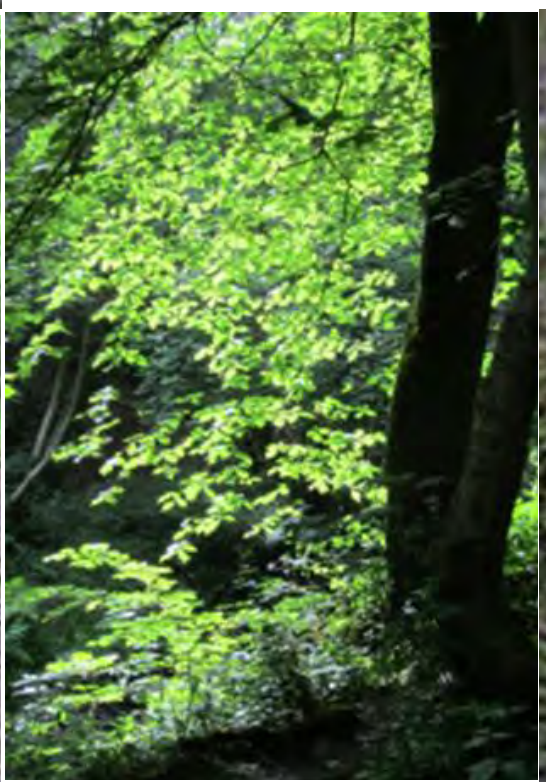
And labour's only cow was drove away.
No matter—wrong was right and right was wrong
And freedom's bawl was sanction to the song.
— Such was thy ruin, music-making elm.

Like Levine, Clare grew up at the brunt of great national hardship and severe class division. In Helpston, he struggled to make a living, nearly enlisted, even put up fences for the local squire—which always made him drink more and hardly write at all; then at twenty-four, his family almost destitute, he travelled a few miles for work burning lime, which went to make mortar and fertiliser. It was during this employment that he resolved to change course: he approached a local bookseller and his twelve -year journey to publication began.

This is no rags-to-riches tale. Clare held out for the best deal, and after his first collection was published in 1820, he enjoyed several years of acclaim as the Peasant Poet. During visits to London, though noticeably gauche, he made friends, some generous and loyal, of writers, artists, etc. There were more collections of his work, but inexperience and bad advice lost him money, and it's likely that his wit and politics eluded much of his contemporary readership. When delays and charlatans had squandered his most accessible assets, his popularity waned. Meanwhile, the severity of his mental frailty, and homesickness when away, went unrecognised or misunderstood for too long. Conversely, he missed London friends and city life when he only connected with them by letter.

Three years after the publication of his first collection, Clare suffered his first bout of depression. This coincided with the death of a rural labouring-class poet from Suffolk, a few decades his senior. Robert Bloomfield's work had been immensely popular for a while, but the man had died penniless and losing his sanity. Fourteen years later, aged forty-four, John Clare was first certified insane. Failing mental health, manifesting in depression and erratic behaviour, had for a long time prevented him from making the best of his earnings, and made home life difficult. Now, it seems, his wife was concerned that he would become violent. In his last few years at home, he could often only be calmed by one of his children talking gently with him about the countryside. He remained in mental health care and continued to write until his death in 1864. Here's his sonnet, published in 1835, 'To the Memory of Bloomfield':

Sweet unassuming minstrel, not to thee
The dazzling fashions of the day belong:
Nature's wild pictures, field and cloud and tree
And quiet brooks far distant from the throng
In murmurs tender as the toiling bee
Make the sweet music of thy gentle song.



Well, nature owns thee: let the crowd pass by,
The tide of fashion is a stream too strong
For pastoral brooks that gently flow and sing,
But nature is their source, and earth and sky
Their annual offering to her current bring.
Thy gentle muse and memory need no sigh,
For thine shall murmur on to many a spring
When their proud streams are summer-burnt and dry.

In the 1870s, as is so often the case, much concern was expressed in Britain about the national debt. This didn't, however, refer to the debt owed to the working urban and rural poor by the individuals making a fortune from the sweat on their thickening backs. Ruskin's response was to call for a National Store, and St George's Museum in Walkley was designed to exhibit this collection of artefacts.[21] He deplored mass production and the attendant poverty of the human mind and body, and founded the Guild of St George to explore alternatives to industrial capitalism, encourage art and craft, and work toward greater understanding and co-operation between the different classes throughout the country. The museum in Walkley was one of its earliest projects. Unfortunately, several episodes of serious mental illness left John Ruskin unable to realise his hopes fully.

Recently, the Guild funded a nine-year cycle of Triennial exhibitions at Sheffield's Millennium Gallery which culminated earlier this year. Ceramicist Emilie Taylor was commissioned to produce work for *Force of Nature; Picturing Ruskin's Landscape*, its 2012 exhibition.

Taylor has led a number of projects that encourage members of a community to make art from what binds them.[22] Several years ago, for instance, in *Brown & White*, recovering heroin and cocaine users employed a nostalgic framing to juxtapose their own images of addiction and safety. For *Force of Nature*, she drew on childhood memories of her father's involvement in pigeon racing around their Rivelin Valley home, and the piece she made, 'So High I Almost Touched the Sky', is a pair of metre-tall vases decorated with tender images of Skye Edge pigeon fanciers, their birds and surroundings. She fired them in an outdoor smokeless wood-fuelled kiln, built by the artists' community at Manor Top, while pigeons flew high above. The impressive stature of these items, along with their capacity and fragility, are perfect for the men they depict. Indeed, for the whole workforce who keep everyone fed and sheltered without anyone's name being known—because none of them are called Tesco or Adidas—and for the poets and artists spoken of here, who have seen something and wished to tell it.

A few years ago, Taylor was guest visual artist on a poetry walk led by Mark Doyle, and I was lucky enough to be on it. We left Upperthorpe Library to stand where Kelvin flats had been, and look out over Pitsmoor and Parkwood Springs. She gave out materials, talked to us about looking, not looking, and negative space, showed us methods to capture our version of the view. Then I was amazed to be led along Neepsend Valley to where derelict pigeon lofts are barely hidden by a thin stand of trees beside Penistone Road. 'Flight from Cuthbert Bank' is the poem I wrote about the walk; here are its last two stanzas:

Ten years since the last
kept pigeon homed to here. Back five more decades
to before they razed Parkwood Spring and sucked
Neepsend dry: the valley not this fleck of factory,
a filament between car galleries
and abandoned hillside,

but like a Lowry vision: a flock
of men released by work clocks, to rise above
day's end, the valley's din, legacies of grind,
to hold the small bulk, feel its heat
pulse through feathers in cupped hands,
and send those tiny hearts and lungs
to claim their reach of sky.

Fay Musselwhite's debut collection Contraflow *was published in April this year, and several of her poems appear in the Longbarrow Press anthology* The Footing*; both are available from* <www.longbarrowpress.com> *and some bookshops.*

NOTES

[1]Ruskin, *The Two Boyhoods*, in Wilmer p. 146.
[2] Ruskin qtd in Dearden, pp. 17-18.
[3] From *Door into the Dark* (1969).
[4] Levine, *Work*.
[5] Details of Philip Levine's life are from Levine, *The Bread of Time*.
[6] Levine, *Bread*, p. 113.
[7] "Every Blessed Day', in *Work*.
[8] 'Fear and Fame', in *Work*.
[9] 'Burned', in *Work*
[10] 'Among Children', in *Work*
[11] Levine, *Bread*, p. 114.
[12] Price, p. 71.
[13] 'Possession', in *Not This Pig*.
[14] Engels.
[15] Details of Benjamin Creswick's life are from Annie Creswick Dawson.
[16] Simon Ogden, qtd by Creswick Dawson.
[17] 'The Village Minstrel'.
[18] 'The Eternity of Nature'.
[19] Details of John Clare's life are from Bate, *Biography*.
[20] 'The Lament of Swordy Well'.
[21] Notes about the Guild and the Museum are from the Guild's website.
[22] Details of Emilie Taylor's work are from her website.

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THE THIRD JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE

New Art Gallery, Walsall, February 25th 2016

Peter Miller

(L-R) Stephen Snoddy (New Art Gallery, Walsall), Peter Miller, Kate Mason (Director, Big Draw) and Sue Grayson Ford (former Director, Campaign for Drawing) at the prize-giving in Walsall.

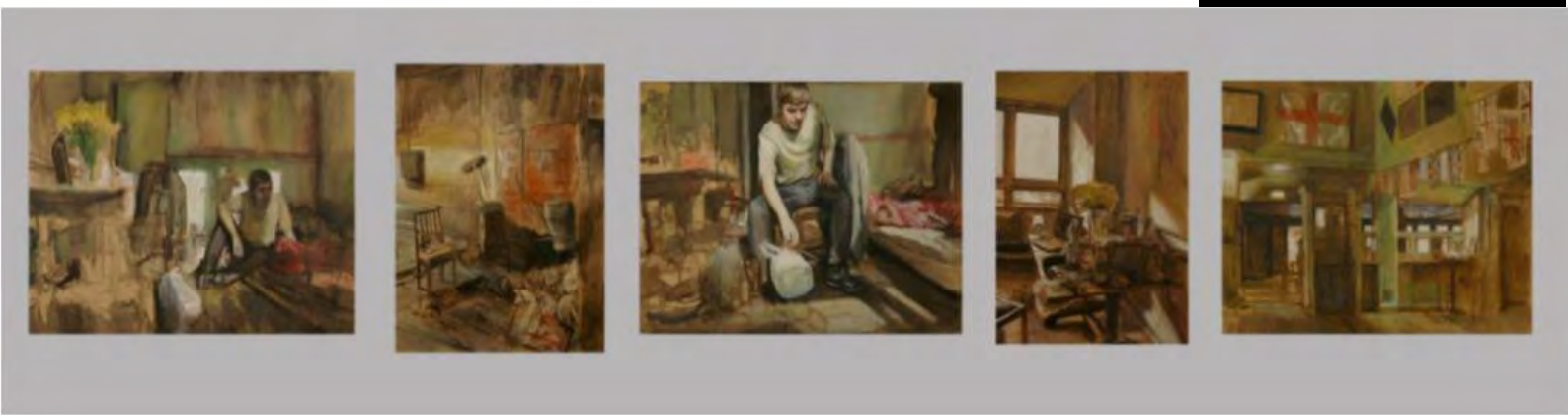
The John Ruskin Prize was established in 2012 by the Campaign for Drawing (now the Big Draw) following a proposal of Clive Wilmer, the Master of the Guild. In 2014 and 2015 the prize had taken the theme of *Recording Britain* from the original idea of Kenneth Clark, who in 1939, with the advent of war and the potential destruction it might bring, set up the scheme whereby artists recorded Britain in drawings and watercolours. The resulting 1400 works between 1939 and 1943 are now housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Gill Saunders, Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings at the V&A, was one of this year's judges. Gill also provided an excellent introduction, *Recording Britain: Then and Now*, in this year's exhibition catalogue.

The prize exhibition, *Recording Britain Now: Society,* was shown at the New Art Gallery Walsall, one of the finest galleries in Britain. Designed by Caruso St John, architects, it opened in 2000 to house the collection of Kathleen Garman (widow of Jacob Epstein) and Sally Ryan. The exhibition occupied the fourth floor of the building, which had panoramic views of Walsall from the balcony, and about 200 people came to the opening. There were a number of speeches and it was agreed that, with over 600 entries and 30 finalists, the choice of winners had been a difficult one. The first prize of £5000 was awarded to Laura Oldfield Ford for an outstanding body of work describing the marginalised and dispossessed in south London where she lives. For over twenty years she has chronicled the radical reordering of urban space following de-industrialisation. She explores Ruskinian themes of the ravages visited on people by industrialisation and the pursuit of profit. It was felt to be a timely comment on urban society in Britain in the current age of austerity and cuts.

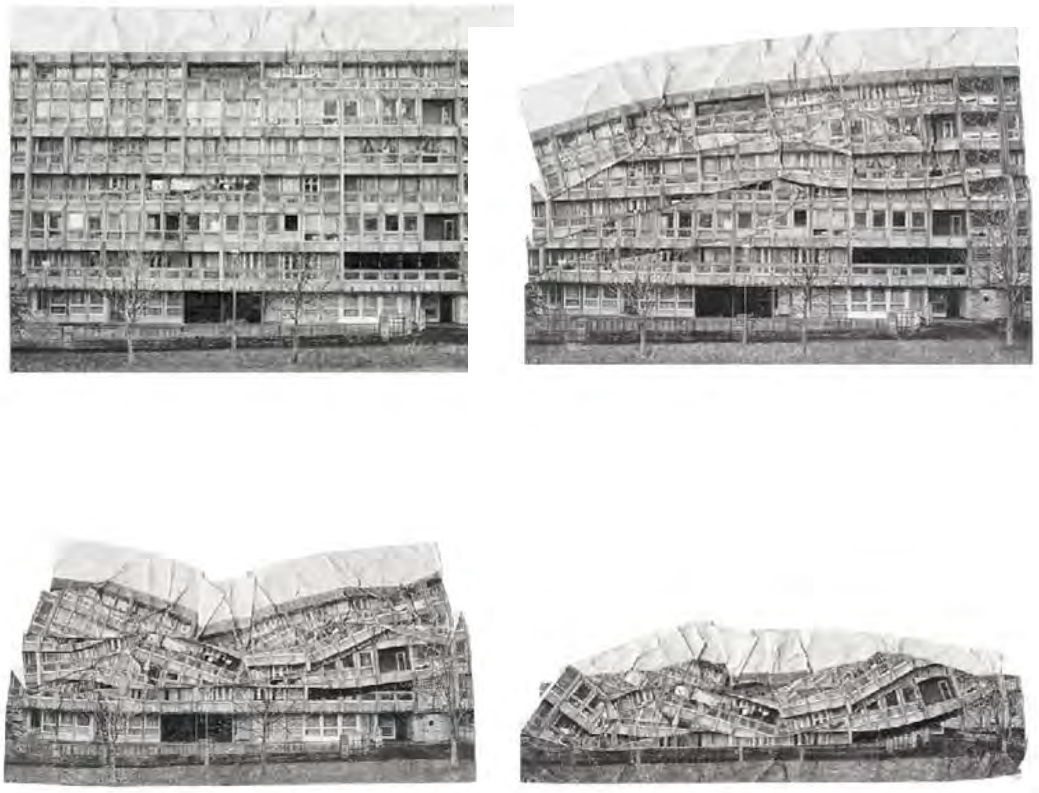
1ST PRIZE: Laura Oldfield Ford,* Colliers Wood *(acrylic and oil on canvas).

The second prize of £2000 went to Jessie Brennan for her *A Fall of Ordinariness and Light* which was a series of four drawings showing the collapse of a block of social housing flats. It cleverly expressed in graphite the crumpling of paper to suggest the demolition of Robin Hood Gardens in south London. She also showed a 79-page booklet which explored the demolition in a series of coloured photomontages. The third prize of £1000, reserved for students, was awarded to Robin Sukatorn for his 'reportage' drawings, mostly of Manchester where he currently lives. It included *Jeremy Corbyn speaks in Manchester* and his fluid, rapid observations were strongly politically informed.

Guild Companions were well-represented and we repaired to a local pub where delicious food was available for the judges, the finalists and members of the Guild. It was kindly provided by the New Art Gallery. We were able to talk to some of the finalists



Laura Oldfield Ford,* Winstanley Estate series *(acrylic and oil on board)



2ND PRIZE: Jessie Brennan, **A Fall of Ordinariness and Light**
(graphite on paper)

and much interest was expressed in the Guild's activities.

The total prize money of £8000 was only made possible with the generous contribution of the Pilgrim Trust which had also supported the original *Recording Britain 1939-1943*. Thanks are due to Rachel Price who, as Project Manager for the John Ruskin Prize, co-ordinated the exhibition and produced the excellent catalogue. Also to Kate Mason, who has taken over as Director of the Big Draw and finally, to Sue Grayson Ford, who as founder of the Big Draw, has just retired from its activities. We owe her a great debt of gratitude.

The exhibition continued at the New Gallery Walsall until Sunday April 17th and then transferred to the Electricians' Shop Gallery at Trinity Buoy Wharf, 64 Orchard Place, London where it ran from Thursday May 5th to Sunday May 22nd.

On Winning the Student Prize

Robin Sukatorn

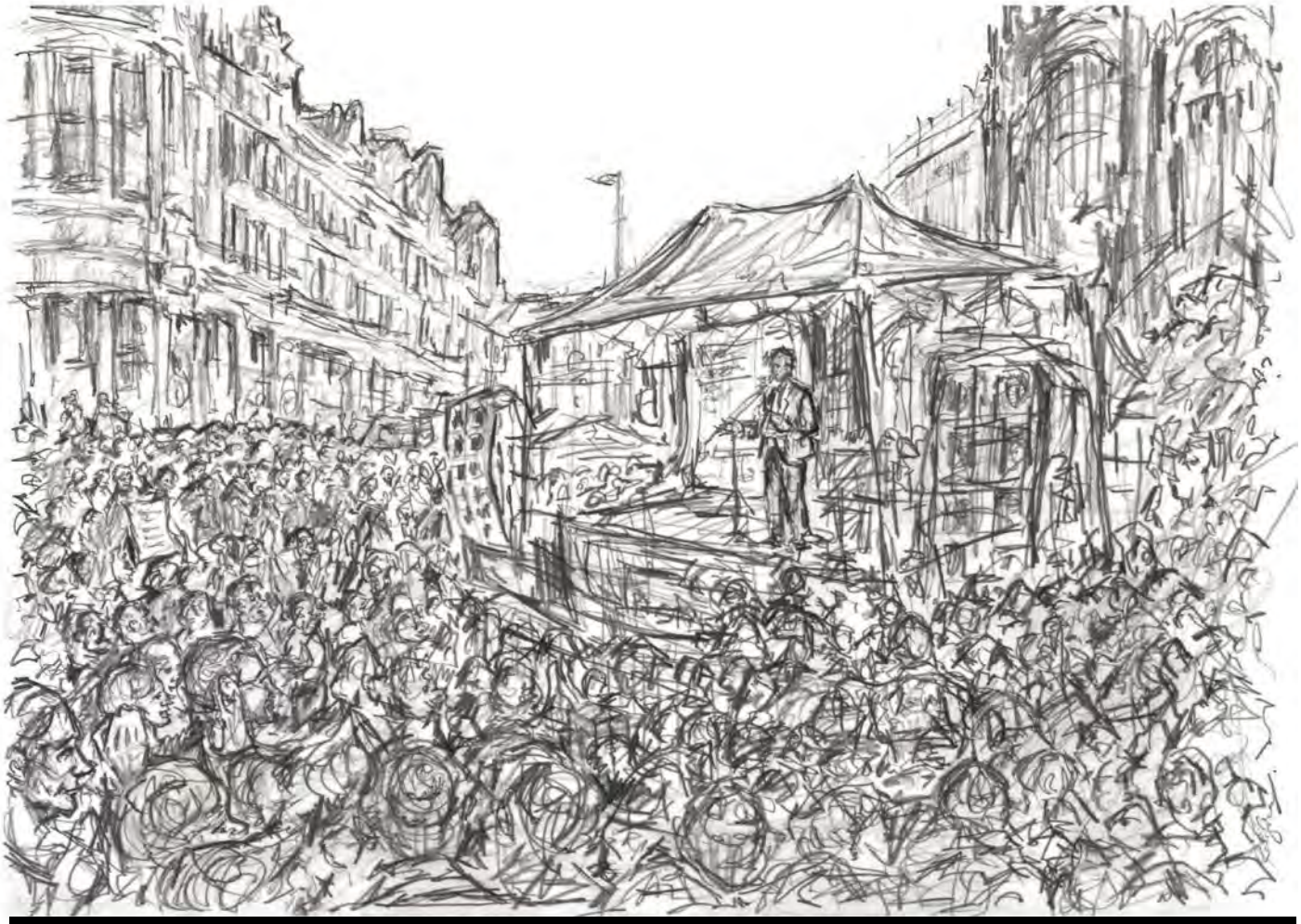
In September of last year I arrived at the Manchester School of Art to embark on a two-year masters course focusing on illustration, with an ambition to meld together my passion for drawing with my interest in current affairs and contemporary society. My project was launched somewhat dramatically with the arrival of a mass anti-austerity demonstration through Manchester during the first week of term. The next day, a speech by newly-elected Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, outside Manchester Cathedral, took place as the Conservative Party met for their annual conference on the other side of town.

It was an exhilarating experience to float within the sea of demonstrators, scribbling furiously with pencil and pen to capture a sense of the scene and the characters around me. Back in my studio, I laid out the live sketches, photographs and notes I had made on location and set out to compose a drawing of Corbyn speaking to the rapturous crowds, retaining a lively and gestural application of line, with my eyes continually darting between my hand and the gathered materials from which I was making my drawing.

I had learned about the John Ruskin Prize from a fellow student during a course review of my work, and the more I researched, the more it struck me how strongly Ruskin's celebration of drawing as a means of representing and commenting on contemporary society resonated with my own practice and interests. In response to the theme 'Recording Britain Now: Society' I decided to enter my drawing of Jeremy Corbyn Speaking in Manchester', a submission which I hoped would not only capture a moment in local Manchester life but also reflect the changing and contested landscape of British politics, particularly the surge in grassroots, left-wing activism amongst Labour supporters and the reaction against the austerity policies of the Conservative government. It was a great honour to be shortlisted and to have the opportunity to exhibit in Walsall and London alongside such an inspiring and talented group of artists, all offering unique responses to the Prize's theme. To be awarded the Student Prize was absolutely thrilling, and I am extremely grateful for this recognition from the judges as well as for the generous words of encouragement and advice from many of the artists and guests at the ceremony.

Having only recently taken the plunge into the world of art and illustration, this experience has given a great boost to my confidence and sense of purpose as an artist, and it has really inspired me to push on with creating new work. I am currently developing a drawing project in which I will record scenes from the cultural, civic and political life of the north of England, and winning the student prize has opened up the opportunity for me to branch out from Manchester to a wider variety of further-flung locations. I have recently returned from a four -day drawing trip through Leeds, Hull and Sheffield (where I visited the Ruskin Collection at the Millennium Gallery) and I will shortly be visiting Newcastle, York and Liverpool, as well as locations in the Lake and Peak Districts. I now have greater freedom to experiment with different media and creative processes, such as etching, lithography and painting, and I aim to develop the drawings resulting from my travels into a self-published collection, as well as into larger-scale work.

It is endlessly fascinating to discover different parts of the country, to scout out opportunities for drawing, and to record my impressions of the scenes and people I encounter. I very much look forward to building on this inspiring experience with the John Ruskin Prize in the years to come, and to continue to explore and record the world around me through drawing, in a way which I hope Ruskin himself would have appreciated.



STUDENT PRIZE: Robin Sukatorn, **Jeremy Corbyn speaks in Manchester** *(graphite stick on paper).*

GRANDPA's PEACH: TWO LANGUAGES FOR KIDS, NOT ONE

Bob Steele

Mary was two when she was taken on a day trip to visit her grandparents who lived in a semi-rural community not many miles away. She remembers being carried in her grandfather's arms to the back garden to admire the first peach he had ever been able to grow. There was only one but if you took time to look carefully, it was a sight to behold—a perfect orb with a fuzzy skin to touch and just coming into full colour. It was a memorable event—being in the arms of an affectionate grandfather and having contact with a wonder of nature.

Back home next morning, Mary was sprawled on the kitchen floor with a large black crayon and sheets of newsprint. It was her daily custom to draw but she was still at the scribbling stage and the marks were simply fun to make and didn't represent anything in particular. But then she spotted a familiar shape and something clicked. She called to her mother and, pointing to the circle, exclaimed with a note of triumph, 'Grandpa's peach'!

It happens all the time but is not always noticed, the birth in a child of a *double* language. Mary was already building a vocabulary at the time of her visit and her discovery of a familiar shape in a tangle of marks next day prompted her to form a sentence, albeit, a short one. There is no record of when Mary progressed to *intentional* graphic representation but it would not be long in coming. The stage was set for rapid language growth and spontaneous drawing would stimulate literacy and literacy would stimulate drawing. This symbiotic relationship would hold as long as she continued to draw. It was not exclusively Mary's or that of a small percentage of talented children but a potential, waiting within every child's mind, and all that is needed are drawing materials and thematic motivation from a kindly caregiver!

Spontaneous drawing is an uncoded language, the symbols of which are invented by each child. The set pieces of literacy, i.e. words, *are* coded and the product of culture. Each system has advantages and both are needed. Literacy is precisely repeatable with significant implications for communication, knowledge, abstract thought, and metaphorical expression. Spontaneous drawing is designed for personal use and, for the child, is more flexible, capable of greater complexity *and* subtlety, and it has far greater capacity to link small units into holistic entities, thus effortlessly achieving *aesthetic energy* and the status of *work of art*. If my reasoning holds, the mental processes associated with holistic language use (i.e. drawing alone or with words) has a direct and immediate effect on the psychological development and psychological health of children!

For the developing child, drawing has the advantage of being the easier of the two to use

and thus tends to become a *pathfinder* for literacy. (A good teaching strategy for all ages: draw first; tell or write about the drawing later.) Oral expression of one kind or another is the only option—using words as writing is far off in the future—and in oral expression children are faced with a particular challenge: *words keep disappearing over a memory horizon*. In contrast, the schemata of drawing stay in place on the paper and this makes possible an automatic *feedback loop*.

It begins with the mysteries of image formation in the mind/brain which guide the hand holding the drawing tool and this results in the initial marks on paper. The child drawing scans the marks as they appear and additional marks are placed in precise relationship to the ones already there. The image keeps flowing back into the mind/brain for further scanning and further mark making. The feedback loop explains why children are able to experience empathy when they draw but not when they speak or write.

The emphasis here on preconscious image making is not meant to diminish the importance of rational thought in the overall creative process. Even in the very young and ever more so with the growth of the mind/brain, *analysis* and *intellect* play a role, important if not the equal of synthesis and intuition. To be specific, the conscious intellect is engaged in choosing a pre-drawing theme and, later, reacting to a finished product. In complex drawings, it emerges in moments of pause (where do I go from here, what have I left out that needs to be put in?).

The importance of the literacy code to eventual learning and communication is happily granted but in the meantime the young mind craves a language for immediate use in fulfilling the daily requirements of mental development. Drawing, fortified with words, fills the bill, an alternative wisely provided by Nature but treated casually, even indifferently, by humans. Later in life, the relationship is reversed and words take over as 'number one', supported, whenever feasible, by drawing. I suspect, however, that for many children, especially those who have been brought up on a 'daily draw' regime, or those who find the literacy project an arduous task, spontaneous drawing will remain important for many language functions, if it is encouraged. Nature provides the opportunity but culture tends to be blind!

A SIX-YEAR OLD'S WORK OF ART: 'LUCY WAS TIRED NOW'

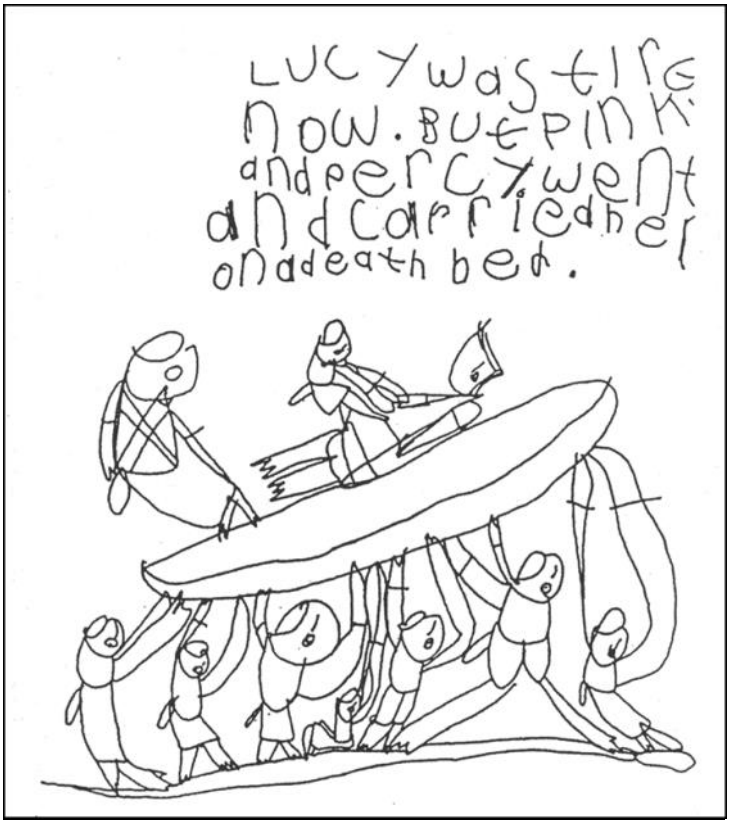
Joanne was a precocious child so it should not surprise us that she would make a brilliant drawing, indeed, a *work of art.* Children's drawings, like most human characteristics, vary in excellence, but there is little point in rank ordering them. I coined the term *aesthetic energy* to describe the feeling we get while contemplating a *work of art,* whether by child wonder or adult genius, but it is not something one needs to measure, only to recognise. It is the product of empathy for subject matter, manufactured in the preconscious. We can say that the formal characteristics associated with *good design* provide at least a nomenclature for later analysis, a tool for understanding, but the values of drawing are much more. *Good design focuses on form, while aesthetic energy and work of art are a matter of form* and *content, indeed, always beginning with content!* Form works if it is a product of empathy, empathy for content and empathy for drawing process. We can come close to defining *good design* (those overworked concepts, elements and principles) but there is always an indefinable mystery about *aesthetic energy* and its culmination in a *work of art* and it's always a matter of personal judgment.

Joanne's story is truly astonishing and would have interested the great neurologist, Oliver Sacks. For one thing, she was surprisingly prolific and yet she was classed as *legally blind* by medical authorities! She learned to type. She played clarinet in her school band. She rode her bike to school down a busy urban street. She was something of an expert on dog breeds, and while she had none of her own, she never failed to chat to them in street encounters. Dogs, always drawn from memory, were a major part of her pre-teen subject-matter. Her drawings were always true to canine physical characteristics—she could never properly see a whole dog so I conclude that her knowledge of breeds came from library books which her mother told me she studied by the hour.

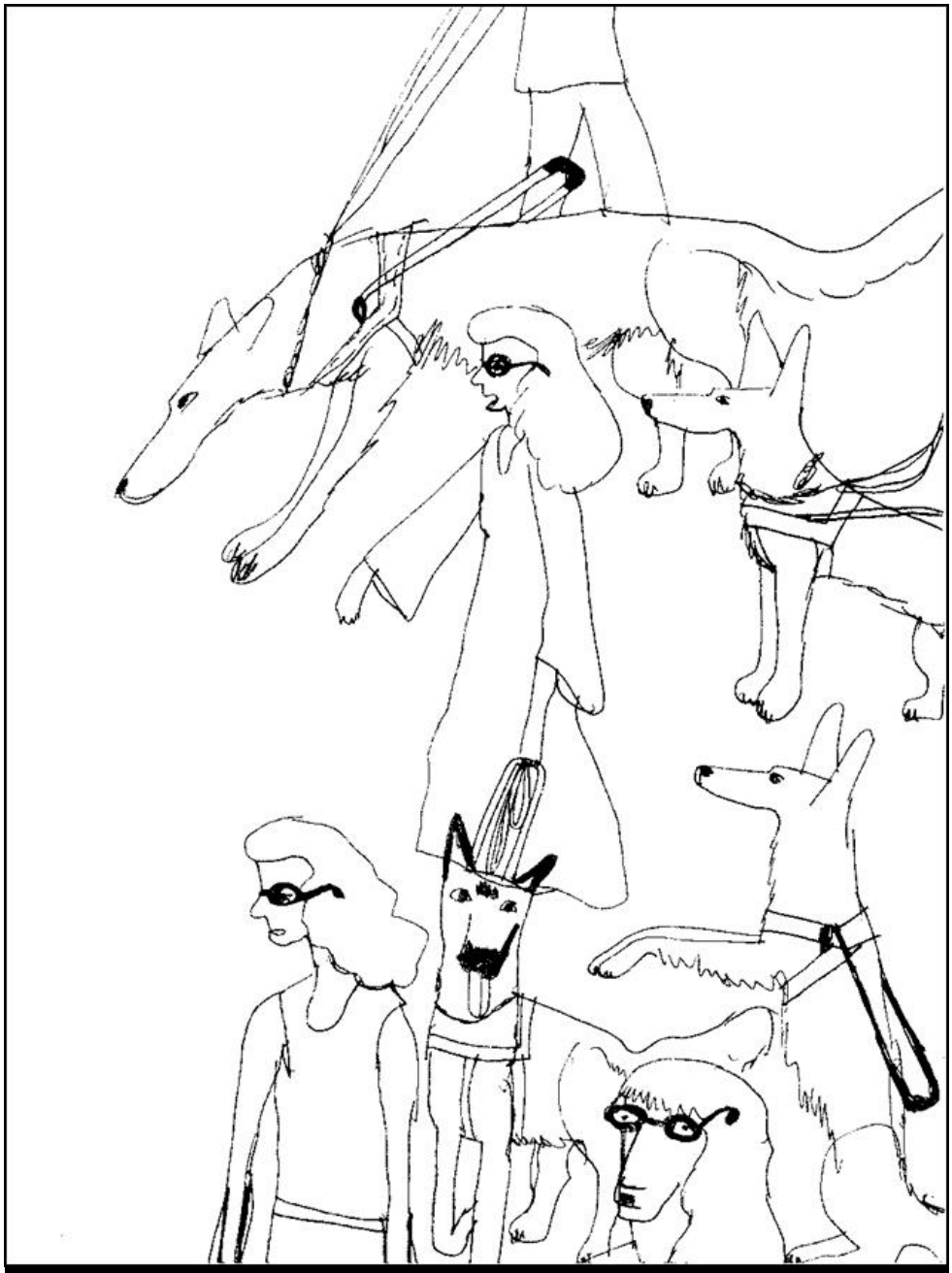
I have a theory about Joanne's attraction to drawing and her problem with seeing. Empathy, as it relates to drawing, has two components, *seeing* and *feeling.* Feeling has two meanings, one related to the sense of touch, the other to an emotional state, and this double meaning describes empathy when it is related to spontaneous drawing. Presumably, when Joanne met a dog on the street, or studied one in a book, and later when she drew the dog from memory, she did her best to 'see' the animal, the one she had a special feeling for at the moment, and to compensate for her lack of vision her feeling, in both meanings, was more intense, a matter of compensation.

Lucy's drawing is a perfect example of the symbiotic relationship of drawing and writing. The text not only contributes meaning but plays a role in the picture's spatial organisation by occupying the drawing's upper third with a broken textured rectangle. Even the crudity of the letter forms adds graphic texture. (Joanne taught herself to write with printed letters and many of her drawings combine the two language forms.) The text reads, 'LUCY WAS TIRE/ NOW. BUT PINK/ AND PERCY WENT/ AND CARRIED HER/ ON A DEATH BED'.

The drawing is the penultimate panel of a series of 24, a narrative about the summer adventures of a gang of friends who paint houses. It's all summer fun until suddenly Lucy gets tired and needs a rest and a



'Lucy was tired now' by Joanne (aged 6).



'Five Dogs' by Joanne (aged 8).

shadow passes over the narrative. Where did Joanne pick up the phrase 'death bed', we wonder, and why did she use it in this otherwise happy context? I have never found an answer, but my guess is that she read it somewhere and it appealed to her imagination. At any rate, it brings the gang into a moment of solidarity in an extraordinary drawing. In the final panel, all is well again and Lucy, now rested, resumes her leadership role and house painting resumes.

But look carefully at the formal arrangement! I have never studied a *work of art* that holds its elements in such a state of compressed energy. The diagonal pitch of the 'death bed' makes *tension* the theme that excites a flow of *aesthetic energy* by galvanising its elements in opposition to one another. And note that the theme of tension works in both form *and* content. The drama on the stone slab, and it has to be stone, makes my arms tense with a sympathetic response, and note that Lucy touches it only on the pivotal point of her seat and nowhere else, which concentrates our attention on the precise moment of Pinky's arm-wrenching task. Relaxation is promised, but, as on the tableau of Keats' Grecian urn, it will never happen. Below the slab, every arm bends to the task and the downward thrust is positively body-splaying. That all fourteen arms of her seven friends are actually touching tells of the complete and uninterrupted state of empathic involvement!

Two years of daily practice changed Joanne's drawing resources from the self-invented schemata of young childhood to a more mature style I call *empathic expressionism*. This term is meant to replace the false goal of *naturalism* or *photographic verisimilitude* which is without empathy because attempts to 'get it right' require frequent moments of analysis. In naturalism, empathic form can never be achieved; there is no flow of *aesthetic energy* and the values of authentic art cannot be realised. With this in mind, examine a drawing by Joanne from a mere two years after the Lucy drawing,

At eight, Joanne spent many hours making drawings to illustrate complex stories, typically as a series with added text in the empty spaces. Her rendering of dogs and the teenage girls whose friends they were, has become astonishingly convincing and the drawings are perfect examples of *empathic expressionism*. How can we account for it? She was, of course, undoubtedly gifted. Her emotional attachment to dogs gave her a powerful focus and personal motivation. She was attracted to books and it was natural for her to want to tell stories and illustrate them, but it was not without concentration and effort. (Her parents loved and cared for her but claimed no role in her precocious activities and, indeed ,were mystified by it.) Her eye condition had the effect of intensifying the 'touch' aspect of empathy in contrast to those children handicapped by the cultural emphasis on truth to vision as the ideal measure of art. She touched the dogs she met on walks and the illustrations of dogs she studied in books and she *touched* them again when she made drawings of them.

Studying Joanne's drawings tells us that mere illustration (and some illustrations, of course, are simultaneously art!) makes use of sightedness as a necessary source of information and detail, but authentic art requires sight *and* touch in integrated fusion. And this, of course, is empathy!

Some 25 years ago, I started the Drawing Network, an informal group of parents, teachers, academics and citizens interested in the welfare of children and the reform of schooling. There are no table officers, membership fees, or annual meetings. We write, publish and distribute pamphlets and books world-wide, pamphlets at no charge and books at CA$20 plus postage. The book most closely related to this article is A PICTURE BOOK OF CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS, *which is still available. We are small but growing! We need your help in spreading the word. If you find this appealing and wish to participate, we welcome you wholeheartedly. We urge you to distribute this or any other Drawing Network publication. (No need to get further permission.) Write your own text or use mine!*
<http://drawnet.duetsoftware.ca/>.

AMERICAN NOTES

Jim Spates (spates@hws.edu) *and* ***Sara Atwood*** (NAbranch@guildofstgeorge.org.uk)

And the entire object of true education is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy the right things. Not merely industrious, but to love industry. Not merely learned, but to love knowledge. Not merely pure, but to love purity. Not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice.

—John Ruskin, 'Traffic' - 1864 (18.437)

Ruskinians in Los Angeles: Clive Wilmer, left, Gabriel Meyer, right; Jim Spates, centre (couldn't afford hat!).

A wonderful set of lines, these. Among Ruskin's best. Lines which inspire (literally: 'to *in*-spirit,' 'to put the breath of life into'), lines which point us, in words lovely and direct, to the paths we all should seek and follow. As what follows hopefully makes clear, during the past year, a good number of inspiring things have occurred which have helped us move down the paths Ruskin rightly championed.

West Coast: Events

Not one, but *two* Ruskin 'tours' occurred in California. In the case of both events, the principal speaker was Master of The Guild, **Clive Wilmer.**

The first happened in early September and was sponsored by the **Ruskin Art Club (RAC)** in **Los Angeles.** Clive's first lecture, 'Human Nature and Natural Abundance: John Ruskin and Environment,' was given on September 2nd at the University of Southern California (USC). Later that day he spoke on 'Ruskin's Language: How a Victorian Prophet Uses Words.' On September 4th, at the Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center, he read from his own *New and Collected Poems*. Between these events, discussions were held with **Jim Spates,** visiting from New York, **Gray Brechin**, from The Bay Area, **Gabriel Meyer,** Director of RAC, and other RAC members, about what might be done in the LA Basin to make Ruskin, the importance of his work, and his historic (but largely unrecognised) influence on the area better known. One of the most significant discussions occurred at **The Huntington Library** in nearby **San Marino.** It centred on whether The Huntington, one of the most prestigious libraries in America and archival home of some of Ruskin's most important manuscripts, might be willing to sponsor an exhibition of their Ruskin holdings and host, at the same time, a major Ruskin conference in 2019, his bi-centennial year. The suggestion was well received and, in consequence, a full-scale proposal for these events was submitted. The Library will make its decision later this year.

After these events, Clive travelled to the **San Francisco Bay Area**. On September 8th, his talk at **The Colophon Club** at **Berkeley City Club** was on 'John Ruskin, William Morris, and the Revival of Craftsmanship'; two days later, his lecture, '"Beautiful, Peaceful, and Fruitful": John Ruskin's Guild of St. George,' was presented at **The Swedenborgian Church of San Francisco**, a National Historic Landmark**.** He was joined on this occasion by Companion Aonghus Gordon, who spoke on the educational work of Ruskin Mill Trust. [For those who know little about this remarkable, *hand-crafted* place of worship, visit: <www.sfswedenborgian.org.>.] These lectures stimulated numerous talks with Bay Area people interested in Ruskin and his legacy.

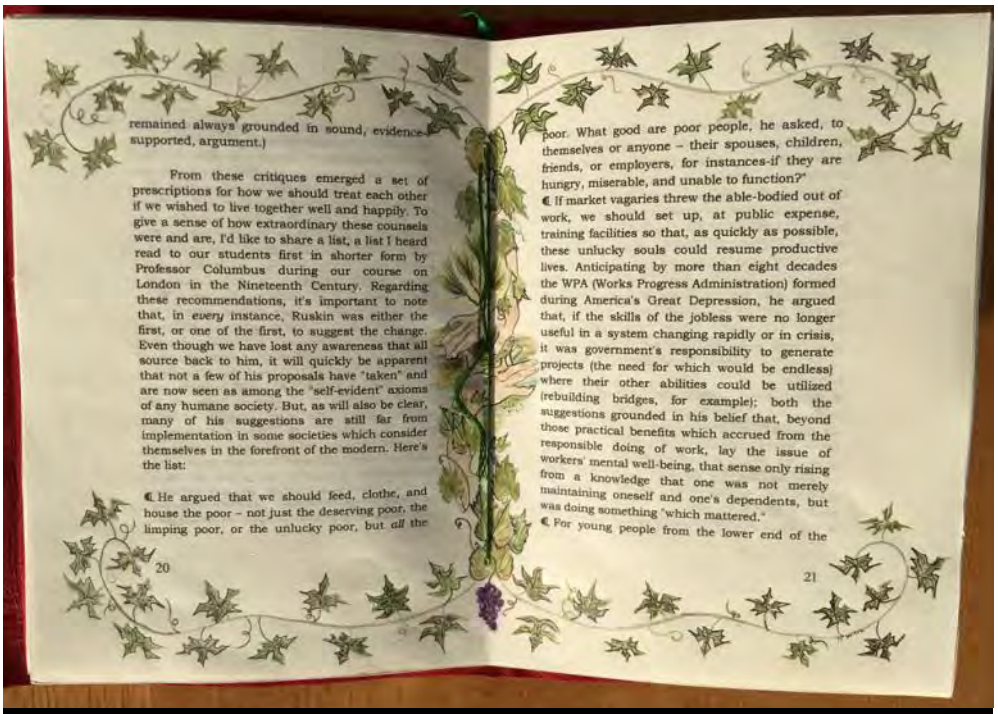
The second tour was in the Bay Area alone. On December 17th, Companion **Nicholas Friend**, Director of Inscape, the Cultural Study Society, lectured at **The Hillside Club** in Berkeley on 'The Hillside Club and the True Meaning of Civilization'. The Guild Master was in his audience and the following day was once again at San Francisco's Swedenborgian Church, his talk there entitled 'Ruskin in Modern Poems: A Reading and a Commentary'. On the 19th December, Clive and Nicholas shared a platform at Berkeley's **First Church of Christ Scientist**, a building designed by Arts and Crafts architect Bernard Maybeck. They held a public conversation on *News*

Interior of the Swedenborgian Church, San Francisco.

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Berkeley (interior detail).

from Nowhere, William Morris's utopian romance. [For the significance of Berkeley's First Church of Christ, Scientist, another National Historic Landmark in the Arts and Crafts tradition, read: <www.friendsoffirstchurch.org>.] The last talk in this tour, held again at the Swedenborgian Church, was on December 20th. Clive's subject was 'Reading Nature in Architecture: A Student of John Ruskin looks at the Swedenborgian Church in San Francisco.'

On April 22nd, RAC co-sponsored—with the **University of Southern California Department of Cinematic Arts**—a screening of a new film in which Ruskin plays a significant role: *Many Beautiful Things: The Life and Vision of Lilias Trotter*. (A review of the film can be found elsewhere in this issue.) Following the screening, **Ruth Weisberg**, an artist, Professor of Fine Arts at USC and its former Dean, Jim Spates, and Companion **Ron Austin**, led a discussion chaired by RAC Director, Gabriel Meyer. Another presentation by Nicholas Friend, 'William Morris and the Medieval Origins of Berkeley,' had taken place at The Hillside Club in Berkeley on March 22nd.


remained always grounded in sound, evidence-supported, argument.)

From these critiques emerged a set of prescriptions for how we should treat each other if we wished to live together well and happily. To give a sense of how extraordinary these counsels were and are, I'd like to share a list, a list I heard read to our students first in shorter form by Professor Columbus during our course on London in the Nineteenth Century. Regarding these recommendations, it's important to note that, in *every* instance, Ruskin was either the first, or one of the first, to suggest the change. Even though we have lost any awareness that all source back to him, it will quickly be apparent that not a few of his proposals have "taken" and are now seen as among the "self-evident" axioms of any humane society. But, as will also be clear, many of his suggestions are still far from implementation in some societies which consider themselves in the forefront of the modern. Here's the list:

¶ He argued that we should feed, clothe, and house the poor – not just the deserving poor, the limping poor, or the unlucky poor, but *all* the

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poor. What good are poor people, he asked, to themselves or anyone – their spouses, children, friends, or employers, for instances-if they are hungry, miserable, and unable to function?"

¶ If market vagaries threw the able-bodied out of work, we should set up, at public expense, training facilities so that, as quickly as possible, these unlucky souls could resume productive lives. Anticipating by more than eight decades the WPA (Works Progress Administration) formed during America's Great Depression, he argued that, if the skills of the jobless were no longer useful in a system changing rapidly or in crisis, it was government's responsibility to generate projects (the need for which would be endless) where their other abilities could be utilized (rebuilding bridges, for example); both the suggestions grounded in his belief that, beyond those practical benefits which accrued from the responsible doing of work, lay the issue of workers' mental well-being, that sense only rising from a knowledge that one was not merely maintaining oneself and one's dependents, but was doing something "which mattered."

¶ For young people from the lower end of the

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Hand-illuminated pages from one of Joe Weber's Ruskin publications: Roycroft Print Shop, East Aurora, New York (Illuminator: Necole Witcher).

East Coast: Events

Last year, an important Ruskin-Morris-Hubbard Conference was held at **The Roycroft Community** in **East Aurora, New York**. Roycroft was established by **Elbert Hubbard** in the mid-1890s on the principles championed by Ruskin and Morris. While Hubbard lived, Roycroft's success ensured the spread of the Arts and Crafts Movement in America. (Without that influence, it is all but sure that few of the West Coast organizations discussed above would have been as successful as they were and continue to be.) Principal among Roycroft's achievements was its rise as one of the two or three most important publishing firms in the US. At Hubbard's insistence, its publications were printed by hand on presses very like those used by Morris in England. Now, as both tribute and revival, **The Roycroft Print Shop,** under the direction of Companion **Joe Weber,** is about to open. To make it a nearly-identical recreation of Hubbard's shop of over a century ago, Weber searched out printing presses from Hubbard's era (two were originally Hubbard's!) and has dedicated the new press to making the same kind of beautiful books created by Hubbard and Morris. Books will be bound in suede or full leather and almost all will be illuminated. To do all this, Joe has had to revive Hubbard's original techniques for printing, illuminating, how to create *frontispieces*, how to gold-foil stamp, and teach these not only to himself but to those working with him. To say that this is an extremely scarce exercise in regenerating a true *craft* in the Ruskin-Morris sense, goes almost without saying. It is hoped that, in due course, some of the Guild's own publications will be printed there. The press opened officially in mid-April. In conjunction with that debut, **Jim Spates** led a two-session discussion of Ruskin's extraordinary lecture on the importance of reading, 'Of Kings' Treasuries'. The Roycroft Print Shop is a remarkable achievement and, for bringing it into being, Joe Weber deserves our sustained applause. (He can be reached at: joeweb@sunlink.net

North American Companions

We now turn to brief descriptions of projects, writings, lectures, and plans of some North American Companions.

Sara Atwood: Now based in Portland, Oregon, in early May of last year, Sara was invited to give the Annual Ruskin Lecture at Whitelands College, University of Roehampton, in the UK. Her talk, '"An Enormous Difference between Knowledge and Education": What John Ruskin can Teach Us,' is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Some days later, she visited the **Ruskin Mill Trust** to take part in an Action Research Workshop at The Field Centre, an event organised by Dr. **Aksel Hugo** and Dr. **Mandy Nelson**. Sara's lecture on the first evening of the event (May 8th) was entitled, '"From the King's Son Downwards": Modern Education and the Wisdom of the Hands,' its theme being the importance of hand-work in education and the negative effects of its absence in modern mainstream schooling. The following day she joined **Aonghus Gordon** and the staff and students of Ruskin Mill for a day of workshops. Later that day, she gave a second talk, '"One Mighty Whole": Ruskin and Nature.' After that, participants split into three separate hands-on workshop groups, one focused on iron forging, another on wool-making, and a third on woodworking. During her woodworking session, Sara joined **Carole Baugh**, Arts Coordinator at Freeman College, and Aonghus Gordon in making a rolling pin. They began by splitting the wood and were guided through each stage of the process using traditional tools, including a spring pole and treadle lathe. She reports that it was an immensely satisfying (and productive) experience which confirmed her view not only of the value of hand-work in life but of Ruskin Mill's programmes which gave emphasis to that experience.

On July 14th 2016, Sara gave a lecture at a seminar jointly hosted by the Guild and the **Campaign to Protect Rural England**,

held at CPRE's London offices. The purpose of the seminar was to consider the relevance of Ruskin's ideas to today's environmental movement and to consider how those ideas might be applied in Ruskin Land, the Wyre Forest and the wider countryside. Participants represented various environmental and heritage groups, including the Landscape Institute, Woodland Trust, Natural England, CPRE, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Council for National Parks, the Sylva Foundation and the National Trust. Sara's paper, '"The Secret of Sympathy": Ruskin and the language of nature' is available online on the Guild's website at <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/ruskin-nature/>.

Sara will be giving this year's **Ruskin Lecture** at the Ruskin Art Club, LA, on September 1st. Her title is '"A pile of feathers": Valuing Education in a Market Economy'. See <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/events/forthcoming/>.

Van Akin Burd (1914-2015): Our great friend and Companion (since 1984!) died quietly in his sleep on November 7th of last year. You can read a tribute to Van by **Jim Spates** elsewhere.

George Landow: In Providence, Rhode Island, George remains co-editor of **The Victorian Web**, a hugely important resource for Ruskin scholars and enthusiasts.

Jim Spates: Working in Geneva, New York, in addition to the activities noted in this column, Jim continues to post regularly on his website, **Why Ruskin?** To visit it, go to <www.whyruskin.wordpress.com>. His essay of the same title (his answer to the question he always gets asked once people learn of his love of Ruskin) can be downloaded from the website. It *will be published later this year* by Pallas Athene. Jim is also working on a book interpreting Ruskin's social thought: *Availing toward Life* will focus on Ruskin's classic, *Unto this Last,* its goal being to make Ruskin's still extremely relevant economic and social arguments accessible to modern readers.

Bob Steele: Working in Vancouver, British Columbia, Bob continues his dedication to unlocking the creative potential of children. He describes that work as follows: 'Spontaneously, children use drawing as their most expressive language medium, as their language for articulating, expressing and communicating their deepest and most complex perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. Despite this, our culture practically ignores spontaneous drawing in the years prior to kindergarten, fails to recognise that drawing is a significant aid to gaining proficiency in literacy, and downplays the importance of drawing as a language medium throughout the entire curriculum.' To counter these oversights, Bob has created **The Drawing Network** <www.drawnet.duetsoftware.ca/>, a small, informal group of parents, teachers, academics and concerned citizens devoted to spreading the word about 'drawing-as-language.' (Bob can be reached at: drawnet@shaw.ca). See Bob Steele elsewhere in this issue.

New North American Companions

Van Burd would delight in what follows. 'During our talks,' Jim Spates recalls, 'Van would regularly underscore how important it was to get new people interested in Ruskin to become Companions. "Ruskin is too great and too important to the world," he would say, "not to take this as one of our prime tasks."' Welcome! We plan to include a list of *all* North American Companions on the NA section of the Guild's website soon. Remember to keep an eye on: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/north-american-companions/>. We began this column by citing some wonderful Ruskin lines: Considering what we have discussed, we are of the opinion that, had he the chance to read of the happenings in North American which pertain to making his thought and work known to a wider audience, Mr. Ruskin would be pleased that, a century and a half on, his enjoinders to live well and happily continue to produce some very fine fruit.

Read Jim's blog, *Why Ruskin?* by going to <https://whyruskin.wordpress.com/>.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS:
THE RUSKIN ART CLUB, LOS ANGELES

The Ruskin Art Club, founded by Mary E. Boyce in 1888, is among the oldest and most influential cultural and arts associations in California. Like several other historic arts associations in the Los Angeles Basin, such as The Gamble House, The Judson Studios, the California Art Club, and The Huntington Library, the club has its roots in the 19th century Arts and Crafts movement, and was inspired by the vision of art and social criticism championed by John Ruskin and William Morris. As the first women's cultural organization in Los Angeles, it played a major role in advancing the cause of women in the early decades of the last century. In the late 1980s, in connection with the Club's centenary, the Directors amended the bylaws to permit men to join.

During its early years, the Club mounted some of the city's first public art exhibitions, helped establish the University of Southern California's School of Fine Arts, was instrumental in the campaign to build an art museum in Exposition Park (precursor to today's Los Angeles County Museum of Art), and was integral to the founding of the Southwest Museum. Indeed, it can be said without exaggeration that there is hardly a cultural institution in Los Angeles to which the Club's members have not made landmark contributions. Today, still energized by Ruskin's insistences that art and life should be integrated, that the natural environment should be protected at all costs, and that society exists solely for the health, help, and happiness of all human beings, the Club continues its legacy of public service by providing scholarships and prizes to local artists, writers, and musicians. Through its calendar of programs and events, it provides a platform allowing established and emerging talents to gain public recognition and support, its goal always being to find ways to live life on a human scale in an ever more complex modern world.

To find out more about the Club, its history, and forthcoming events, visit: <www.ruskinartclub.com>.

Mary E. Boyce, founder of the Ruskin Art Club, LA.

Jim Spates writes: 'I first met **George Landow** at The Ruskin Library in Lancaster. It was 2000 and many people who were interested in Ruskin had assembled for a conference and celebration. Some of us sat down with George for a pint in Bowland Bar. It was there that he told us of his efforts to establish a presence for Ruskin and other eminent Victorians in something he called "hypermedia". It was a time when the "world wide web" barely existed and when some of us thought that "the internet" was only a tennis term. The truth was that none of us had any real idea what he was talking about. Some sixteen years later, there is no doubt whatsoever that he was the visionary while we were the proverbial "stuck-in-the-muds!"'.

George has been doing everything he could to actualise his cyberdream since 1987, the year he posted an early version of what would become *The Victorian Web*. Today, the VW enjoys a reputation as one of the oldest academic and scholarly sites on the web, and, from the point of view of readers of *The Companion,* its relevance to the understanding and study of Ruskin is immense. That we should be regular visitors to the site can't be said too strongly. Here is an excerpt culled from the VW's home page which explains why this is so:

> The Victorian Web takes an approach that differs markedly from many internet projects. These days the internet offers many excellent resources such as Project Gutenberg, the Internet Archive, and The Library of Congress. Such sites take the form of archives that quite properly preserve their information in separate images which are accessible via various search tools. In contrast, the *VW* presents its images and documents as nodes in a network of interconnections. In other words, instead of presenting its information in atomized or isolated form, VW emphasizes the *link* rather than the search tool (though it has one). It presents its information so that it can be easily linked to other information. Other Internet archives and tools, like Google, treat bodies of information as a sort of chaotic swamp that one searches — one can't say 'negotiates' — hoping to penetrate the fog and darkness. When we find what we're looking for, we leave. On the *VW,* books (some in their entirety), articles, reviews, comments, paintings, political events, and eminent (and some not-so-eminent) Victorians are encountered in many contexts, all of which we can examine and compare at our leisure. The *VW* differs fundamentally from websites like *Wikipedia* and reference works like *Britannica* as well. These justly celebrated sites aim to present a single, authoritative view of a subject. In contrast, the *VW* encourages multiple points of view and debates, partly because important matters rarely generate general agreement, and partly because debate on these matters is what keeps thought and scholarship growing. The visitor or scholar who logs on today's *VW* can examine over 88,000 documents and images.

Companion George Landow, Founder and Co-Editor of The Victorian Web.

To a direct question about how a Companion could make good use of the *VW,* George wrote:

> Although we haven't added any major works about Ruskin since creating heavily linked versions of Robert Hewison's *John Ruskin: The Argument of the Eye* and Elizabeth K. Helsinger's *Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder,* there exist innumerable links to him as a major Victorian figure, to his biography, books, essays and lectures, and to current debates about all of these. Since the central vision of VW involves situating texts and images in as rich a network of connections as possible, we are continually adding new materials, creating new links that, otherwise, might be missed. An example is some cartoons on environmentalism taken from *Fun* and other periodicals that were inspired by Ruskin. (See 'Nice Soap Factories here and there on the Swiss mountains'). Another direction would be to go to *VW*'s annotated text of his lecture of 1864, 'Traffic,' where one can find, in addition to the lecture, links to the *Illustrated London News'* review of the Bradford Exchange after it opened, as well as a link to Jim Spates' commentary on Ruskin's famous passage on 'taste' which appeared in that lecture. As a third example, Jacqueline Banerjee, the VW's Associate Editor, has just returned from a brief jaunt to a rainy Venice and, as a result, has just posted 'Salviati in Venice and Britain: An Introduction,' an illustrated essay in which Ruskin appears. [There are photographs of Venice by Salviati in the Ruskin Collection.]
>
> In the coming year, the VW plans to upload projects relevant to those who are interested in Ruskin. Among these will be a memorial section dedicated to the work and influence of Van Akin Burd on Ruskin studies and a collection of essays and comments entitled, 'How I first found Ruskin'—to which Robert Hewison, David Lustgarten, Jim Spates, and myself have already contributed entries (see: <www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/encounters/index.html>.) If anyone reading this would like to contribute to either of these efforts, post your thoughts and memories to george@victorianweb.org. If you would like VW to post any article or review you have which is relevant to Ruskin, first obtain permission for such republication from the place where it originally appeared, and then send your contribution to victorianweb.org.

USING YOUR MONEY FOR GOOD: A SYMPOSIUM ON ECONOMICS

Catherine Howarth

During *Good Money Week* in October 2015, the Guild teamed up with ShareAction to host a symposium inspired by Ruskin at Mary Ward House in London.

A range of speakers and workshop participants explored the theme of using and investing money as a force for good in our personal lives, society and the environment. There were many fantastic and animated conversations that allowed participants to learn more about Ruskin's ideas and to debate together how they might be brought to life today.

A superb opening keynote address was delivered by political economist and environmentalist, Andrew Simms of the New Weather Institute. A long-standing fan of Ruskin's work, Andrew brilliantly and humorously deconstructed contemporary economic theory and practice, much as Ruskin did in the 19th century.

The three themes from Ruskin's economic thought explored at the symposium were: taking personal responsibility; the dignity of labour; and creating a beautiful world.

Those of us attending John Iles's workshop on Rural Stewardship were invited to share and sample apples that had been picked off trees on Uncllys Farm orchard earlier that morning. Even Ruskin's gifts of prose-writing may have been inadequate to capture the taste-bud ecstasy of this experience. Unquestionably the sensory highlight of my day.

Other workshops covered the joys of the Simple Living Movement, more on unlearning orthodoxies in the economics profession, and craftsmanship that respects workers and the world.

Towards the end of the day, the whole group came back together to reflect on our discussions, the workshop sessions and the opening lecture. People committed to a variety of follow-up actions around the three themes of the day. Those reflections and commitments are recorded below and capture much of the spirit and essence of this wonderful event.

Taking personal responsibility:
– Use renewable energy, as proposed in a workshop hosted by Pure Leapfrog.
– Invest savings ethically and in your community, as explored in a workshop hosted by Ethex.
– Use banks that seek to have a positive social impact, with one recommendation for Unity Trust Bank.
– Promote value beyond the bottom line in business, as explored in a workshop hosted by B Corporation.
– Explore different concepts of personal value and living simply.

The dignity of labour and making:
– Train employees well and commit to ensuring that their work is engaging them.
– Learn from and respect fellow workers, as well as share skills with the next generation whilst promoting fair wages.
– Seek to change the world by buying high-quality goods and respecting the creators of beauty.

Creating a beautiful world:

Mary Ward House in Bloomsbury where the symposium took place.

– Have nothing in our homes that isn't either useful or beautiful (*The life changing magic of tidying up* by Marie Kondo was highly recommended to get people started).
– Know where the things you buy come from and where the things thrown away will go.
– Respect 'vital beauty', walk more in the landscape, adopt an approach of slowness and learn now to see.

Inspired by what we'd heard and experienced during the day, we ended with this splendidly challenging quotation from *Modern Painters*, memorably recited by Pamela Hull of Brantwood:

> The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion — all in one. —*Modern Painters* volume III.

ShareAction was delighted to have hosted such an enjoyable collaborative venture with the Guild of St George. The day provided vivid proof of how resonant and relevant Ruskin is to our lives today.

THE SECOND WHITELANDS RUSKIN LECTURE (2015)

Sara Atwood, *'An enormous difference between knowledge and education': What Ruskin Can Teach Us.* (York: Guild of St George Publications, 2015).

Sara Atwood's lecture is a good brief resumé of Ruskin's attitudes to education. The second Whitelands Ruskin Lecture, it was presented at the Whitelands College May Festival, which has associations with Ruskin stretching back to his life-time. It's sometimes witty, as when she says, 'Today we excel at the band-aid solution; in fact, we've applied enough plasters to the education system to mummify it.' In her view there are five things to be distilled from Ruskin's writings on education: the need to understand the past; the need to see clearly; to understand that everything is connected; to respect the natural world and our place in it; to develop and exercise both intellectual and manual skill, head and hand.

She proceeds to examine the requirements in more detail. On the whole she accepts what Ruskin has to say, and thinks it can be a reasonable guide for pedagogical practice. Education was important for Ruskin since it covered, for him, how we live and we might live, so it was central to an analysis of culture.

Like many Ruskinians, Atwood is inclined to think that, apart from some reservations, Ruskin can be broadly endorsed. My position is slightly different. Whenever I read him I keep having 'hang on a tick' moments. Perhaps the most frequent of these moments concerns Ruskin's belief in the education of the eye, which many people have praised. Yes, it is important, but it is also highly problematical. At the heart of the matter, in my view, is the difficult negotiation between the mediated and the unmediated world. As Ruskin puts it an unmediated engagement with the world through the eye is the consummation devoutly to be wished. But it is not as simple as that. Perception is constantly

influenced by the cultural surroundings, by the vast inherited hoard of mediated data, both visual and verbal. And of course in the body of his writing Ruskin has great respect for this inheritance. So that the negotiation between mediation and absence of mediation is constantly difficult. Much more difficult than Ruskin explicitly makes out.

And there are other problems. Atwood quotes, approvingly: 'the beauty of nature is the blessedest and most necessary of lessons for men; and … all other efforts in education are futile till you have taught your people to love fields, birds and flowers.' (*Works*, 34.142) Yes, there is much to be said for that, but 'nature' is a more fraught concept than he is inclined to accept in his public writings. Although he sometimes accepts this privately, as a letter to Charles Eliot Norton exemplifies:

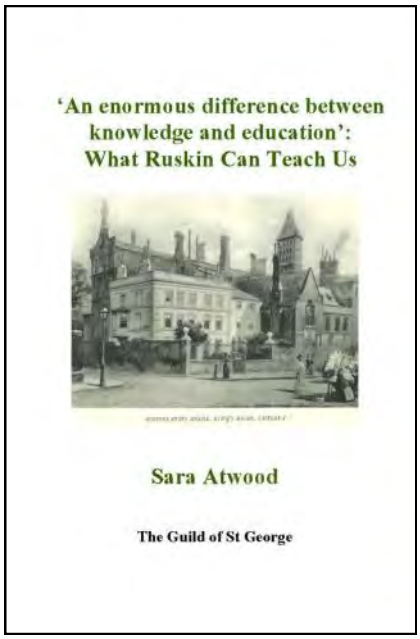
> The one thing I need seems to be, for the present, rest; and the power of slowly following some branch of natural history or other peaceful knowledge; not that natural history is in one sense peaceful, but terrific; its abysses of life and pain, of diabolic ingenuity, merciless condemnation, irrevocable change, infinite scorn, endless advance, immeasurable scale of beings incomprehensible to each other, every one important in its own sight and a grain of dust in its Creator's—it makes me giddy and desolate beyond all speaking; but it is better than the effort and misery of work for anything human. (August 26th 1861).

'Nature never did betray/ The heart that loved her,' says Wordsworth in 'Tintern Abbey', but Ruskin wrote to Norton: 'Nature herself traitress to me—whatever Wordsworth may say' (January 15th 1873). I remember Lionel Trilling quoting these lines in a lecture decades ago, adding, 'Tell that to Dorothy Wordsworth'—who ended up mentally incapacitated.

Certainly there is a lot in Ruskin that would be good to take on board. I am particularly keen on drawing as a way of engaging with the physical world, and more of it should be encouraged in schools. But that's not to say that Ruskin's *Elements of Drawing* is an entirely desirable programme.

Of course space was limited for Atwood, but no broad context is provided. Was Ruskin a lone voice crying in the wilderness? Was he the *only* person in the whole of the nineteenth century to have enlightened views on education? Of course not. Is there more value in what he has to say than Arnold—who, after all, had hands-on experience as an Inspector of Schools ? A number of theorists at the time thought that education enabled pupils 'to become specialised servants of the economy.'

Ruskin is a sort of bogey-man for many, a cultural whipping-boy, who preached a



patriarchal gospel for keeping women in their place. And that place was the home. And yet…. He devoted a lot of efforts, as Atwood notes, to the actual education of women. Almost the happiest periods of his life were spent with the young women at Winnington. Out of which grew *Ethics of the Dust*. And some of those young women, later in life, continued to love Ruskin deeply, and not regard him as some odious politically incorrect monster. Such as Dorothy Livesey, Frances Colenso, Eleanor Tindall, Lily Armstrong, Mary Leadbeater, Gertrude Huish, Constance Oldham and Susan Scott. He appreciated their skills with cricket. You can imagine a book about it all called *Cricket and Crinolines*. But later on, at Brantwood, he drew the line at tennis, and did think the net was always in the way. He took one correspondent, Lizzie Watson, to task for playing tennis and Chopin too much. But what kind of educational theorist is it who thinks one can spend too much time on Chopin? *Fors* 93, incidentally, castigates the tennis-playing public. Perhaps Henry V's attitude to the game lodged in his mind somewhere? That monarch, disdainful of the effete French, preferred unreal tennis with cannon balls.

What doesn't wear well, and Atwood does not face this head on, are the drawbacks of Ruskin's ambitious schemes to hold everything together—science, art, mythology etc. The modern mind is suspicious of this, since it can lead in fanciful directions. Witness the hefty reservations many of us have about 'The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century', as about James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, which aims at a unifying construction.

The classic rejection of the mediating powers of Science and Art is Wordsworth's 'The Tables Turned.' Ruskin refers to it twice. The first time approvingly (3.655), since it accords with his famous exhortation in *Modern Painters* to go to nature 'in all singleness of heart' (3.624). But the second time (5.359), he thinks, rightly, that Wordsworth shows a 'narrowness of mind' since 'to dissect a flower may sometimes be as proper as to dream over it.' Later on in life Ruskin became somewhat

A game of cricket at Winnington Hall School, c. 1864.

more impatient with those 'who tear the bouquet to pieces to examine the stems' and disgusted at the extreme form, of vivisection, which led to him resigning his Slade Professorship. He makes an encounter with George Rolleston and 'the charming Squelette of a frog' into a sort of comic interlude (22.366-67). He complained that Rolleston has filled the Oxford Museum 'with the scabbed skulls of plague-struck cretins' (34.349). Is this relevant to us? Only, I think, as a road down which not to go.

There is a paradox and an inconsistency at the heart of Ruskin. He writes an enormous amount about education, including a whole appendix to volume 3 of *The Stones of Venice*, with many recommendations about its best form. But he admitted that the most important things he knew he had learnt for himself. Which seems to negate, at a stroke, all imposed forms of education. And one should recall that before going up to Oxford he had had no regular schooling in a school. Many of us are very attracted to his holistic view, that we should know all about geology, history, mythology, literature, painting, ornithology, sculpture, architecture, economics, bottiney (as Wackford Squeers describes it), meteorology, linguistics, woodwork, gardening (Grassmoor Primary School, near Chesterfield, Derbyshire has compulsory gardening—good for them), geometry, astronomy.... Throw in road-building. He constructs a vast pedagogical programme. The list is endless. It would be nice to fit them all in. But is there time? Certainly there is more time than one might think, and the younger generations now are wasting terrific amounts of time with Gameboys etc.

Atwood sounds many cautionary notes about the electronic world. In theory the internet makes all knowledge instantly accessible, so that the whole population has the opportunity to be as well informed, as well educated even, as Leibnitz, better informed than Leibnitz even. But it doesn't work like that. You need some mental map of your own into which to fit the acquired data, and for it to function effectively there needs to be a combination of mediated and unmediated experience. Modern youth is depriving itself, and the culture is depriving it too, of this unmediated experience. A medal has just gone on sale of a naval person, George James Perceval, who was an 11 year-old powder-monkey at Trafalgar. Before the battle he wrote to his parents that he hoped to give the French a 'good licking.' Quite right too. Health and safety would now step in and remove the opportunity for this educative experience. He became an admiral in 1863.

Bernard Richards

(Above) Celebrating May Day at Whitelands, 2015: May Pole Dancing.

(Right) Dr Rachel Dickinson presenting books by and about Ruskin to the the May Monarch, King Q, and his attendants. In the background is the William Morris reredos, designed for the Chapel, and now a striking feature of Whitelands' main lecture hall.

Photos: Sara Atwood and Stuart Eagles.

Many Beautiful Things: The Life and Vision of Lilias Trotter dir. Laura Waters Hinson (Oxvision Films, 2015).

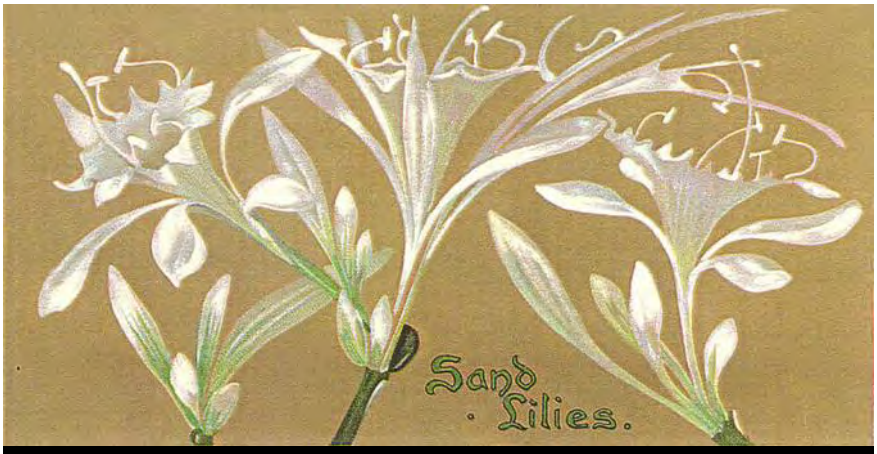
Lilias Trotter.

She has long been a cipher in the Ruskin story. She is mentioned only five times in the Library Edition, three mentions being incidental. In one of the remaining notices (33.280-1), Ruskin tells us, briefly, the story of his chance meeting with her via her mother's insistence in Venice in later 1876, a time when, much in mourning, he had returned to his beloved city on the Adriatic to see if he might find a way to communicate with the spirit of his dead lady, Rose La Touche. (Rose, ravaged by anorexia and insane, had died the year before; Ruskin never got over losing her.) Succumbing to the mother's importunings, grumblingly, he agrees to look at her self-taught daughter's pictures. Only to find them wonderful! He found her talent exceptional, her small drawings 'lovely and honourable'—possessed of a quality which begins to make him rethink his earlier view that women would never rank among the finest of artists. (A few years later, his discovery of the work of Kate Greenaway and Francesca Alexander will cement this change of mind.) In the only other substantive passage (37.571-2), a letter written to Greenaway in 1886, Ruskin tells Kate that he is thinking of setting up an Art Academy for Girls in London. He wants Kate to be headmistress, with Francesa and his 'sweet friend' from Venice being its principal teachers, its 'Donnas'. (The school never came to be.) After this, his 'sweet friend' disappears from the record.

But now a film—*Many Beautiful Things: The Life and Vision of Lilias Trotter*, directed by Laura Waters Hinson—has gone some fine distance toward rectifying the dearth of our knowledge about the relationship between Ruskin and this much younger artist. (Lilias was 23 when she met Ruskin in Venice; he, 57.) It has gone even further by filling in many of the details of the previously all-but-forgotten story of Lilias's remarkable, unconventional life. With the voice of Michelle Dockery (*Downton Abbey's* Lady Mary) as Lilias and John Rhys-Davis (Gimli in the *Lord of the Rings* films) as Ruskin, the film reveals that the principals had an intense connection, one which lasted more than a decade—from their first Venetian encounter until that fateful moment when Lilias and two friends departed, in 1888, for North Africa, where she and one of these companions would spend the rest of their lives as Christian missionaries. (Lilias died in 1928.)

The Ruskin part of the story is, briefly, this. So impressed is he with Lilias's art, that Ruskin happily offers to mentor her. That help accepted, he encourages her to try this or that new technique, try this or that new subject, tells her that her talent, being as great as it is—*if* she devotes her life to art—she will become not only England's greatest woman artist, but one of its finest artists *ever* (such, given his passionate championship of Turner, the Pre-Raphaelites, and other male painters, was no small encouragement).

But Lilias was torn. To have been lauded and counselled by the great Ruskin was not something to have taken lightly. On the other hand, her heart, always, was with the poor and downtrodden, with those who had fallen away from Christ's path, those whose lives she believes she can set right. And so, as she continued painting under Ruskin's tutelage, she could often be found walking through the slums of central London, searching out and then trying to save the lives of prostitutes and other unfortunates. Finally, the helping impulse won and Lilias was convinced that to be a missionary in Algeria was what God most needed her to do. Ruskin's disappointment was severe.



Sand Lilies *by Lilias Trotter.*

Even though his commitment to helping the oppressed endured (over the course of his life, he gave away the modern equivalent of millions of pounds to organisations aiding the poor), he also knew that talents of Lilias's magnitude were rare indeed. And thus the loss of Lilias became not only a catastrophe for art but yet another indication that he had miscarried in his life's mission to transform the world for good, another failure fueling the ever-worsening depression which plagued his last decades and contributed mightily to his periodic descents into madness.

But we did not lose Lilias's art completely. One of the triumphs of this film is that it gives us image after image of it, of the early art she did before meeting Ruskin, of the art she did when their relationship was at its most intense, of the art she continued to do, if sporadically, in French North Africa. Ruskin was right. Her talent was vast. Her drawings as rendered in the film, are breathtakingly lovely: of landscapes, of flowers, of birds, of trees, of sunrises and sunsets, and, heart-rendingly, of the people she knew, loved, and helped in Algeria. They are indeed *many* beautiful things.

Also cheering is the fact that, in this film, we have a depiction of Ruskin that is infinitely closer to the man who is the respected inspiration of these pages than to the irresponsible imaginings of two other recent films, *Mr Turner* (Ruskin as poseur) and *Effie Gray* (Ruskin as sexual neurotic and cruel and acrid husband). That said, I could have done with fewer scenes in this film of an aged Ruskin waffling about a garden with Lilias, waving at birds and boughs with his cane, looking more like a decrepit Wilfred Hyde-White than the still vital, most-revered art critic of his time.

And this, too, is praiseworthy: that this

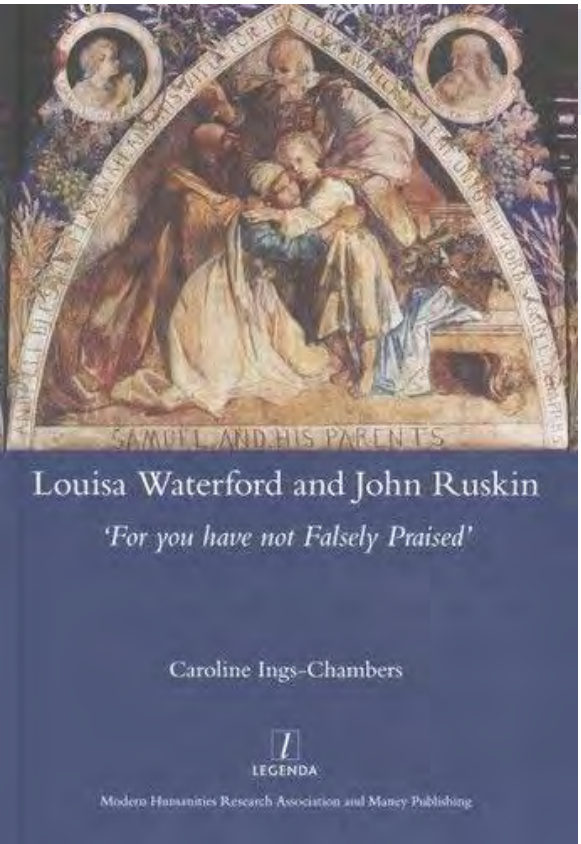
Lake at Sunrise *by Lilias Trotter.*

film exists at all is a result of the remarkable tenacity of Miriam Rockness who, by chance of the good *fors* some time ago, came to possess some of Lilias's diaries. Seeing how marvellous her art was and how remarkable her story was at the same time, Rockness determined that that story, then all but lost, would no longer remain so. And so began a decades-long sleuthing process as, quite literally, she turned over every long-ignored stone which might conceal something pertaining to Lilias Trotter. Until, after enduring frustrations uncountable, that exultant moment came when she learned that the correspondence which had been exchanged between Ruskin and Trotter had not vanished, but was waiting in the archives for a reader in The Ransome Library of the University of Texas. (Yet another instance, this reviewer hastens to note, pointing to the immense riches of the Ruskin literary legacy housed in the United States, the lack of full appreciation of which has undermined the accuracy of Ruskin biographies.) The discovery allowed Rockness to fill in the missing details of the story recounted in the film (and in her book, *A Passion for the Impossible: The Life of Lilias Trotter*). For this devotion of a considerable amount of her own 'life and vision' to the ferreting out of this lost material, all of us who care about Ruskin—and, now, Lilias Trotter—owe Miriam Rockness sustained applause!

Many Beautiful Things is a fine and inspiring film. Do see it and take your friends with you when you go. You won't be disappointed.

(In the US, the film can be bought at: <www.amazon.com/Many-Beautiful-Things-Vision-Trotter/dp/B01BCNJ856>. As of this writing, it is not available in the UK, but can be ordered from this website: https://ililiastrotter.wordpress.com/.)

Jim Spates



Caroline Ings-Chambers, *Louisa Waterford and John Ruskin, 'For you have not Falsely Praised'*. (Legenda, 2015)

Caroline Ings-Chambers's primary aim, expressed somewhat awkwardly in the Introduction to this volume, is 'to transgress the boundaries and to re-work the processes of time that for too long have held Louisa Waterford, the artist, in obscurity and to emphasise the continuing value of her work today' (6). Ings-Chambers claims Waterford as a 'visionary artist' and a 'visual poetess' (5-6) in possession of genius. Yet Ings-Chambers also concedes the 'undoubted shortcomings of various kinds and degrees' (5) that characterise Waterford's work. It is difficult for the reader to weigh these conflicting descriptions against the evidence of the pictures. The only colour image appears on the book's cover, while images inside the text are given in black and white (a frustrating choice, given that much of Ings-Chambers's discussion of Waterford's work turns on her use of colour). A number of pictures discussed are not reproduced at all. The chapter devoted to the Ford murals would have benefitted from accompanying images, but only two of the sixteen murals are reproduced. Ings-Chambers provides the location and a description of each mural, along with an account of the Biblical source. While this information is welcome, there are also some surprising errors, such as when she describes doves in *The Sacrifice of Cain and Abel*, as 'pigeons flying past on the left of the picture' (160).

As the title announces, Ings-Chambers also intends to explore the principles and practice of Ruskin's art instruction, as well as his ideas about class and education. Troublingly, she does not seem to be

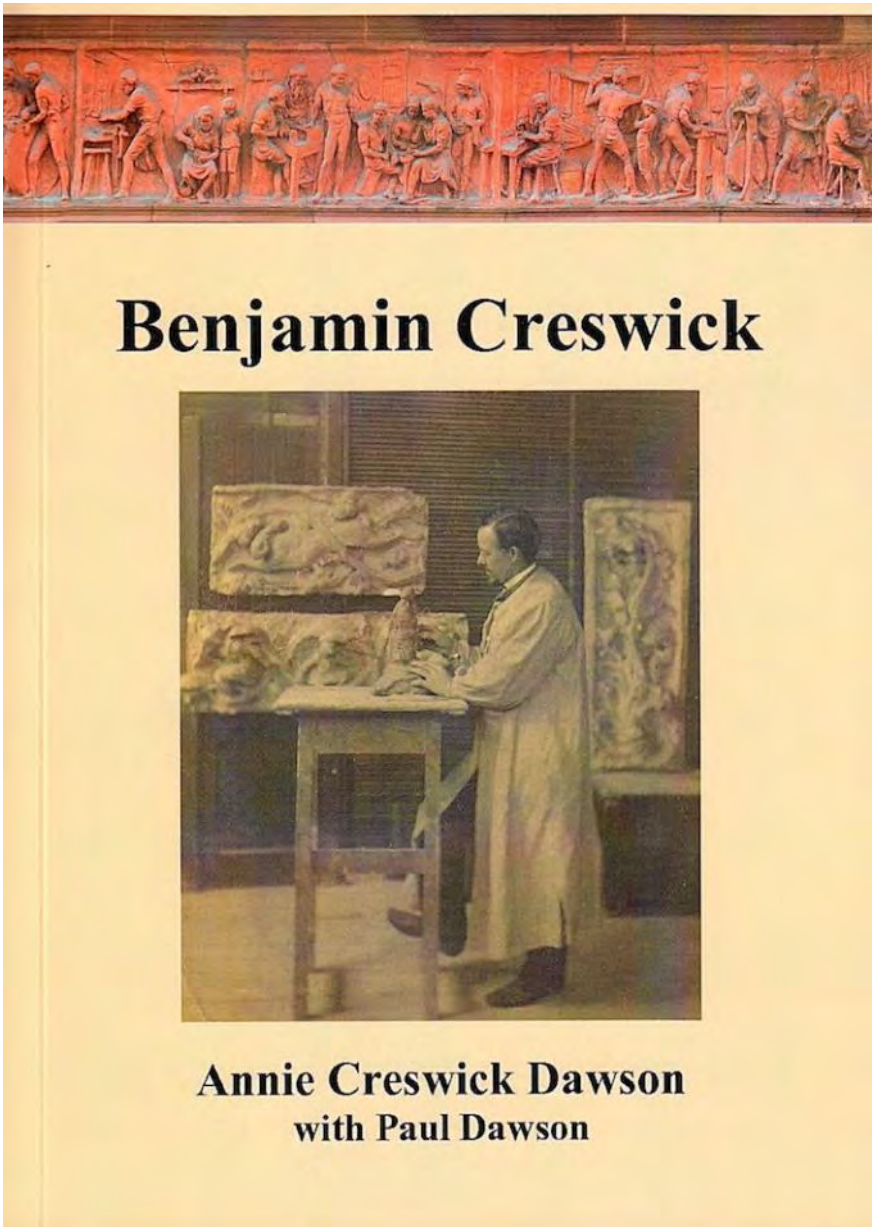
closely acquainted with Ruskin scholarship. Although she cites several important studies, including work by Van Akin Burd, John Batchelor, Tim Hilton, and Robert Hewison, her most recent source is the *Dictionary of British Watercolour Artists*, published in 2002, while the majority of her sources date from the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. While these works are important and valuable, Ings-Chambers nonetheless ignores recent work on Ruskin's interaction with female artists and other women; Ruskin and education; Victorian education; and, more specifically, the education of women. Given the volume of scholarship today it would be impossible to cite everything published on one's subject, but Ings-Chambers has missed work of direct relevance to hers, with the result that her arguments often reflect a limited or outdated understanding of Ruskin's ideas.

Ings-Chambers argues that Ruskin's criticism of Waterford was in part gender-based. Yet Ruskin was equally critical of male artists, as writers such as Jan Marsh have noted. Ruskin's association with Waterford and other female artists reflects his belief that women should be offered the same educational advantages as men and should be provided with carefully chosen teachers worthy of respect. This belief was expressed in his published writings and reflected in his active support of girls' schools and the new women's colleges. Writing about Ruskin and women's education, Ings-Chambers offers a superficial reading of *Sesame and Lilies*, quoting only three short and selective passages from the book and declaring his views to be 'restrictive' and 'disturbing' (68). Such readings echo wrong-headed interpretations of *Sesame and Lilies* that cast the book as an example of Victorian patriarchy and condescension.

Ings-Chambers writes of Ruskin's 'preference for putting effort into preserving the art of the old masters rather than into creating modern works' (128). What about *Modern Painters*, or his support and patronage of the Pre-Raphaelites and other contemporary artists? Yet four pages later, Ings-Chambers cites Ruskin's declaration in *Modern Painters* that 'the greatest minds of existing nations … have a chance in their particular walk of doing something as great, or, taking advantage of former examples into account, even greater and better' than artists of the past (qtd 132). This tendency to reverse or overturn previous claims repeatedly undermines Ings-Chambers's argument and sometimes comes close to invalidating her own project, as when she writes, toward the end of the book, that, 'More significant than external assessments of the instructional relationship was Waterford's own estimation of her tutor … Modern interpretations of the student and tutor relationship are useful for establishing historical socio-political perspectives. Ultimately, Waterford's own analysis of her needs and of the outcomes of her learning with Ruskin are of the greatest importance.' (99-100).

Ings-Chambers's interest in Waterford's work and Ruskin's ideas is encouraging. One hopes that the close attention that she has given to the murals might introduce them to a wider audience. Yet there is reason for caution with regard to her views about Ruskin. Waterford would have been an artist without Ruskin's help, but it is worth considering whether, without him, she would have become the artist that Ings-Chambers so deeply admires. ***Sara Atwood***

Annie Creswick Dawson with Paul Dawson, *Benjamin Creswick.* (York: Guild of St George, 2015).



In his concluding essay for the brand-new *Cambridge Companion to John Ruskin* (edited by Francis O'Gorman and reviewed elsewhere) Marcus Waithe addresses the complicated issue of Ruskin's 'Cultural legacies'. He identifies Ruskin's commitment to craft and craftsmanship as one of his enduring influences: 'this being the area where his interest in art converged with his belief in the personal and social value of labour.' He argues that Ruskin's key chapter in *The Stones of Venice*, 'The Nature of Gothic'—which William Morris described as 'a new road on which the world should travel'—is not a nostalgic piece of medievalism, but an ahistorical identification of abstract characteristics such as 'changefulness' and 'naturalism' that could be revived in a creative practice, informing a working life where the distinction between artist and craftsperson collapses into the integrated role of 'maker'. The Arts & Crafts Movement, formally launched in 1888, had precisely that aim.

Waithe's chosen examples of the continuity of Ruskin's influence are C.R. Ashbee, Eric Gill and, less directly, Bernard Leach. He mentions Benjamin Creswick only briefly, but this delightful short study by Creswick's great-granddaughter makes him an exemplar of what Waithe is talking about. Creswick was born in 1853, the very year of the publication of 'The Nature of Gothic' and at the age of seven was apprenticed as a Sheffield knife-grinder. Though his family was not poor, he would have experienced the industrial conditions that Ruskin describes in 'The Nature of Gothic', where 'we manufacture everything …. except men.' Modern manufacture, with its emphasis on uniformity and finish, was a form of slavery. For Ruskin, it was not just the workers' labour that was being stolen by industrialism, it was their creativity—their art.

Threatened by the lung disease that results from the

grinding trade, Creswick sought a way out by developing his skills as a carver and a modeller in stucco. When Ruskin set up the first Guild museum in Walkley, above the smoke of Sheffield, in 1875, Creswick was exactly the sort of person the museum was made for. Its curator, Henry Swan, took him up and after Creswick had produced a rather crude small bust of Ruskin based on a photograph, Swan introduced him to Ruskin, who sat for a larger bust in 1877. Ruskin recognised Creswick's 'pure and true genius' and proposed to use him to decorate the new Guild museum that he was planning for Bewdley. The museum did not materialise, but it led to his working for the local driver of that project, George Baker. In 1879 Creswick attended the formal inauguration of the Guild of St George, and became one of its founder Companions. Later that year Ruskin brought him to live and work in Coniston for a time, and is said to have supported him and his growing family for four years.

No longer a knife-grinder, but a recognised artist-craftsman, in 1880 Creswick moved to London, initially staying with and collaborating with another Ruskin connection, the architect Arthur Mackmurdo. Working both as an applied artist, providing sculptural friezes for shopfronts and decorative pieces for interiors, and as a sculptor, he became an associate of the Century Guild, and showed at the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition in 1888. The same year he had a sculpture in the Royal Academy summer exhibition for the first time.

Annie Creswick Dawson carefully traces the connections in the Ruskin-influenced circles in which Creswick moved, and reproduces some of his surviving public work, such as the 31-foot terracotta frieze on the Cutlers' Hall in Warwick Lane, London EC4, arguably his masterpiece. The same Ruskinian connections led to his move in 1889 to Birmingham, to become Head teacher of modelling and modelling design at Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Birmingham has claims to be as important as Sheffield in the Ruskin story. George Baker was on the Art School's appointments committee, and the founder of the Birmingham Ruskin Society, J. H. Whitehouse, later worked for Cadburys at Bournville, where in 1905 Creswick contributed decorative friezes for a new school.

Thus, in Ruskinian manner, the maker also became a teacher, while continuing to accept commissions—sometimes to the annoyance of the local branch of the Wood Carvers, Modellers and Stone Carvers Union who thought he should stick to teaching. He retired in 1918, and completed his last commission, some striking, semi-classical relief panels of the Stations of the Cross for the Church of our Lady and St Brigid, Northfield, Birmingham, in 1929. Having escaped the life-threatening working conditions of industrial Sheffield, he lived to the ripe old age of ninety-three. He died in 1946.

It is clear that Creswick had the talent and determination to transcend the trade of knife-grinder on his own, but Ruskin, through his writings and personal intervention, helped to make that possible. As a maker, Creswick taught by example, and only one written lecture survives. His work is Ruskinian in that it is figurative—and indeed often celebrates the nature of work itself—and is designed, as Ruskin said sculpture should be, to tell the story of the building that it embellishes. As a teacher, his Ruskinian values must have been passed on to several generations of students. It certainly continued in his own family. One of the most moving passages in Annie Creswick Dawson's book is her evocation of a childhood partly spent in the Edinburgh studio of Benjamin Creswick's son Charles and his wife, her own grandparents who continued the craft tradition.

'Cultural legacy', 'influence', 'tradition', 'heritage' are words often associated with historical figures for whom we wish to claim a continued or revived importance. Once we get beyond an immediate personal connection between that individual and a group of followers, however, the effect of one person on a whole generation, or even a culture, is harder to demonstrate. Without over-claiming for Ruskin, this account provides concrete evidence of how his ideas and values spread far and wide.

Robert Hewison

The dedicated Benjamin Creswick website, created by his great granddaughter, Annie Creswick Dawson, is online at: <http://benjamincreswick.org.uk/>.

This website and others can be found on the Useful Links *section of the Guild website at* <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/useful-links/>.

On Giving the Ruskin Lecture

Marcus Waithe

I was delighted when the Guild invited me to give the Ruskin Lecture on 'Ruskin and Craftsmanship'. Over the last five years, I have been developing practical skills in copper and silver smithing, and learning about buildings conservation – especially lime-based mortars and plasters – through the restoration of my home, a stone cottage in a Cambridgeshire village. The invitation gave me the perfect opportunity to combine reflection on these experiences with my academic work in literature, art, and the history of ideas.

My lecture was concerned with Ruskin's labour ethics and aesthetics; but I also addressed the relation of that Victorian inheritance to more recent developments. I began by discussing the dismantling of British manufacturing industry, and its corrosive effect on public understanding of the made objects that populate our world. In the cultural sphere, I mentioned the downgrading and exclusion of craft skills from the syllabuses of secondary schools and art schools.

These changes continue to influence our society and our economy, but the timing of the lecture (November 2015) also allowed me to address positive developments. In the wake of the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, a new generation of thinkers and makers are turning their attention to the human and material value of craftsmanship, while there are signs of revival in niche areas, as in Sheffield, where a combination of social enterprise and internet commerce are helping to sustain local craft skills and to foster new ones.

Ruskin was a man of his time, and not all of his ideas are applicable today, notably his insistence on the blind obedience of apprentice to master, and his less nuanced remarks about the role of machines. Nevertheless, he has bestowed several powerful ideas that can continue to inspire craftsmanship in the modern world.

One is the principle that human imperfection need not be a hindrance where making is concerned, but actually presents an opportunity in creating beautiful and useful objects. This doesn't mean accepting less than the best – in particular, as one member of the audience rightly suggested, in the area of aircraft design, where safety is paramount (!) – rather, that 'the best' is only achieved when we allow our weaknesses to buttress our strengths. Thus what is distinctive and characterful, even in a machine-made object, often derives from the element that is unplannable, the human vision of a particular time and place.

Another of Ruskin's ideas is that most people perform better work when they are accorded a measure of freedom and set intellectual

challenges. This notion defies the 'division of labour' of the nineteenth century, and the Fordist production-line models of the twentieth century. I concluded by discussing recent challenges to these orthodoxies, notably the 'kaizen' methods employed at modern car plants, and the renewal of the 'cottage industry' brought about by new technologies such as 3D printing.

I'm most grateful to the Guild for inviting me to give this lecture, and to the audience for questions and warm and stimulating company over the drinks and dinner that followed.

Companions who are particularly interested in craftsmanship may like to know that another opportunity to discuss these matters is forthcoming: a Guild symposium on the subject will take place at the Art Workers' Guild, in London, on September 24th 2016 (see back cover for details).

To watch a video recording of Marcus Waithe's Ruskin Lecture, please visit <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-ruskin-lecture/>.

An illustrated booklet (*pictured*) of the text of the lecture is available from the Guild Shop, priced £6+p&p: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/shop/>. Please email Peter Miller on publications@guildofstgeorge.org.uk.

You can also watch Marcus's lecture on *Ruskin in Walkley* on the *Ruskin in Sheffield* pages: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/ruskin-in-sheffield/>.

The Master introduces Marcus Waithe's Ruskin Lectire (2015).

THE RUSKIN LECTURE (2015)

Marcus Waithe, *Ruskin and Craftsmanship* (York: Guild of St George Publications, 2015).

Marcus Waithe's Ruskin Lecture, 'Ruskin and Craftsmanship' was delivered in November 2015 following the Annual General Meeting of the Guild of St. George in Sheffield's Millennium Gallery. The lecture marked the conclusion of *Ruskin in Sheffield 2015*, a programme of events and art & craft activities revealing Ruskin's enduring relevance as a thinker, artist and social reformer. It also anticipated *Ruskin in Sheffield 2016: Make Good Livelihoods* which was preceded by the third of the Guild's Triennial exhibitions, *In the Making: Ruskin, Creativity and Craftsmanship*, an exhibition of works from the Ruskin Collection and new commissioned works. Both exhibition and project are tied to Sheffield's *Year of Making*. Sitting between these programmes, focusing on the one hand on Ruskin's moral and aesthetic vision and, on the other, focusing on the integration of craft into the economic life of communities, Waithe's lecture provided the crucial context to understand the Guild's work in these areas.

To look at current ideas of art and craft, Waithe took a route from ancient narratives, where making was seen in relation to the gods and when creativity through manual labour was considered noble. Revisiting the positive connotations of creative manual labour, the Arts & Crafts Movement arrived in the 19th Century as a rude re-awakening. For Ruskin, medieval guilds exemplified ethical standards. With their pre-Renaissance emphasis on individualism and immersion to the natural world, Ruskin recognised significant values that could be adapted to improve the social conditions in which the 19th-century working classes were forced to live and work.

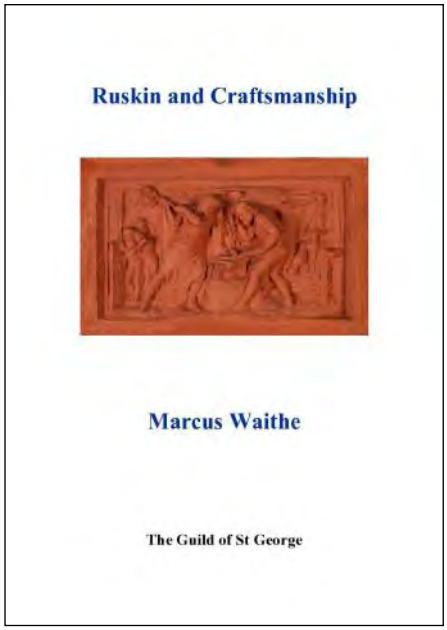
The Arts & Crafts Movement gave rise to Modernism, with its aesthetic attention to form and function.. The industrial processes of the mid 19th and 20th centuries are now outsourced to countries with low labour costs and consequently poor working conditions. By placing Ruskin's ideas on art and craft as a social agent, Waithe's lecture revealed for me a link between noble or ethical craftsmanship and the condition of art in 21st-century critical theory, the view that all art is political.

Waithe asked us to consider this complex partnership between making, desire and the handcrafted object in an age of mass production, consumption and machine finish. Economically, craftwork's current status has slipped into a position that signifies something backward-looking. How this nostalgic attitude towards craft came about and what it means for the craftmaker is central to Waithe's argument and an invitation inevitably follows: how, as cultural readers and practitioners, can we revisit Ruskin's texts? Taking a closer look at the devaluation of the craft mark as a moral and aesthetic gesture also opens a discourse on making in relation to the hand or the machine.

Stone cut by masons in the 15th or 16th centuries, paintings and all other original works are still there for us to see. If we allow ourselves to believe for one moment that in some cases we see the work itself without a veneer of restoration, it is through the craft or art object that we see the past in the present. Yet the eyes of the viewer in the present cannot see with the eyes of the viewer of the past.

Ruskin's principle that design should not be divorced from making is controversial in a world of modern manufacture aimed at servicing burgeoning populations. A blind adherence to Ruskin's views is not Waithe's solution to ethical questions. What we need to understand is the role of craft for us today. Waithe urges us to think about craftsmanship as outward-looking. As Artificial Intelligence becomes ever more plausible, there has never been a more important time to look at what values we appreciate when the human spirit is channelled by the body into the production of an art or craft object. Waithe's lecture invited us to consider what is the nature of craft-making, and how we might re-imagine a role for making by hand that is both dynamic and engaging in the future.

Carole Baugh



In the Making: Ruskin, Creativity and Craftsmanship
The Master's Speech at the Launch & Private View (January 26th 2016)

In Ruskin's day, Britain was a superpower that bestrode the earth like a colossus, and the foundation of the country's power was manufacturing industry. It was, said Benjamin Disraeli, 'the workshop of the world'.

Ruskin begged to differ. 'I have listened to many ingenious persons who say we are better off now than ever we were before,' he wrote. Then with heavy irony: 'I do not know how well off we were before, but I know positively that many deserving persons … have great difficulty in living in these improved circumstances…' How did it come about, he wanted to know, that in a country so rich there was so much poverty? It was a country in which a few people made a great deal of money on the backs of the very poor, who were (and I quote another passage from Ruskin, in which he may be thinking of Sheffield) 'sent like fuel to feed the factory smoke'.

Ruskin's argument can be applied to many places now, but not many of us do much about it. Ruskin did. 'For my own part,' he concluded. 'I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer.'

Refusing to put up with it was his way of announcing the foundation of the Guild of St George. The Guild was originally intended as a utopian body which would reintroduce a life-enhancing system of agriculture, bringing decent incomes and healthy living to working people. But Ruskin was not simply a nostalgic ruralist; he also thought about manufacture and about urban living. The principles of the Guild reached their fullest expression in Sheffield, when he built St George's Museum, the collection now housed in this Gallery. Ruskin praised the work of the Sheffield 'Mesters', but he also believed that beautiful craftsmanship could not long flourish if people were cut off from other forms of beauty – a people so oppressed that they never breathed fresh air or saw the blue sky. 'Beautiful art,' he wrote, 'can only be produced by people who have beautiful things about them, and leisure to look at them; and unless you provide some elements of beauty for your workmen to be surrounded by, you will find that no elements of beauty can be invented by them.' Moreover, the factory system subjected man to mechanism. In doing so, it eradicated the individual worker's creative powers: 'You must either make a tool of the [human] creature,' he wrote, 'or [make] a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them … you must unhumanise them…'

Craftsmanship, Ruskin believed, was the saving grace of manufacture. Using one's hands to make beautiful and useful things in sympathy with natural beauty freed the soul to flourish: the individual soul, which is at its best in collaboration with others. This year in Sheffield is 'the Year of Making' and the Guild's role in Sheffield is to champion making, encourage creativity, and promote craftsmanship. That is what this exhibition is about and I commend it to your attention.

The Guild is indebted to Museums Sheffield which cares for the Ruskin Collection. Their curatorial team has now curated three of these big Triennial exhibitions. This is the last of them, though that is very far from being the end of our collaborations. We are especially grateful to Kim Streets as Chief Executive, who has gone out of her way to make this relationship fruitful. We have been enormously lucky in our Curator, Louise

Pullen, who is currently on maternity leave, but who with Kirstie Hamilton got this show going. I want to thank Louise and Kirstie and, with them, Alison Morton (who has taken over from Louise as co-curator of the show) and Hannah Brignell (who in Louise's absence has been running the Ruskin Collection). The Guild is grateful to all the staff of Museums Sheffield, not least to Amy Farry and Chris Harvey in the publicity department. The exhibition also includes work by commissioned artists and we want very much to celebrate their work – in particular, Hannah Downing, Amber Hiscott, Mir Jansen and Henk Littlewood. Finally, I want to express my thanks to colleagues in the Guild of St George and, in particular, to Ruth Nutter, who has brilliantly run the *Ruskin in Sheffield* project over this past year. *In the Making* is the culmination of that project with its message of the value of good craftsmanship.

But above all, this is an exhibition intended to lift the spirits. I hope everyone enjoys the show!

In the Making: Ruskin, Creativity and Craftsmanship ran from January 23rd to June 5th 2016.

What You Do*, Where You're From*, Who You Know (2016), a new commission by Mir Jansen & Henk Littlewood for the exhibition In the Making.Gouache and oil on Ruskin Land oak, 2016. Photo courtesy Museums Sheffield.

Companions Lynne Roberts and Neil Sinden took over the tenancy of St George's Farm near Bewdley in July last year. Here Neil writes about their first few months:

THE BELOVÉD REVISITED: RUSKIN LAND IN THE WYRE FOREST

Neil Sinden

We have been living at St George's Farm at the heart of Ruskin Land in the Wyre Forest for a year. It has been one of the most interesting and exciting times of our lives. The near total immersion in the changing seasons has provided many pleasures.

Since arriving here there has been so much to see and do. We've been made very welcome by our new neighbours and other members of the local community in and around Bewdley. It has been a delight to explore the forest and surrounding area which were previously little known to us. Most exciting, though, is the opportunity to be part of the future of this beautiful place. Working with Tim Selman, John and Linda Iles, other Companions and local supporters, good progress has already been made putting together plans to reinvigorate Ruskin Land, making the place and the ideas that inspired it better known, and helping it to become an influential centre for arts, crafts and the rural economy—to echo the Guild's own strapline.

Ruskin Land has an intriguing history. Many fascinating people have lived here since the farmhouse was constructed a little over a century ago in 1908. It has been interesting to find out about some of those in whose footsteps we follow. Those Companions who have read the illuminating booklet, *Ruskin and Bewdley,* by Cedric Quayle and Peter Wardle, published by the Guild, will be aware that Frederick and Ada Watson, along with their three children, were among the earliest inhabitants. A few months ago I was pleased to receive a message from one of the Watsons' great granddaughters, Delwyn Watson, who lives in New Zealand. She had somehow found out about us from the regular blog we are writing called 'News from Ruskin Land'. (If you are not already signed up to the blog please do - see below for further information.) It has been wonderful to exchange information with Delwyn about her ancestors. Imagining their lives here is not too difficult. Little has changed in the immediate vicinity, although we are fortunate to have mains water and electricity now which makes daily life a lot easier!

A sense of the experience of those who lived at Ruskin Land in its early years is provided by a little-known and long out-of-

'The Way of the Wood', illustration of the Wyre Firest by Harrison R. Fowler in **The Belovéd** *by Edith Hope Scott.*

print novel, *The Belovéd*, written by the Guild's first historian, Companion Edith Hope Scott, and published in 1921. It consists of evocative, fictional letters from an early settler describing her response to the area, accompanied by the stories of some of the other original inhabitants, including a Mr and Mrs Brown, whose characters are based on the Watsons. Passages in the book describe the antiquity of the surrounding oak forest and its coppice landscape, as Scott writes here:

> The Forest is older than history, but only immense oak roots tell that, for the trees are seldom more than 30 or 40 years old, and are surrounded with short dense oak scrub which grows on the oak stools and are periodically cleared, so that any year you may find a part of your dense and mysterious forest become a thinly wooded stretch of ground, bare of undergrowth except for the useless delights of honeysuckle and wild rose and all the other sweet wildnesses that are not to be bought or sold.

Scott refers to the clearing of Ruskin Land, the establishment of the orchard and construction of 'the little red house'—St George's Farm—describing the smallholding 'as a little island in a sea of trees.' And she dramatically captures the feelings of two visitors arriving at the farm, in words that could have been written only yesterday:

> Then we turn off the high road, which after passing a few cottages, became more and more enclosed with trees; and it seemed to Molly and me that we were getting into a dark and dreadful forest such as we knew existed in fairy-tales. … It was nearly dark when we turned into a long steep lane, which seemed to go straight up a hill, and was bordered with tall, dark pine trees—we did not know what they were, but they looked like great giants standing in rows, and our hearts beat quickly—at least I'm sure mine did.

The Watsons stayed at St George's Farm working the land for almost thirty years. They used a horse and trap to get to market, reared pigs and poultry, harvested the apples, plums and cherries, and produced honey. As well as Scott's writing, there are a few surviving photographs of the whole family which give glimpses of what their lives were like. It wouldn't be that difficult to re-stage some of the photos today, if we could successfully source the Edwardian clothing.

The future of Ruskin Land is set to be as inspiring as it was in the past. We feel privileged to be part of it. Please look out for information on the evolving plans on the 'News from Ruskin Land' blog. We were pleased to welcome some of you during this year's Companions' Day on 11th June. If you were unable to come then, or if you would like to come again, please visit us when you can and enjoy the surroundings so lovingly described by Edith Hope Scott almost a century ago.

News from Ruskin Land can be accessed online at https://neilsinden.wordpress.com/.

The Watsons in the early days at St George's Farm, Ruskin Land.

As Companions working in the Wyre Forest seek to deepen our knowledge of the Guild's links with the local area, and ahead of this year's Ruskin Lecture, 'The Sombre Robe': Ruskin and Birmingham*, to be given by Bernard Richards, Emeritus Fellow of Brasenose College Oxford, Stuart Eagles writes about the life and career of the Guild's second Master.*

PAST MASTERS:
A BUILDER OF BIRMINGHAM, GEORGE BAKER (1825-1910)

Stuart Eagles

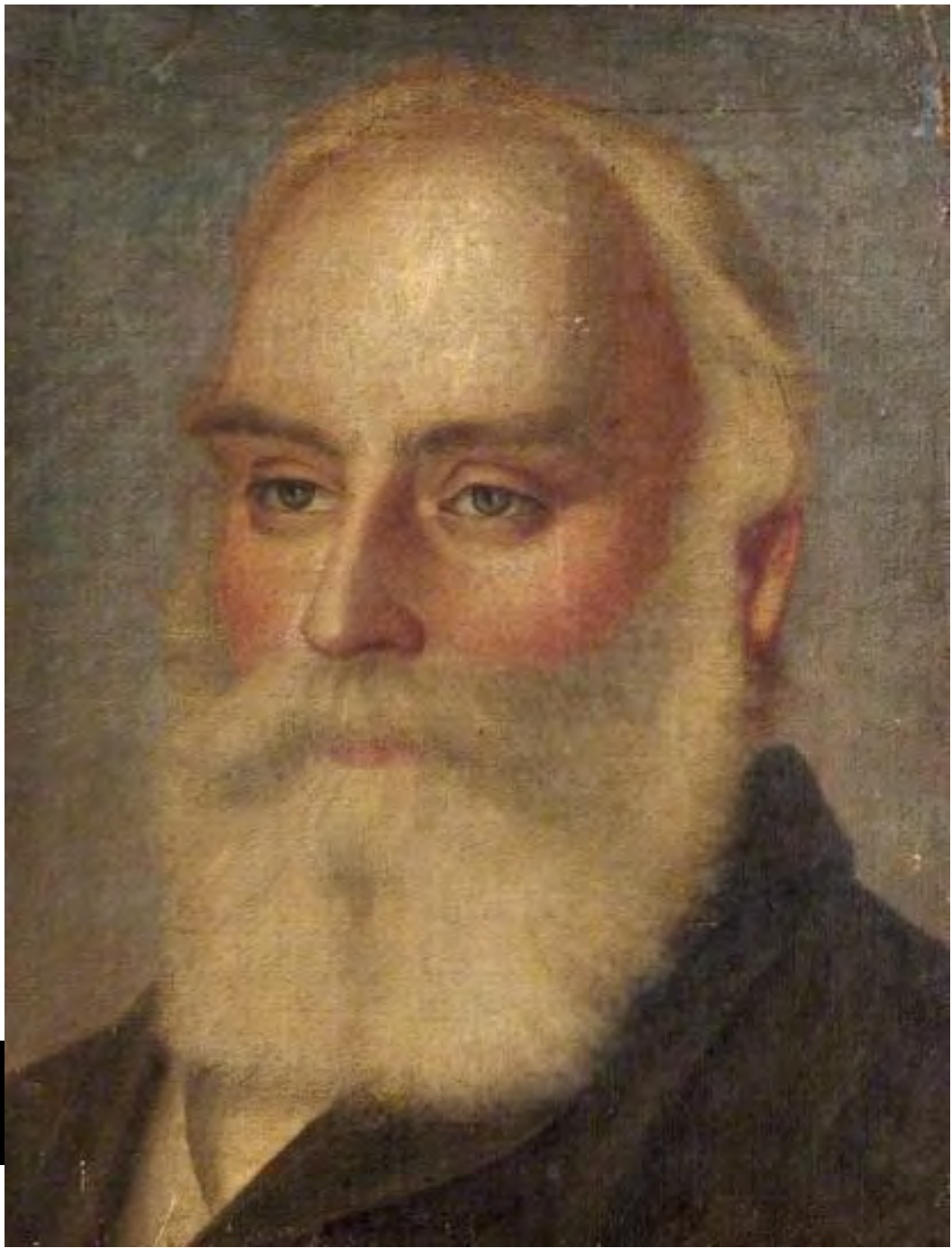
'George Baker was a man of strong individuality, of most genial and affectionate nature, esteemed and beloved by all who knew him.' So reads Baker's anonymously written obituary in the Society of Friends' *Annual Monitor* (1911). The *Birmingham Post* called him 'one of the builders of Birmingham as we know it.' He was, they said, 'one of that band' of public-spirited men around Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914) who transformed the city. 'Alderman Baker's success in public life…' announced the *Annual Monitor*, 'was essentially as a thinker … few have made a deeper or more permanent impression in the minds of the citizens as a devoted servant whose sole desire was to leave his native town better than he found it.'

Despite the recent revelations of Mark Frost's hugely important study, *The Lost Companions* (2014), which seriously questions the nature of Baker's approach to working-class Companions employed by Ruskin in the Wyre Forest, it is difficult to find fault with his career as a municipal administrator and civic leader. Confined to a few thousand words in this article, my intention is to focus on those aspects of Baker's life and work that are not directly linked to the Guild and are therefore less well-known perhaps to readers of this magazine.

George Baker was born in Birmingham on 11th May 1825. His Quaker heritage, and his Birmingham roots, reached back to at least the seventeenth century. His great-grandfather, Samuel Baker (c. 1730-1813), a hard wood turner by trade, was appointed one of the first fifty Street Commissioners in 1769, tasked with overseeing the municipal government of Birmingham. George's father, Edward Baker (1800-1857), was the son of a button maker, George Baker Snr. (1762-1801), who died when Edward was an infant. Edward was sent aged nine to the Friends' Ackworth School located near Pontefract, West Yorkshire, and founded in 1779 for boy and girl boarders. He remained there from September 1809 to December 1813.

According to some sources, Edward set up what became his family firm of blacking manufacturers as early as 1818, though given his age at that time this seems improbable. When in 1824 he married Maria Downing (1795-1869), his marriage certificate recorded that he was a Grocer. Edward probably established the factory, which was on Birmingham's Granville Street, in the early 1830s. Later called Edward Baker & Sons it boasted that it was a 'blacking manufacturer, importer of black lead, and sole agent in the Midlands for Rothwell's patent fire lighters, and wholesale dealers in lucifer matches'! The firm was certainly in business by 1833.

George followed his father to Ackworth School, but the circumstances were unusual insofar as he was admitted at the tender age of eight on 4th September 1833 because the school roll had fallen short of numbers. At that time there were no school holidays, and it is extremely unlikely that he would have returned home before his schooling ended. It must have been a comfort, therefore, to have been joined by his siblings: James Baker (1826-?) in December 1834, and John Edward Baker (1828-1908) in May 1837. George left the school on 7th September 1838, returning to Birmingham



Portrait by his nephew, Joseph Southall (Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, donated by George's grandson, Guild Companion Olaf Baker). Reproduced with permission.

Ackworth School, near Pontefract.

via Wakefield. Intriguingly, he was collected by one William Lloyd, and the agent responsible for his enrolment at the school had been one Charles Lloyd. Given the prominence of the Quaker Lloyd families in Birmingham and Staffordshire, it is tempting to speculate that these men might have been relatives of Anna Lloyd (1837-1925), one of the many women artists trained by Ruskin by means of correspondence, and whose work, 'Study of a Tulip' (1886) is one of the treasures of the Ruskin Collection. She cannot have failed to have known of George Baker later in the century when they both lived in Birmingham and contributed handsomely to its civic life.

Soon after his return to the family home, George's brother, Morris Baker (1829-1898), left for Ackworth, enrolling on 5th October. His sisters, Anne Baker (1831-1877) and Elizabeth Maria Baker (1833-1922), would also study at the School. It is worth pausing here to consider a few notes of family history. It was Elizabeth who married Joseph Sturge Southall (1835-1862), a pharmaceutical chemist of Nottingham. The sole issue of their marriage was Joseph Edward Southall (1861-1944), the artist and pacifist who drew up the plans for a Guild Museum in Bewdley that was never built (the plans are in the Ruskin Collection). In 1903, he married his cousin, Anna Elizabeth (Bessie) Baker (1859-1947), the eldest of the five children of John Edward Baker whose schooling at Ackworth had overlapped for a while with George's. (For more on J. E. Southall, read Companion George Breeze's entry for Southall in the *Oxford Dictionary for National Biography*, and his exhibition catalogue, *Joseph Southall, 1861–1944: artist–craftsman* (1980).)

George Baker's career in the family firm began as soon as he left Ackworth. At first he served as a clerk, and then as a sort of travelling salesman. According to his Quaker biography in the *Annual Monitor*, he hauled a case of samples around the country. He gradually took on more responsibility, and by the time of the 1851 census when he was in his mid-twenties, he was able to describe himself as a 'Blacking Maker employing two men, two boys and ten girls'. George's brother, John Edward, who from school had been apprenticed to T. & W Southall, chemists and druggists of Birmingham and probably relatives of Joseph Sturge Southall who later became his brother-in-law, eventually joined him in the family firm. They added new departments of business, expanded its operations, and steadily won a reputation as an important enterprise

As young as twenty, in the mid-1840s, George began his long association with Birmingham's Quaker First-Day School at Severn Street, becoming one of its first teachers. It had been founded by Joseph Sturge (1793-1859), a Radical businessman, to improve reading, writing and scriptural knowledge among adolescents, but it soon came to focus on adults. Baker was a trustee of the school's Savings Fund for decades, and during his tenure the fund is said to have risen in value from £700 to £17,000. By the 1850s he had gained a reputation as an efficient and dependable financial administrator. Education remained a particular passion. He became a member of the Birmingham Education Society in 1868, and the National Education League (campaigning for non-sectarian education) in 1869, but he failed to be elected to the Birmingham School Board in 1870. He played a part in the reform of King Edward VI Grammar School, and served the reformed institution as a Governor.

In 1848, George had married Rebecca Baker Pumphrey (1824-1864), the daughter of Josiah Pumphrey (1783-1861), a brass founder and a member of another prominent Birmingham Quaker family. Rebecca died on August 20th1864, shortly after the birth of the couple's seventh child and only daughter, Lilian Rebecca (Lily) Baker (1864-1884), who herself was only twenty when she died.

George's public career began in earnest in 1860, when he was appointed to the Board of Overseers, becoming Chairman in 1867. In 1864, he had been appointed a Poor Law Guardian, and chaired the Board a few years later. He reorganized the system for vaccination of the poor. He created new wards for elderly women in the workhouse, and arranged for the successful purchase of the land on which an infirmary was later erected. He also played a leading role in establishing Rubery Hill Asylum. Eventually built in 1882, it could accommodate up to 600 patients. With its own chapel, library and laundry, the asylum was set in 150 acres of parkland.

Baker was a life-long member of the Birmingham Liberal Association which was founded in 1865. A close friend of its President, John Skirrow Wright (1822-1880), Baker was honorary secretary during its most active years. He was a leading member of that group of civic reformers led by Joseph Chamberlain. He was elected to Birmingham Town Council in 1867, representing St George's Ward. He never followed Chamberlain and the majority of Birmingham's Liberals into support for Unionism following the Liberal split over Irish Home Rule.

Birmingham's Severn Street Schools.

His priority on being elected to the Council was to join with those reforming the town's system of drainage and sanitation, helping to oversee the construction of a new sewage network which did much to improve public health. (He later served as Chairman of the Drainage Board from 1892 until his death in 1910.) He was a member of the Water

Committee that secured Birmingham's water supply, and he was on the Improvement Committee that oversaw the clearance of the slums that had occupied what became Corporation Street. One of the chief developers of the city centre was Baker's friend, the architect John Henry Chamberlain (1831-1883)—no relation of Joseph's. J. H. Chamberlain was appointed a trustee of the Guild of St George in 1879, where he served alongside Baker. When Baker became an Alderman of Birmingham in 1874, few appear to have doubted that his record of public service had earned the accolade.

Joseph Chamberlain was elected Mayor of Birmingham in November 1873, but resigned in June 1876 to stand for Parliament. Baker was elected to succeed him, and was re-elected in May 1877 to serve for one further year. It was difficult to maintain the momentum for reform that Chamberlain had built up, but Baker's enthusiasm seems to have been undiminished.

It was whilst Baker was Mayor that he met Ruskin, and Ruskin's letter of August 1877 to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain in *Fors Clavigera,* was written from Baker's home, Bellefield (Bellefield House, west of Winson Green Road, since demolished, was on Birmingham Heath, opposite the present site of Birmingham Prison). Readers of *The Companion* will know how uncomfortable Ruskin was to meet Birmingham's leading businessmen and politicians. The letter is worth reading in its entirety for what it reveals about the tensions between Ruskin and his disciples. For all that Ruskin enjoined his readers to take action to improve the world around them, he shared none of his disciples' sense of hope that a remarkable amount of good could be achieved in the industrial cities.

Baker made a particular effort during his Mayoralty to advance the interests of Birmingham's cultural institutions. In 1877, he convened a conference of representatives from a range of municipal authorities with the aim of persuading London to share its cultural treasures, particularly its public art collections, with the provinces. It helped pave the way for the passing of the National Gallery Loan Act of 1883. Baker also keenly encouraged the establishment and expansion of public libraries, and must have known fellow Birmingham Guild Companion, the antiquarian and historian of Warwickshire, Samuel Timmins (1826-1902). Timmins was a founder, with the radical Rev George Dawson (1821-1876), of the Shakespeare Club in the 1860s which led to the formation in 1881 of the Shakespeare Memorial Library based in Birmingham Reference Library.

In 1879, Baker re-married: Gulielma Patching (1854-1930) was nearly thirty years' his junior. Her father, Frederick Patching (1822-1887), was a woollen draper and tailor based in Edgbaston, who for some time had lived at Spring Bank, Bewdley. Like her husband, Rebecca had also attended Ackworth School (1864-5). The couple had one daughter and one son, the latter of whom was born when George was nearly 57. His daughter was Elma Chiswell Baker (1880-1962) (Chiswell was the maiden name of George's paternal grandmother) and it is once again worth pausing to entertain a tantalising digression. Elma married Alfred Miller (1883-1958), the brother of the sculptor, Alexander (Alec) Miller (1879-1961), whose son was schooled at Bembridge. Alec wrote to Van Akin Burd and Jim Dearden in 1960 to tell them that his sister-in-law had shown him letters from Ruskin to her father (George Baker) that he believed she still possessed. For a variety of reasons the matter was not pursued, and I have so far been unable to trace the whereabouts of this potential treasure-trove.

In 1886, George Baker became chairman of the Improvement Committee. Despite facing keen opposition from fellow politicians to his house-building plans, Baker nevertheless successfully persuaded the Council to build twenty-two cottages in what became Ryder Street which were completed in 1890. In the following year, he achieved the more ambitious goal of building 82 houses in Lawrence Street. In 1895, he persuaded the Council to purchase and then demolish insanitary housing in Mill Lane, and though his plans for 64 new homes on the site were defeated two years later, the houses were eventually built under a barely modified scheme shortly afterwards. The responsibilities of the Improvement Committee were transferred to the Estates Committee in 1899, and Baker became its first Chairman, before retiring aged 75 in 1900.

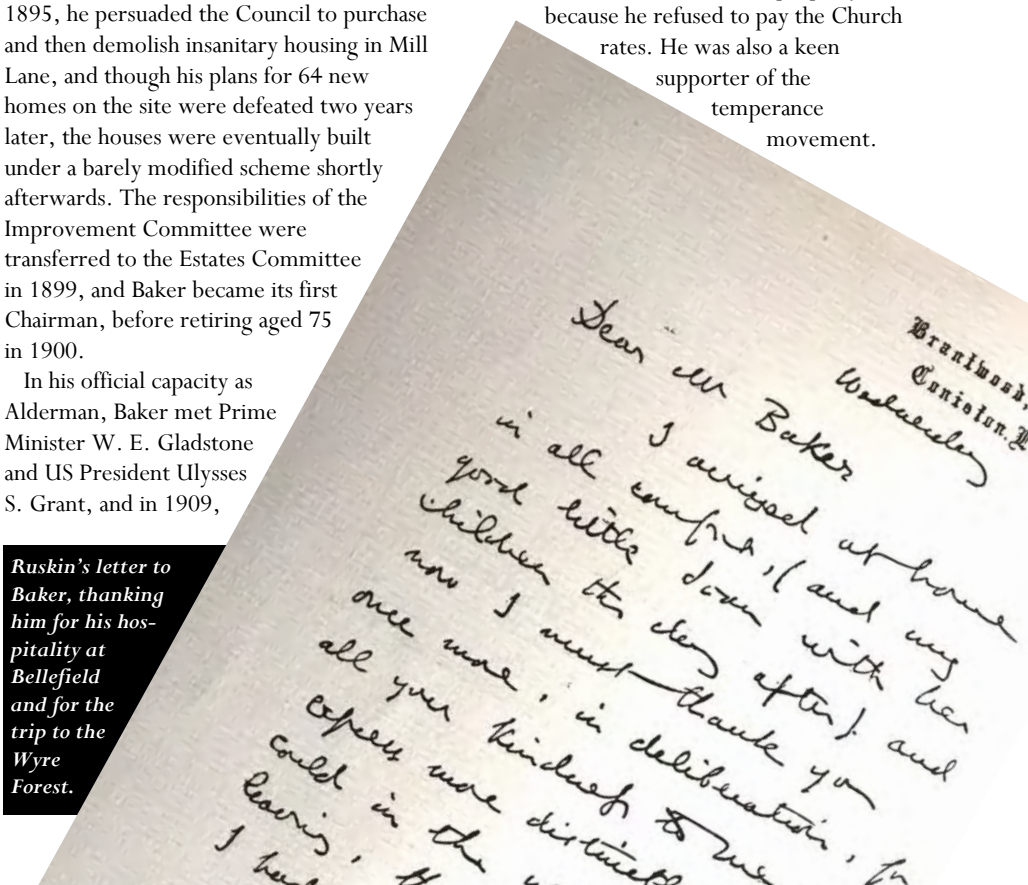
In his official capacity as Alderman, Baker met Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone and US President Ulysses S. Grant, and in 1909,

George Baker, miniature portrait (in the possession of Dale and Alex Parmeter).

at the opening of the new University buildings, when Baker moved the Corporation's address, he was presented to King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra as 'Father of the Council'.

He was a tireless promoter of international peace, serving as the President of the local branch of the Peace Society, the foundation of which owed much to Baker's old friend and ally in adult education, Joseph Sturge. In 1857 he visited Finland with Wilson Sturge (1834-1899) on a relief mission to fishermen whose property had been destroyed by the British navy during the Crimean War.

Baker was a defender of civil and religious freedoms, and early in his first marriage suffered some confiscation of property because he refused to pay the Church rates. He was also a keen supporter of the temperance movement.



Ruskin's letter to Baker, thanking him for his hospitality at Bellefield and for the trip to the Wyre Forest.

BEAUCASTLE

The Venetian influence is particularly evident in the ornate external 'bachelor' staircase, so-called because unmarried gentlemen guests weren't allowed to use the same staircase as the ladies. Originally, this outside staircase led to four bedrooms unconnected to the rest of the house, a prudish arrangement that has been reversed with the addition of communicating doors.

The elaborate wrought-iron balcony that runs around the rear of the house was probably inspired by Ruskin's Alpine travels. Inside and out, the level of craftsmanship is sublime, from the magnificent drawing room with its beamed ceiling elaborately vaulted with handmade mouldings, to the oak-panelled hall and dining room, and the four exquisite stained-glass windows [the figures of which were designed] by Edward Burne-Jones, which are thought to have been made in William Morris's factory.

Beaucastle was in less than pristine condition when, in the early 1990s, Mr and Mrs Amor bought the house from its previous owner, George Clancey, who had lived there for 40 years. It was he who had laid out Beaucastle's 12 acres of park-like gardens and grounds, with meandering lawns and a picturesque lake created from a former clay pit.

The Amors relaid and insulated the roof, rebuilt the tower, and renovated the interior, installing bathrooms and a splendid farmhouse kitchen/breakfast room. The 10,697sq ft house now has four reception rooms, a sumptuous master suite, six further bedrooms, two bathrooms and a billiards [sic] *room, from where a spiral staircase leads to the observation tower with its spectacular 360° views over Bewdley and the surrounding countryside. Below the house, a courtyard of buildings includes former coach houses, stables and grooms' quarters, all suitable for conversion subject to planning consent.*

—*Country Life* (October 22nd 2009).

Having purchased 381 acres of Crown land in the Wyre Forest, Baker commissioned William Doubleday to design the Gothic mansion, Beaucastle, which became Baker's principal residence in the 1870s. It is often remarked that Baker was highly unusual in serving two different towns as Mayor, but it is not sufficiently appreciated that when Baker served as Mayor of Bewdley in two consecutive years between October 1888 and September 1890, he did so *at the same time* as continuing to represent St George's Ward in Birmingham and carrying out his formidable burden of committee work there. In reality, he was more of a figure -head in Bewdley, but as the recorded, his ambitions for the town were no less great as a consequence.

> On Monday evening a public meeting was held in the townhall (sic) to promote the effort which is now being made to make Bewdley an attractive health resort. The Mayor, Mr. George Baker, presided over a large attendance, which included many of the leading residents and tradesmen of the neighbourhood.
>
> The MAYOR said that what was now being done was an experiment, but it had answered at Bridgnorth, Malvern, and other places. They desired to attract visitors to Bewdley, not only the 'trippers,' [but] for persons who desired healthy and well-situated residences. They desired to clear away all the insanitary dwellings in the borough, and to improve it in every possible way. In few places so beautifully situated as Bewdley was there to be found such a noble river as the Severn, and he saw no reason why the town should not be supplied with the electric light, the motive power for the dynamos being obtained from the river. In places less happily placed than Bewdley that had been successfully accomplished, and why not, therefore, at Bewdley? His Worship concluded by moving a resolution appointing a standing Visitors' Committee, to promote the interests of Bewdley, Wribbenhall, and neighbourhood, their duties being to give information to persons seeking health and pleasure and place of residence. …
>
> The motion having been carried, the MAYOR was thanked for convening and presiding over the meeting.
>
> —'The Attractions of Bewdley' *Worcestershire Chronicle*, May 24th 1890.

Bewdley was, Baker thought, an attractive, modern-thinking and environmentally-sensitive town whose natural virtues Baker sought to enhance. How many people in Bewdley, I wonder, were aware of the Guild settlers in the Wyre Forest? Writing in 1901 to her fellow Guild Companion, the solicitor Sydney Morse (1854-1929), Edith Hope Scott (1862-1936), the future Guild historian and Wyre settler, remarked:

> Bewdley has been tending to become a new Guild centre, & therefore seems the most suitable place for at least beginning any new Guild work. The Master lives there. The 20 acres of Ruskin land are there. And two Guild companions already own small plots of land there.
>
> —Brotherton Library: Edith Hope Scott, unpublished letter to Sydney Morse, n.d. 1901.

Much of that hope, which promises to be fulfilled by the Guild in the coming years with a greater degree of success and fidelity

Looking out from the viewing tower at Beaucastle. *Worcestershire Chronicle*

to Ruskin's vision than was ever possible in the past, nevertheless owes a great deal to the considerable foresight and prodigious energy of George Baker, Acting Master during Ruskin's long decline, and second Master of the Guild from 1900 until his death in 1910.

'Until within a few weeks of his death,' the Quaker *Annual Monitor* recorded:

> [George Baker] was still engaged in public life. Taken ill whilst visiting his wife's mother [Mary Patching née Wheeler (1830-1914)], [at 19 Charlotte Street] in Edgbaston, his malady became so serious that he could not be moved to Bewdley. Late at night on the day he died [10th January 1910] a great fire broke out in the Cornwall Works, and the sounds of many alarm-signals reached the ears of the dying man. Recognising their import, he feebly asked his wife whose works were on fire. On inquiry through the telephone, he was told that it was George Tangye's works. 'Give him my love and sympathy' were almost his last words.
>
> —*Annual Monitor*, p. 9-10.

That love would have been genuinely felt. Baker's relationship with the Quaker, manufacturer and philanthropist, George Tangye (1835-1920), stretched back many decades, and was strengthened by a shared commitment to education that expressed itself in an active involvement with the Severn Street Schools. Together with his brother, Richard Tangye (1833-1906), George had given £11,000 towards the foundation of the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, and a further £10,000 towards the Birmingham School of Art. Richard, who had served as a Liberal Councillor in Birmingham, had been particularly influential in the choice of J. H. Chamberlain as the School's architect. The School would eventually count the sculptor, artist-craftsman and Guild Companion Benjamin Creswick (1853-1946), among its leaders. When Sir Richard Tangye came to publish the catalogue of his own library, it revealed that he owned many Ruskin volumes, including Chamberlain's Ruskin bibliography.

Like many members of his wider family, George Baker was buried in the Friends' section of Birmingham city cemetery, at Witton. His estate was valued at £15,500 (a simple RPI multiplication would measure the modern equivalent value at £1.5m but by many factors it was probably worth more than that figure suggests). His widow never remarried and moved back to Edgbaston where she died in 1930.

'For over fifty years,' reported the *Birmingham Gazette*, 'Mr. Baker ranked as a public man, and for the last forty, at any rate, he occupied a very prominent position in the municipality.' [*Birmingham Gazette* (January 17th 1910).]

Companion Annie Creswick Dawson with three of the capitals carved by her great grandfather, Benjamin Creswick, which adorn the Bachelor Staircase at Beaucastle. Edith Hope Scott wrote that Creswick 'carved the capitals of the short pillars on the outside stone staircase [at Beaucastle] with the wild life of the forest, squirrel and rabbit, deer and bird among the oak and the wild growth of the wood. Work delightful to himself and a delight to everyone who sees it.' Photo: Paul Dawson.

Special thanks to Dale and Alex Parmeter, the current owners of Beaucastle, for welcoming a party of visiting Companions to their home on June 11th this year, and for permission to reproduce the 'miniature' of Baker and to publish photographs taken on that day (an account of the visit will appear next time). Heartfelt thanks, also, to Celia Wolfe, honorary archivist at Ackworth School, for providing me with valuable information for this article.

George Baker, photograph published in the* Annual Monitor *(1911).

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The next issue will carry an article about past Master, George Thomson. Please email enquiries@guildofstgeorge.org.uk with any contributions for this magazine.

The Cambridge Companion to John Ruskin. Ed. Francis O'Gorman. (Cambridge: CUP, 2015).

In his Introduction to this volume, editor Francis O'Gorman writes of the modern tendency to require that writers and their ideas be 'relevant' or (ugly word) 'relatable' (1). He observes that 'Ruskin trips the switch on a journalistic habit of requiring historical thinkers and authors to speak directly to the present in order to be worth reading . …. We can apparently value him for being a little like us" (1). While O'Gorman enumerates the real and important reasons that Ruskin may be considered relevant, he warns against the desire to make Ruskin over in our own image, emphasising the necessity of understanding his ideas in the context of his life and times.

O'Gorman's Introduction is an expertly condensed consideration of Ruskin as both thinker and writer. He points out that Ruskin 'is a remarkable commentator on his own continuing education' (2), unafraid of revising his ideas and positions (for which flexibility he was accused of contradiction). O'Gorman also examines the different strands in Ruskin scholarship, which range from criticism of Ruskin's work as an expression of his life, to contextual criticism that examines the intellectual, aesthetic, historical, gendered, or political aspects of his work, to what O'Gorman calls a new strand concerned with his legacies in culture, politics, education, and the environment in particular.

Yet this Introduction is an appreciation as well. O'Gorman rightly points to the *pleasure* of reading Ruskin. He is 'a writer of praise', the power of his writing deriving from 'the depths of his care' (10). O'Gorman expresses this beautifully in a passage that is as much an affectionate tribute as a critical assessment:

> Writer of praise, writer of hope, elegist and witness to ruin, articulator of disappointment and of promise: yet in the end it seems to me that Ruskin is finally worth reading simply because he is a writer … He has a luminous gift for the expression in words of what is passing in a rich and complex mind …. Reading Ruskin in his own words, contemplating the dazzling management of his prose, we can perceive how language at its highest reach can shift the view … He enables us, daringly, to see with words. (13)

In mounting such a strong and elegant case, O'Gorman might seem to undermine the aim of this volume: readers may finish his Introduction wondering why they ought to read a book of essays *about* Ruskin rather than immerse themselves at once in the Library Edition. Yet the articulate and intelligent commentary offered here is just what's needed to draw new readers to Ruskin. As O'Gorman observes, the voluminous nature of Ruskin's writing means that he is 'mostly read in pieces' (2) today, which too often means that his ideas are poorly or incompletely understood. The *Cambridge Companion* fulfils a useful role in providing readers with a map, as it were, to Ruskin territory.

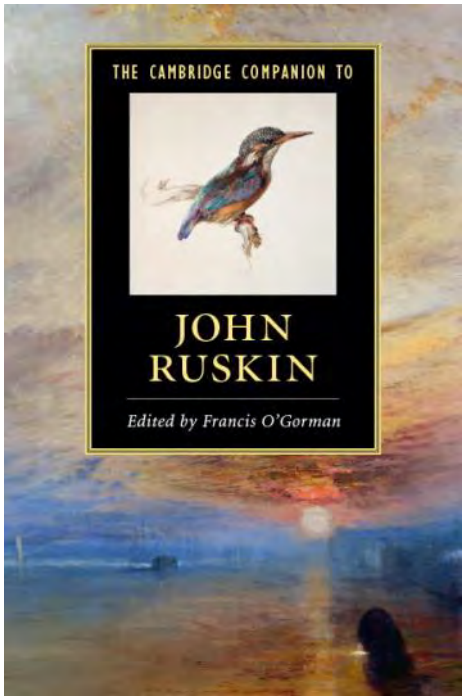
One of the greatest challenges, in a book of this sort, is determining what ought to be included: what topics are essential in a *Companion to* volume? The headings here are somewhat alarmingly broad—Ruskin's ideas about topics such as art, architecture, technology, and religion, for instance, are the stuff of book-length studies. Yet O'Gorman and his sixteen contributors (who include some of the finest scholars working on Ruskin today) know that there can be no Ruskin in a nutshell and have wisely used the headings as a guide, mining narrow, yet rich veins of inquiry that yield valuable lodes.

The book is divided into four parts: Places, Topics, Authorship, and Legacies, comprising a total of seventeen essays. While the

demands of space mean that my review will necessarily highlight only a handful of these essays, all are worthy of the reader's attention. Part I includes essays on places of emotional, aesthetic and intellectual importance to Ruskin: Edinburgh-London-Oxford-Coniston; the Alps; France and Belgium; and Italy. Writing about 'The Alps' Emma Sdegno observes that 'Ruskin substantially contributed to the myth of the Alps that shaped the imagination and travel habits of the Victorians' (32). Ruskin deeply loved the Alps; he drew them, walked and climbed in them, studied their geology, and came close, at one point in 1863, to building an Alpine home. He returned to them in memory in *Praeterita*. Sdegno argues that 'within his massive corpus is a composite work devoted to [the Alps]' (32). In her essay exploring Ruskin's response to France and Belgium, Cynthia Gamble reaches a similar conclusion, noting that the two countries 'are interwoven into his writings on art, architecture, landscape, history, culture and politics' (79).

Part II, 'Topics', is the lengthiest section of the book, comprising seven essays: on Art, Architecture, Politics and Economics, Nation and Class, Religion, Sexuality and Gender, and Technology. Alan Davis, in particular, has chosen a unique approach to Ruskin and Technology. Ruskin's resistance to technology is amply documented. Thus, while Davis concedes Ruskin's criticism, and often outright rejection, of many forms of modern technology, he has chosen to explore a more positive aspect of the subject—Ruskin's long engagement with printmaking. As Davis argues, 'Printmaking (etching, line engraving, mezzotint engraving, wood engraving, and lithography) was the branch of technology about which Ruskin was most fully informed, and with which he was most deeply involved, for most of his active adult life' (176). Focusing on printmaking of the 1860s, Davis considers the ways in which conventional printmaking, concerned primarily with reproduction and imitation, diverged from Ruskin's principles and practice, which were grounded in a commitment to creative labour and truth of expression – 'doing with each material what it is best fitted to do' (qtd 181). Ruskin's primary concern, with printmaking as with all technology, was with the 'contrast between the advanced technology of the doing, and the questionable nature of what is being done' (172). Davis's insightful discussion reflects his own extensive knowledge of the subject, gleaned from years spent looking at and writing about Ruskin's plates.

In Part III, dedicated to 'Authorship', Dinah Birch offers a characteristically perceptive assessment of the religious and cultural influences that helped shape Ruskin's public voice and lecturing style. Birch argues that 'The confluence of Evangelical faith and Romantic feeling formed Ruskin's identity as a writer' (207) and describes *Modern Painters* as 'one of the last great works of European Romanticism' (107). Discussing the power and popularity of Ruskin's public lectures, she notes that they influenced Ruskin as much, though differently, as they did his audiences. While the lectures helped spread his ideas to the public, they also required him to visit unfamiliar towns and cities, thus shaping and refining his ideas by extending



'his understanding of social and economic conditions in Great Britain' (210).

Ruskin's understanding of these conditions owed something to his mentor Thomas Carlyle as well. Yet despite Ruskin's deep admiration for the older man, David R. Sorensen argues that 'their association was never as harmonious as appearances suggested' (189) or as the two men wanted others to think. In an insightful account of their often complicated friendship, Sorensen observes that Ruskin's moral vision was 'underpinned by a spirituality that put him at odds with Carlyle, whose faith was a mercurial muddle' (194). Sorensen suggests that Ruskin was often wearied by being Carlyle's disciple, unable to become 'the "Sage" that Carlyle wanted him to be' because he 'yearned to belong to the world whose misguided ways he sought to reform' (199-200).

Readers curious about Ruskin's worldly affinities will want to turn to Clive Wilmer's essay on 'Creativity' which looks at Ruskin as poet, artist, and prose writer. Summing up the message of *Modern Painters* in an 1888 Epilogue, Ruskin asserted his conviction 'that the knowledge of what is beautiful leads on, and is the first step, to the knowledge of the things which are lovely and of good report; and that the laws, the life, *and the joy of beauty in the material world of God*, are as eternal and sacred parts of his creation as, in the world of spirits, virtue; and in the world of angels, praise' (7.464, my italics). It was in this sense, of the richness of experience generated by looking, drawing, thinking, and reading, that Ruskin yearned to belong to the world—as he declared so memorably, 'THERE IS NO WEALTH BUT LIFE.' Wilmer explores the imaginative power of Ruskin's art and writing, his talent for integrating into life a deep and multifaceted way of looking at and engaging with the world. Wilmer demonstrates 'the quite exceptional beauty of [Ruskin's] prose' (231), the 'organizing and symbol-making power of an artist's imagination' (237) expressed in his drawings, and the ways in which his work reflects his complex personality. A poet himself, Wilmer is particularly good on Ruskin's use of language and imagery, noting that he 'communicates his meaning through rhythm and cadence, imagery and the choice of resonant words' (244). He is surely right in concluding, as did Oscar Wilde before him, that 'the critic was an artist' (244).

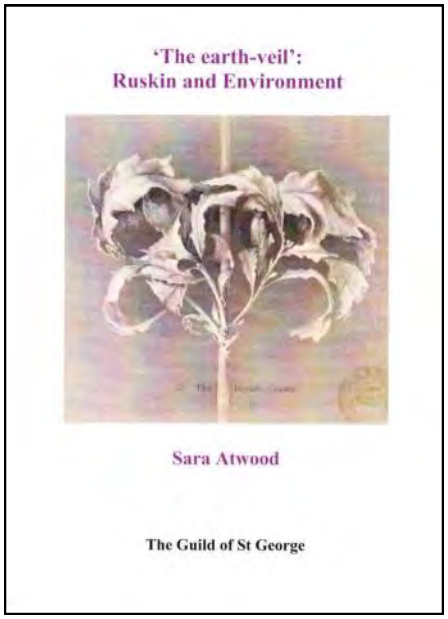
Stuart Eagles and Marcus Waithe ably cover Ruskin's "Legacies" in Part IV. Eagles is well-positioned to report on Ruskin's political legacies, having explored the subject in detail in his 2011 book *After Ruskin*. Here, Eagles takes up the thread of his earlier argument, looking closely at the various ways in which Ruskin was 'appropriated, assimilated, harmonized, sometimes distorted and rarely taken whole' (250) by his admirers, both during his life-time and afterwards. Eagles offers an astute analysis of the men and women inspired by Ruskin and of the sometimes uneasy relationship between their work and Ruskin's ideas. Eagles's knowledge of his subject is both broad and deep. He follows the often slippery line of Ruskin's influence with admirable discipline, always careful to avoid 'finding Ruskin lurking in every shadow' (250). He considers the 'Ruskin credentials' (254) of progressive reformers and politicians including T. H. Green, H. D. Rawnsley, T. Edmund Harvey, C. R. Ashbee, Clement Attlee, W. T. Stead, and Keir Hardie, to name only a few. We also learn about Ruskin's impact on John Coleman Kenworthy's co-operative Tolstoyan community at Purleigh in Essex. Kenworthy's story leads us to Tolstoy's admiration for Ruskin and the 'crucial part' it played in

'mediating, reinforcing, and augmenting Ruskin's teaching' (258) for Gandhi, who had 'first read about *Fors* in an essay by Tolstoy published in 1897' (259). After reading *Unto This Last*, Gandhi declared that he had 'decided to change my life in accordance with the ideals of the book" (qtd 258). He produced a paraphrased version of *Unto This Last* under the title *Sarvodaya* (the welfare of all) and would go on to invoke Ruskin in his own published work. Perhaps the most fascinating part of Eagles's essay, however, is his account of Leon Trotsky's dismissive and incomplete understanding of what he called 'Ruskin's reactionary romantic delusions' (259). In bringing this story to light, Eagles draws upon a 1901 essay by Trotsky (published under his real name, Lev Bronshtein). This essay, 'almost completely unknown in the West' (259) is certainly new to Ruskin studies and Eagles has thus opened an entirely new and intriguing line of inquiry.

The *Cambridge Companion* has been given a lovely cover, combining Turner's *Fighting Temeraire* with Ruskin's *Study of a Kingfisher* (1871), the two images pointing nicely to the link between Ruskin and the artist he so famously championed. It is to be regretted, especially given the value Ruskin placed on clarity and accuracy, that the text itself has not been shown the same level of care and attention. There are a number of typos throughout and many of the images are dark and indistinct. This is particularly unfortunate in essays in which the images are central to the argument, such as Lucy Hartley's 'Art' and Alan Davis's discussion of printmaking. In Hartley's essay, an image of Ruskin's engraving after Turner—'Advanced Naturalism'—is so dark that the foreground details are almost completely obscured. One expects better—and O'Gorman and his contributors deserve better—from an esteemed University Press. However, these flaws do not detract from the high level of scholarship presented in this volume, which is a welcome addition to Ruskin studies.

Sara Atwood

Sara Atwood, *'The earth-veil': Ruskin and Environment*. (York: Guild of St George Publications, 2015).



I must begin with a declaration of interest: Sara Atwood is an old friend, and I was consulted during the development of early drafts of the lecture on which this essay is based. So I'd be unable to claim impartiality in writing a formal review, but I hope this does not disqualify me from offering this *response* to the essay.

A great deal has been written about 'Ruskin and Environment', and much of it is excellent. If someone were to ask me where to find a brief introduction that covered most of the key points, and introduced some new ones, this booklet of Sara Atwood's would be among my first thoughts. It has been thoroughly researched and shaped over a significant period of time: in a variety of states of development it has been delivered as lectures at Berkeley (California) and at Brantwood, and published as essays in *The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, and the magazine *Earthlines*. Concise, expertly written and attractively illustrated, it sits well in its present form as a Guild booklet.

My purpose here is not to offer criticism of the essay, but to use it as a springboard: to take up one or two of the issues it raises and to pursue them a little further in an unusual direction, to see where they might lead us. For instance, the author aptly observes that because 'we like to listen for the echo of our own thoughts [Ruskin] is often labelled an early or *proto*-environmentalist' (3). This tendency reminds me of what I have called a 'temporal pathetic fallacy',[1] whereby we project our own emotions and attitudes into the past. It will almost always lead us astray, as Sara Atwood recognises: 'we must first understand [Ruskin's] ideas in the context of his worldview and of the intellectual and cultural forces that shaped it, drawing out his meaning rather than imposing our own' (4). Easier said than done of course, but the attempt must be made.

The primary difficulty of trying to take Ruskin 'in the context of his worldview' arises because there are no limits to Ruskin's organic vision of nature. For him, everything is connected to everything else—not merely in a material sense, but in a moral and spiritual sense too. In this respect, much of Ruskin's thinking anticipates the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), for whom there is no such thing as an independent mode of existence: 'every entity is only to be understood in terms of the way in which it is interwoven with the rest of the Universe'.[2] I am not sure whether Ruskin would have willingly followed Whitehead's further development of this idea, though it seems a logical enough extension:

> Nature is … a totality including individual experiences, so that we must reject the distinction between nature as it really is and experiences of it which are purely psychological. Our experiences of the apparent world are nature itself.[3]

And (one might add) not merely are our experiences nature itself, but so are we, and so are the things we make. This was driven home forcibly to me recently when I encountered the work of the artist Briony Clarke.[4] She designs machines that enable the sea, during an incoming tide, to make drawings that display with exquisite beauty the same kind of organic rhythms that Ruskin perceived in the natural world. She calls the machine a 'Sea Fax', and the drawings, 'sea scrolls' (see the accompanying illustrations). The device, made of black perspex, is laid on the sand in the path of an incoming tide. The movement of the water turns a paddle, whose rotation causes a scroll of paper to unroll beneath the water surface. Oily ink [5] is dropped in front of the machine, from where it is carried by the water and deposited on the unrolling paper, making a series of beautiful, rhythmic, intricate, and yet utterly unpredictable marks. More than anything else I have seen, they demonstrate the abstract rhythms that Ruskin sought to express in his finest drawings of landscape—drawings made in pursuit of the 'laws which guided the clouds, divided the light, and balanced the wave' (11). They penetrate beyond the veil of normal perception, and reveal layers of mystery that we could perceive in no other way.[6]

This is not 'technology versus natural environment'; it is 'technology as *part* of natural environment'. The Sea Fax has undergone a number of developments to reach its present (still developing) state, and the artist tells me that the machines have 'pretty much been designing themselves'. Her aim is to remove the intervention of her hand as far as possible: 'For me the machines are just as much part of nature as my digits, and I want them to keep reminding me of that'.[7] I am not suggesting that Ruskin would have accepted such a viewpoint, or approved such use of technology to make art—that would be a temporal pathetic fallacy. But it is important to stress (as Sara

Atwood explains in her essay) that Ruskin was not 'anti-technology', *per se*. Neither was he 'anti-science'.[8] The central issue for Ruskin is whether the technology (or anything else) 'avails towards life', or not (17.84). Sara Atwood's essay reminds us of the key to understanding this: it is the Law of Help (2). The Ruskinian moral imperative we face, when we contemplate the organic unity of the world, arises from the necessity for the help of everything, by everything else. When we contemplate Briony Clarke's Sea Fax machine, submitting itself to the creative energy of the sea ('go to Nature in all singleness of heart … having no other thoughts but how best to penetrate her meaning, and remember her instruction' (3. 624)), we see the Law of Help in operation: the artist and her concept, the machine, the incoming tide, the ink, and the paper, are all united in helpful cooperation. This takes us close to the essence of Ruskinian 'environmentalism' as Sara Atwood explains it in her essay—not cranky, or reactionary, or anti-technological, but recognising the infinite mutuality of the Law of Help, and acknowledging its moral and aesthetic implication, in whatever we are doing, and however we are doing it.

Alan Davis

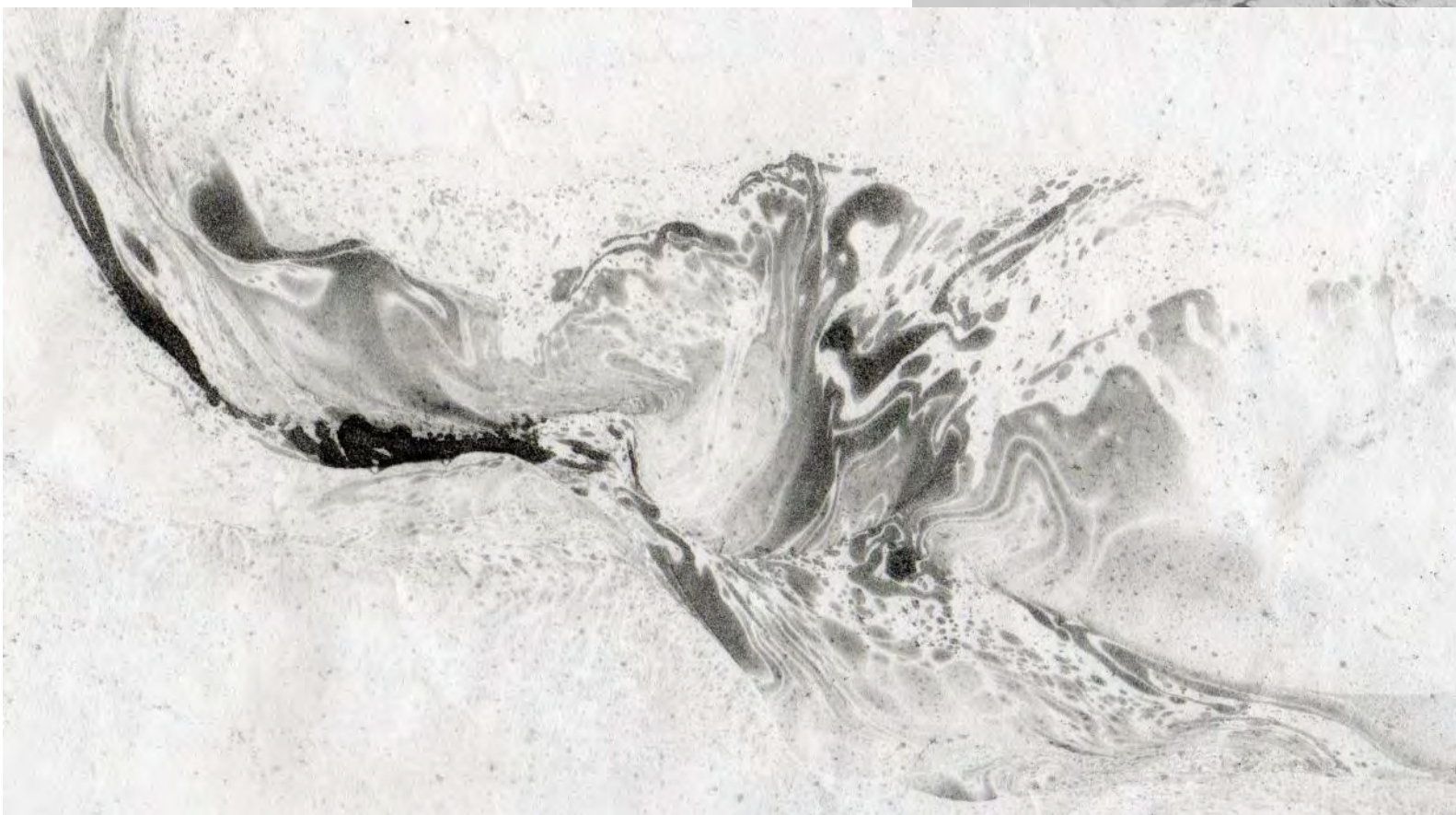
'The earth-veil'; Ruskin and Environment, like all Guild of St George publications, is available from the shop: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/shop/>..

NOTES

1. Alan Davis, Editorial, *The Ruskin Review and Bulletin* (Autumn 2009), pp. 3-4..
2. A. N. Whitehead, *Essays in Science and Philosophy* (London: Rider, 1948), p. 64.
3. Quoted in Colin Wilson, *Religion and the Rebel* (London: Gollancz, 1957), p. 305.
4. See Alan Davis, 'The laws that balance the wave: Ruskin and the art of Briony Clarke', *The Ruskin Review and Bulletin*, vol. 11, no. 2 (Autumn 2015) pp. 19-35. I am grateful to the artist for granting permission to reproduce one of her 'sea scrolls' here.
5. The powder base for the ink is ground from local slate. The oil is biodegradable.
6. See Ruskin's three laws of good landscape drawing in *The Elements of Drawing* (15.115-16).
7. Briony Clarke, pers. comm.
8. Sara Atwood rightly points out that Ruskin's objections were not to science, but to what we today would call 'scientism' (13). Ruskin's observations about science may, however, be sometimes called into question. I am inclined to quibble a bit with his stricture that 'Science does its duty not in telling us the causes of the spots on the sun; but in explaining to us the laws of our own life' [p. 14]. Telling us the causes of the spots on the sun is most certainly one of the duties of Science, whatever others there may be.

(Right) Briony Clarke,* Sea scroll. *Reproduced by permission of the artist.

(Below) Briony Clarke,* Detail of Sea scroll. *Reproduced by permission of the artist.



***PROUST RUSKIN* *'La Bible d'Amiens', 'Sésame et les lys' et autres textes*, édition établie, présentée et annotée par Jérôme Bastianelli (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2015).**

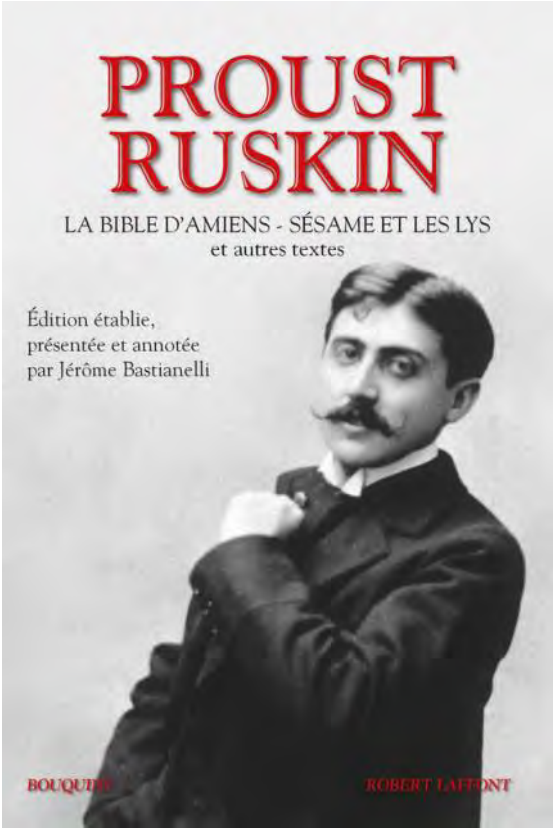
The main title *PROUST RUSKIN* is emblazoned in red above a photograph of Marcel Proust, suggesting that the focus of the book is on the French writer and aimed at a French-speaking market. The book is in French, with an occasional reference in English.

The main contents are:
—an introduction by Bastianelli: 'Ruskin, le prophète de Proust?' (note the question mark);
—two obituary articles on Ruskin by Proust published in 1900;
—*La Bible d'Amiens*, Proust's translation (1904);
—*Sésame et les lys*, Proust's translation (1906);
—13 short texts by Proust that are redolent of Ruskin;
—*Pages choisies* by Robert de La Sizeranne, but with the excision of passages from *Sésame et les lys*;
—extracts of a selection of reviews of Proust's translations;
—a translation into French of *The Times* obituary of Ruskin on January 22nd 1900.

This may suggest simplicity, but this is not the case. The book is overladen with extensive notes on almost every page—Ruskin's notes, Proust's notes, Bastianelli's notes on Ruskin's and Proust's notes, and further notes by Bastianelli on the text. In addition, there are sections of complementary notes by Bastianelli on each article or chapter. This proliferation of layer after layer of notes creates a heavy scaffolding. So complicated is the system (Arabic, Roman, upper case, lower case, italics, different fonts, etc etc) that detailed explanatory notes are provided in an 'avertissement au lecteur' on pages xxxiii and xxxiv that are essential reading before commencing the book. In addition, these very faint and tiny fonts indicating a number or a letter are difficult to find in the textual forest.

Very extensive, meticulous work has already been done on Proust's translation of *La Bible d'Amiens* with the publication in 2007 of Yves-Michel Ergal's excellent book.[1] Bastianelli has used this as a basis for much of his commentary on that work, and owes an immense, unacknowledged debt to Ergal, and indeed to others for their pioneering research. I much regret this lack of generosity.

Proust translated the two works in question by Ruskin without having available at the time volumes 33 (1908) and 18 (1905) of the Library Edition of Ruskin's *Works* containing *The Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* respectively. In fact, Proust only had sight of volume 18 at the very moment when his own complete translation of *Sésame et les lys*—two of the three lectures by Ruskin—was being printed. He requested the return of his manuscript, and hastily translated and added a few notes by Cook and Wedderburn,



always scrupulously acknowledging them as he pointed out. Proust was immensely impressed by the volumes of the Library Edition that he described as 'la magnifique édition anglaise'.

As well as presenting some of Ruskin's works and thought to the Francophone world, Bastianelli seeks at almost every possible moment to demonstrate that the inspiration for Proust's novel, *À la recherche du temps perdu*, variously translated as *Remembrance of Things Past* or *In Search of Lost Time*, can be traced to Ruskin. One of the hypotheses is that Anne, the Ruskin family servant, is the prototype for Françoise, the faithful housekeeper who first appears in the employment of aunt Léonie in the small town of Combray. Bastianelli substantiates this by referring to a passage in *Praeterita*, translated by Robert de La Sizeranne in his *Pages choisies*, in which the servant's kindness, loyalty and submissiveness are counterbalanced by petulance and bad temper (778-779). He quotes at length similar examples of Françoise's contradictory temperament found in *À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs* and in *La Prisonnière*. Bastianelli considers John Ruskin in old age to be the source of Proust's Monsieur Vinteuil, musician and composer and father of a lesbian daughter on whom he doted (40, n2). Bastianelli argues that the abundance of etymology in Proust's novel owes its source to Ruskin's writings on this subject. A particularly strange hypothesis—one of many—is that an obscure and very brief comment by Ruskin on the vulgarity associated with the bicycle (34.617) is the inspiration for Proust's description in his novel of a female cyclist displaying her sexuality with an exaggerated movement of the hips and speaking loudly in slang (127-128).

In June 2015, I took the RER (high speed underground train, a kind of Cross Rail) from central Paris (Auber) to Nanterre, a journey of about 35 or 40 minutes, on my way to the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense, formerly Paris X Nanterre, for a colloquium on Proust and Sound. We travelled to the modern area of La Défense with its high-rise, multi-coloured tower blocks, and on through suburbs in a north-westerly direction. Nanterre is remembered as the birthplace of the student revolution of 1968, fired by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, otherwise known as Dany le Rouge. A new University had been hastily constructed in 1964 to accommodate the increasing student population. Concrete still dominates, interspersed with saplings and touches of greenery as the University continues to mature. However, there is at Nanterre a fascinating link with Proust and Ruskin that Bastianelli highlights. In chapter II of *The Bible of Amiens*, 'Under the Drachenfels', Ruskin relates the story of Geneviève, the Nanterre-born patron saint of Paris, a 'shepherd maid … the hired servant of a richer farmer of Nanterre' (33.55). This is immediately followed by two questions and a comment: 'Who can tell me anything about Nanterre?—which of our pilgrims of this omni-speculant, omni-nescient age has thought of visiting what shrine may be there? I don't know even on what side of Paris it lies, nor under which heap of rail-way cinders and iron one is to conceive the sheep-walks and blossomed fields of fairy Saint Phyllis' (33.55). Proust's note on this passage references a work by abbé Vidieu, *Sainte-Geneviève, patronne de Paris*, confirming that a 'parc' and a 'clos' bearing her name still exist at Nanterre. Bastianelli takes this further in

an additional note (226-227), the genesis of which can be found in Cook and Wedderburn, and translates into French the letter Ruskin received in response to his questions that was published in 1884 in letter 96 of *Fors Clavigera* (29.518). The correspondent informs Ruskin about the ceremony of the 'Rosière'. Bastianelli connects this story of the annual election of a 'Rosière' of Nanterre, crowned with a garland of roses in May, with Ruskin's May Queen (227). The criteria for this honour may, however, be slightly different! A 'Rosière'—the word is retained in French by Ruskin for it is impossible to translate into English—means a 'village maiden publicly rewarded for her chastity'. Ruskin's May Queen was the student judged to be the 'likeable-est and the loveable-est'. However, the notion of a Queenly virgin girl and roses at Nanterre must have revived in Ruskin the unhappy memories of Rose La Touche.

This *magnum opus* is a most useful reference book and an indispensable guide for scholars of Proust and Ruskin. Bastianelli expresses the hope that his book 'permettra … de faire mieux connaître l'étonnant penseur britannique et de donner envie de relire *La Recherche*' (xxxi). We hope so too!

Cynthia Gamble

NOTE

1.Marcel Proust, *Préface, traduction et notes à 'La Bible d'Amiens' de John Ruskin*, Édition établie par Yves-Michel Ergal, Paris: Bartillat, 2007.

Cynthia Gamble, *Wenlock Abbey 1857-1919. A Shropshire Country House and the Milnes Gaskell Family* (Much Wenlock: Ellingham Press, 2015).

In the 1530s the monasteries and priories of England were dissolved. In a few cases, the monastic churches were adapted as parish churches, or developed into our great cathedrals. Most others eventually fell into ruins and largely became quarries from which a variety of materials were looted to enhance other local buildings. In some cases parts of the abbeys were developed into large private houses. At Furness the great Gate House became the Manor House; at Wenlock it was the Prior's Lodging which was eventually developed into a large private house.

In 1857 the manor was bought by James Milnes Gaskell and he and future generations of his family did much hard work to restore the lodging and the ruins generally. And the house and family were constantly visited by streams of interesting people.

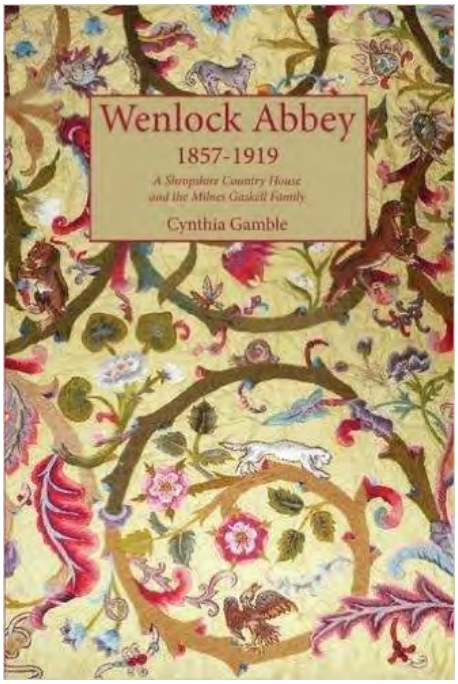
In assembling this very interesting book Cynthia Gamble has had access to a huge family archive, and sifting, sorting and selecting from it must have taken a great deal of time. The result is a fascinating study.

Apart from the fact that it is written by a Companion, why should *we* be interested in it? The abbey was painted by such people as Turner, Sandby and de Wint, and visited by many other artists and authors. The Milnes Gaskell family were great hosts.

And among other writers and authors who visited was Ruskin. He went there with Effie in the summer of 1850—probably not for very long—but for long enough to draw the detail of a cornice for reproduction in *The Stones of Venice* volume I. From here the Ruskins went on to stay with other friends, John Pritchard and his family at Broseley, and, at Badger, Edward Cheney, whom they had first met in Venice.

This is a volume which I can heartily recommend.

James S. Dearden



SCUOLA SAN ROCCO VENICE IN SHEFFIELD

Introduction

Clive Wilmer

Guild presentation to friends visiting from the Scuola di San Rocco, Venice.

Readers will remember a report in last year's issue of *The Companion* about a Guild visit to Venice in March 2015. The piece was by a new Companion, Peter Carpenter, and it described among other things a colloquy we held at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco on March 27th. I was living in Venice at the time, working for five months as a Visiting Professor at Ca' Foscari University, and with Companion Emma Sdegno, who is now a *Consorella* of the Scuola, I set up this event as a sort of conversation between the Guild and the most prominent of the institutions that inspired Ruskin. It was Ruskin's discovery of the fifty-two paintings by Jacopo Tintoretto in the Scuola in 1845 that drew him into his study of Venice and inspired both the second volume of *Modern Painters* (1846) and *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53).

Later on, in 1871, when he founded St George's Fund, he clearly had the Venetian *scuole*—charitable institutions that set a high value on art—at the back of his mind. His writings of the 1870s on Vittore Carpaccio are crucial here. The St Ursula cycle, now in the Accademia, originally belonged to the defunct Scuola di Sant' Orsola, and the *St George and the Dragon*, which he copied for the Guild Museum and which now provides the image in our logo, hangs in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni. The nearest translation one could find for the Italian *scuola* in this sense would be 'guild', so Scuola di San Giorgio is Guild of St George. Nevertheless, much as Ruskin valued Carpaccio, it was the Scuola San Rocco that influenced him most profoundly and it was that *scuola* that uniquely survived the closure of the *scuole* by Napoleon and functions to this day as an active charity.

I spoke on these matters in the Sala dell'Albergo there. The occasion was introduced by Emma, and there were also talks by John Iles on our work in the Wyre and Louise Pullen on the Collection. The Scuola responded with a welcome from the Guardian Grando (the Master, in effect), Franco Posocco, distinguished architect, town planner and one-time pupil of the great Carlo Scarpa, and a brilliant impromptu address from *Consorella* Maria Laura Picchio Forlati, Emeritus Professor of International Law at the University of Padua. She spoke on the important theme of 'intangible heritage', which is to say those aspects of cultural heritage which cannot be measured by material standards, though often they reside in material things. It was a talk wholly in harmony with Ruskin's ideas.

As a conclusion to this very happy occasion I invited the Guardian Grando and any of his colleagues who might want to join him to come and visit the Ruskin Collection in Sheffield. To my delight they decided to do so, and twenty-three of them led by the Guardian arrived in Sheffield on February 19th this year. Directors Janet Barnes, John Iles and Peter Miller joined me there to meet them, together with Ruth Nutter of the *Ruskin in Sheffield* project and our acting Curator Hannah Brignell. We were fortunate in being able to show them not only the current display in the Gallery but also the exhibition, *In the Making*. Afterwards we held a further colloquy, at which we were joined by seven of our Sheffield Companions. I gave a welcome and introduction to the day. This was followed by excellent talks on the Collection by Janet, on the exhibition by Hannah and on the involvement of Venice in recent years with Ruskin and the Guild by Emma. Hannah had also ably arranged a display of work from the Collection, which notably included the full set of copies after Tintoretto commissioned by Ruskin from Angelo Alessandri. Our talks were followed by speeches from the Guardian Grando and his Vicario (Deputy), Demetrio Sonaglioni, both of whom spoke with great warmth and enthusiasm. I know I was not the only person moved by their offer of future friendship and co-operation and their sense of the deeply humanistic value of such inter-European bonds, based as they are not only on art but on ethical notions of social good. In the evening we moved on to the Fusion (Organic) Café, part of the Ruskin Mill Trust's base in Sheffield, for a delightful dinner and warm and productive conversation. We are incidentally immensely grateful to Companion Carole Baugh for her part in this and the co-operation of Butcher Works and Freeman College.

On February 20th the Scuola delegates set out for a visit to York Minster. They were joined by Janet, Peter and myself and we all attended an ecumenical service in the crypt, conducted in English and Italian by the Rev Canon Christopher Collingwood of the Minster and Father Vittorio Buset, a *Confratello* of the Scuola. We gathered for a farewell lunch in the Assembly Rooms in York and our Venetian friends then left for Lincoln. The Cathedral, some of them have told me, was a revelation. It was, I was delighted to inform them, the English Cathedral most admired by Ruskin.

The Guardian Grando has very kindly shared with us the text of his Sheffield address. He has asked me to make some improvements to his English. I have done as he asked but my changes are very minimal. The Guardian's English may be less than perfect, but it is profoundly expressive and, anyway, we know what Ruskin thought about perfection!

A speech by Franco Posocco, Guardian Grando of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco

(former Professor of Architecture at the University of Padua)

Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, February 19th, 2016

Dear Master, dear Companions of the Guild of St. George, ladies and gentlemen: first of all, I want to thank you very warmly for your welcome, for your kind reception in Sheffield.

I wish to introduce you to my colleagues in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

It is not easy for me to express our feelings at being in this city, historically so significant for the culture, thought and development of the first industrial age in Europe.

I think it is necessary to explain why we have decided to come and why we care about this place.

It is good to say publically why we have come here to meet you.

In fact we arrived here, in the North of England, not to buy the famous knives of Sheffield, which are known all over the world, or to see the romantic misty moors of the English landscape, but above all, to honour John Ruskin for his intellectual enterprise and to compliment the Guild, which he founded in 1871 as St George's Company, for its activity.

You are continuing the work of the founder. Compliments!

The friendship between Italy and Britain has a long history.

Except for the bad time of Fascism, the twenty years of Mussolini, the ideal affinity of the two countries was continuous in the context of European culture.

The examples in this regard are numerous.

Looking to modern times alone—I mean after the Napoleonic adventure, when the Republic of Venice died—we can see that the help given by the United Kingdom to the project of the Italian unification was decisive.

At the Congress of Vienna in 1814, the Austrian Chancellor Prince Metternich said: '*Italy is only a geographical expression.*' At that moment the continental powers decided to keep Italy divided into many small states.

Great Britain alone stood against the reactionary restoration, taking in the exiles (Ugo Foscolo and Lorenzo Da Ponte from Venice, Giuseppe Mazzini and Carlo Cattaneo, the fathers of the new Italy and many others) and granting them political freedom.

Disraeli and Cavour signed the treaty of alliance between Britain, France and the small Kingdom of Sardinia in 1855, to declare war upon the Ottoman Empire.

As you know, the family of Benjamin

Disraeli came to London from Ferrara.

The fleet of Her Majesty Queen Victoria moved from the harbour of Malta, at that time British, to protect the boats of Giuseppe Garibaldi and the Thousand from Quarto near Genoa to Marsala in Sicily.

Many of the operas of Giuseppe Verdi have subjects taken from the plays of William Shakespeare (*Otello*, *Falstaff*, etc.).

In the same period Lord Byron went to Venice, not only to swim in the Grand Canal, as he had in the river Thames, but also to advance the cause of Greek and Italian independence.

There was also the important age of the *Grand Tour*, when in Europe the culture was able to lead policy and drag it forward.

Consider the interest in Classicism in architecture, when the Palladian style became the official style of the British Empire, in town planning with the adoption of Vitruvian models, in painting with the style of the Pre-Raphaelites, in sculpture (see the influence of the Venetian Antonio Canova), in music, and so on.

Italy was still disunited, but in terms of universal culture there was unity of expression, fashion and taste. Though politically weak and subjected, it played a leading role in the cultural field; it had a cultural system that was internationally relevant.

If you look at the relation between Henry Moore and Giacomo Manzù, perhaps the two most important sculptors of the last century, you will understand that this elective affinity is still alive.

During the twenty years of Fascism, many intellectual people, in prison or in exile, were writing about a United Europe. (Altiero Spinelli, Alcide De Gasperi, etc.)

We believe in this ideal. The European states have different histories, but the same culture: that is, the same mission and the same destiny in the global world.

This is the ethical and spiritual dimension of John Ruskin: a general pressure toward universal values, a comprehensive humanism.

The message of Ruskin and the challenge of his ideals are, perhaps, more than yesterday, alive and active today, when miserable relativisms are advancing everywhere.

In April, at Ca' Foscari University, your Master Clive Wilmer said —and I repeat his words (a piece of good English at last!) –

> The Scuola di San Rocco is an urban institution and the Guild is spread over both town and country, so there is no similarity there, but the two institutions share this common concern for the interlocked importance of beauty and ethical good. If we turn our backs on Tintoretto, we also turn our backs on the feeding and healing that are his subject. It is my hope that the Guild can extend the hand of friendship to Venice and do so, first of all, by way of this great confraternity. Its fundamental purpose was to make Britain a better place to live in. That was perhaps ambitious enough, but in the hopeful early years Ruskin declared that, more ambitious still, it was designed 'to extend its operations over the continent of Europe'.

We completely agree with you and think that Venice, too, should be 'a better place to live in'.

With the help of our universities, institutions, scuole/guilds and academies, we can promote study, research, exhibitions, meetings, conferences and other events and initiatives.

We can also organise scholarships and publications, to study and represent this important time of our common European culture.

In Britain, in Venice, in other places.

I suppose that our institutions are well disposed, happy to support such projects.

It is enough, today, to have an agreement. We can make programmes and initiatives tomorrow—in Britain, and here in Sheffield, without any hurry

I think, for instance, that we are ready and the time is ripe for an exhibition of John Ruskin in Venice: to thank this great genius, this generous and prophetic friend of our city, who was one of the legendary founders of the 'Myth of Venice' over the world.

Last Wednesday, February 10th, the Scuola Grande and the Fondazione Musei Civici of Venice, which brings together the city's public museums, had a working meeting.

The Director of the Fondazione said that the decision to organise this exhibition of John Ruskin in Venice in 2018 was imminent.

The following year, 2019, will be dedicated to an exhibition of Jacopo Tintoretto.

The reason is that the centenaries of both artists fall in the same year and the Scuola Grande has been asked to join the promotional committee.

We are here in Sheffield to ask for the Guild's collaboration as we begin to explore the problems and issues related to it. John Ruskin deserves an exhibition not only of paintings and drawings, but of personal purposes, intentions, tastes, desires.

Take, for example, the importance of his book, *The Stones of Venice*.

It is our intention to get to work on this project over the next few months.

We believe in the English presence from the beginning of the adventure.

Thank you very much, dear friends of the Guild of St George, for your warm reception.

Thank you for having lit a candle, arriving first with Clive Wilmer in Venice last year and proposing the exciting theme of the relation between Ruskin/Britain and our city/country.

It is one brick for building a good culture, a brick to build a good Europe.

Grazie.

The two celebrants: Canon Christopher Collingwood of York Minster (left) and Father Vittorio Buset of the Church of San Rocco, Venice. Between are the the Master of the Guild, Clive Wilmer, and Architetto Franco Posocco, Guardian Grando of the Scuola Grande Arciconfraternità di San Rocco, in the crypt of York Minster where an ecumenical service was celebrated by both clergymen.

Ken Jacobson and Jenny Jacobson, *Carrying off the Palaces: John Ruskin's Lost Daguerreotypes* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 2015).

The earliest known surviving photographic image made in a camera was created by the French inventor Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, who in 1826 produced a view of his courtyard, fixed on pewter-plate, after an exposure to sunlight of eight hours. He went into partnership with Louis Daguerre who, after Niépce's death, developed and patented the metal-based 'Daguerreotype' process, involving a photographic procedure that required only a few minutes' exposure in the camera to produce clear and detailed results on a polished plate of silver-coated copper. Announced at a meeting of the French Academy of Sciences in 1839, the process was commercially introduced in the same year; thus 1839 is the date generally accepted as the year of the birth of practical photography.

From the manuscript list of daguerreotypes now held at the Ruskin Library, Lancaster (published in 1986 by Paolo Costantini and Italo Zannier in *I dagherrotipi della collezione Ruskin*), it was evident that throughout his working life John Ruskin had collected, made or commissioned more than 300 daguerreotype photographs. Of this collection, it was known that some 131 photographs had survived, the majority of them now at Lancaster, but it had long been assumed that the missing daguerreotypes of Italy, France and Switzerland were lost for good.

Then, in March 2006, Ken and Jenny Jacobson, collectors and historians of nineteenth-century photography, followed a hunch and acquired at auction in Penrith, Cumbria, a worn mahogany box of nineteenth-century photographic plates, described in the catalogue as 'photographs on metal'. The box contained a thrilling discovery: 188 'missing' daguerreotypes from Ruskin's collection, long presumed lost. These are of particular interest and value because many of the Venetian subjects among them had been made as studies for *The Stones of Venice* (1851–53). The collection includes many views of architectural details of St Mark's and the Ducal Palace as well as photographs of lesser-known buildings and their details. The plates, collected and commissioned by Ruskin or taken under his supervision, represent the largest single collection of daguerreotypes of Venice in the world and probably the earliest surviving photographs of the Alps. Also included are studies taken in Florence, Lucca, Verona, Bellinzona and Turin.

The story of the Jacobsons' remarkable find is described in the preface to their magnificent book, *Carrying Off the Palaces: John Ruskin's Lost Daguerreotypes*, published by the antiquarian book dealers, Bernard Quaritch. Their discovery at Penrith set them off on a long journey of intensive research, as well as a thorough programme of restoration and conservation of the precious plates. The book is a valuable document, both for its contribution to the history of nineteenth-century photography and for the new light it sheds on Ruskin's working practices.

Although Ruskin's attitude towards photography was ambivalent throughout his life, he began as a passionate enthusiast for the new invention. On his 1845 visit to Venice, he had become aware of the existence of the daguerreotype photograph, and was quick to recognise its potential power in providing an accurate historical record of the state of endangered buildings. '[Daguerreotypes] are glorious things,' he wrote to his father, '… it is very nearly the same thing as carrying off the palace itself—every chip of stone & stain is there—and of course there is no mistake about *proportions*.' And although he later changed his views, writing that photographs 'are not true, even though they seem so', he recognised their value as records, and continued to commission and to make use of photographs until the end of his working life, both as aids for engravings and book illustration, and for his lectures. During the 1845 Venetian visit, he bought several plates from a photographer he described as 'a poor Frenchman, said to be in distress'. The impoverished Frenchman, as the Jacobsons were to discover in the course of their meticulous research, was almost certainly an early photographer named Le Cavalier Iller, who had been using the daguerreotype process in Nice and Florence before attempting to find work in Venice. Ruskin purchased photographs from him, and commissioned him to take special views under his direction. (Le Cavallier Iller's photographs of Venice were not the first: sixteen daguerreotypes of Venice taken by the English philologist Alexander John Ellis in 1841 are conserved at the National Media Museum in Bradford, and are the earliest known daguerreotypes of Venetian scenes.)

The front cover of the book reproduces a daguerreotype taken in 1845 by the 'Frenchman' of the façade of the Ca' d'Oro on the Grand Canal. The insensitive restorations being carried out on that 'noble pile of very quaint Gothic' horrified Ruskin, and his 1845 watercolour drawing of the building deliberately blanks out the details of the destructive procedures being carried out, clearly visible on the photograph.

The thirteenth-century Fondaco dei Turchi on the Grand Canal was to become another casualty. A comparison of the daguerreotype (1845–6) with Carlo Naya's photograph (c.1870) of the reconstructed building demonstrates the extent of the liberties being taken at the time by architects involved in restoration and rebuilding in Venice. The Fondaco dei Turchi was rebuilt from 1860–69 by Federico Berchet in a style that was considered to be Veneto-Byzantine: instead of trying to restore and conserve what was actually there, Berchet reconstructed the building in the style in which he imagined it might once have existed, adding towers at each end. The overall effect of the altered façade is what we nowadays tend to think of as 'Disneyfication'.

With the help of the daguerreotype photograph, Ruskin was able to make drawings and watercolours of details that were far out of reach and almost out of sight. His drawing of the Fondaco dei Turchi (reproduced in chromolithograph as the frontispiece to volume II of *Stones*, Library Edition) gives a detailed section of the upper right-hand part of the façade: a

Carlo Naya, photograph c. 1870, Fondaco dei Turchi.

John Ruskin and the 'Frenchman', daguerreotype, c. 1845–46, The Fondaco dei Turchi.

drawing that would have been almost impossible to achieve without reference to the photograph, combined with Ruskin's own close observation. 'I believe a new era is opening to us in the art of illustration,' he wrote, '… [and] an infinite service will soon be done to a large body of our engravers … making them draughtsmen in black and white on paper instead of steel.'

By 1849 Ruskin had acquired his own quarter-plate daguerreotype camera equipment. His secretary-valet John Hobbs (generally known as 'George') was pressed into service as photographer, and quickly learned how to expose and develop the daguerreotype plates. Sometimes Ruskin would operate the equipment himself, as we know from a letter that his wife Effie wrote to her mother: '… whether the Square is crowded or empty he is either seen with a black cloth over his head taking Daguerreotypes or climbing about the capitals covered with dust.' Ruskin had begun to make real use of photographs, both as studies for drawings and for recording architectural details. Artists were understandably becoming anxious about this invention, which they saw as a potential threat to their livelihoods. Ruskin saw it as the means to record buildings accurately before they were destroyed, writing: ' … it is the most marvellous invention of the century, given us, I think, just in time to save some evidence from the public of wreckers.' But he did add: 'As regards art, I wish it had never been discovered: it will make the eye too fastidious to accept mere handling.'

The Jacobsons' collection of daguerreotypes, now known as the Penrith Collection, covers the period 1845–52, when outdoor photography was still in its infancy—photographs were usually taken in the photographer's studio, with subjects limited principally to portraiture—and it marks an important early stage of the recording of northern Italian architecture and sculpture in photographs. Not long afterwards, in 1852, the photographic studio of Fratelli Alinari opened in Florence and the daguerreotype's brief life began gradually to be superseded by new photographic processes. Photographers such as Carlo Naya (whose Venice studio opened in 1857), Carlo Ponti, Domenico Bresolin, and the German Jakob August Lorent were becoming active in Venice, and from the mid-1850s were making extensive photographic documentation of individual Venetian buildings. Even then, the tendency was to compose the image of an entire building or scene. Some of Ruskin's carefully planned compositions of 1849–52, taken from unusual angles and showing close-up details of sculpture, were groundbreaking, as was his prescience in recording decorative details, so many of which, by the end of the nineteenth century, had been removed, destroyed or sold to antiquarian dealers. Such was the case with the marble incrustation above the windows of Palazzo Zorzi Bon (entirely lost now, but preserved in Ruskin's delicately detailed watercolour of 1852, made from his daguerreotype), as well as the Veneto-Byzantine sculptures on the façade of Palazzo Grandiben at San Martino (later to be sold and to reappear, set into the wall of the courtyard of Ca' d'Oro). Ruskin's daguerreotypes are the only existing records of those artefacts, shown *in situ* on the buildings for which they had been created. Valuable carved wellheads also suffered, with many of them being sold to dealers and disappearing abroad.

John Ruskin and John Hobbs, daguerreotype, c.1849, Palazzo Zorzi Bon, detail.

It is particularly exciting to see the daguerreotypes of the fourteenth-century octagonal capitals from the ground-level arcade of the Ducal Palace, photographed between 1849 and 1852 when the capitals were still in place in their original positions. In the mid-nineteenth century the Ducal Palace was in a parlous state of repair. Only a quarter of a century later, between 1876 and 1889, forty-two capitals from the upper-loggia and ground-level arcades were gradually removed to the interior of the building for their protection, and replaced by the identical copies that we see today. Ruskin's photographic documentation of the original capitals, carried out with John Hobbs, demonstrates his almost

John Ruskin and John Hobbs, daguerreotype, 1849–50. Eighteenth capital, seventh side: The Planets [Ducal Palace].

the present series; and I much regret that artists in general do not think it worth their while to perpetuate some of the beautiful effects which the daguerreotype alone can seize.' There are also several studies of the large figure sculpture of the Drunkenness of Noah on the south-east 'Vine' angle, described in detail in the Ducal Palace chapter of *The Stones of Venice*. Again, these are unique photographic records, showing the extent to which the capitals and figure sculptures had been blackened by atmospheric and industrial pollution. (Their condition would worsen over the ensuing 150 years, until a lengthy programme of restoration and cleaning of the palace took place between 2005 and 2010.) The fine details of the individual carvings are now a good deal more visible than they would have been at the time Ruskin was researching them.

After their discovery at Penrith, one of the first priorities for the Jacobsons was to initiate a long and complex programme of conservation of the daguerreotypes, which is fully described in one of the appendices to the book. They give a history of the daguerreotype, and describe the technical problems that the process entailed. Also included is a detailed and informative catalogue raisonné of all the 325 daguerreotypes known to have been in Ruskin's collection.

Carrying Off the Palaces is meticulously researched, lavishly illustrated and beautifully produced. Ken and Jenny Jacobson have created a work of lasting documentary and historical value, making a major contribution towards our understanding of Ruskin's engagement with photography, and to Ruskin studies generally.

Sarah Quill

Sarah Quill's book Ruskin's Venice: The Stones Revisited *was published by Lund Humphries in a new and extended edition in 2015, and reviewed in* The Companion *last year.*

prophetic ability to select the most important works and to anticipate events. Among the subjects he chose to illustrate are details from the great corner capital of the Creation of Man and the Zodiac on the south-west 'Fig-tree' angle; the Virtues on the south side, and Animals with their Prey on the west side. This last he considered so fine in workmanship that he selected it for reproduction in mezzotint as the first plate in his folio publication *Examples of the Architecture of Venice* (1851), writing in the preface: '… I have used the help of the daguerreotype without scruple in completing many of the mezzotinted subjects for

John Ruskin and Le Cavalier Iller, half-plate daguerreotype, c.1851. The Ducal Palace, the Zecca and the Campanile.

A Sermon given at St George's (Anglican) Church in Venice
April 26th 2015

Clive Wilmer

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. —John 10:10

Those words of Jesus' always put me in mind of the man I am here to talk about today: John Ruskin, whose name is rightly recorded in one of the clerestory windows here in St George's. Ruskin was always the enemy of thieves—especially of the kind who cloak themselves in authority, power and respectability, while robbing their fellows through exploitation. And he was at the same time the champion of *life*, as against those who, as he would have put it, bring nothing but death, literal or metaphorical. His watchword was—and I quote—'There is no wealth but life'.

I read Ruskin, think about him and learn from him quite a lot of the time, but living among 'the stones of Venice' it is simply impossible ever to avoid him. I don't need to remind you—though I do need to say it—that all of us here this morning are living, or temporarily lodging, in the most beautiful city in Europe—perhaps (who knows?) in the world. It is something for which we must often want to give thanks, and it may remind us of the many less obvious things that we take for granted. But what *is* beauty? In the language of many modern politicians and business people it is an unnecessary luxury. If we want it, we must first make our way in what they like to call 'the real world': the world of bank balances and figures on computer screens. That was not what beauty was for Ruskin. Beauty for him is our common human birth-right; it is a primary human need, and the primary source of it is *nature*.

God, as Ruskin teaches, made Nature for *us*. Nature sustains our lives, but God also made it (Ruskin argues) to please our senses and give our hearts contentment. He was fond of quoting Psalm 95, the Venite of the service of Morning Prayer:

> [T]he Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are all the corners of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands prepared the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

Though Ruskin was not a fundamentalist, he liked the literalness of this. Born to committed Evangelical parents, he rebelled in middle age against his upbringing. But it left him with a conviction that scripture should be taken to mean what it says. He wanted it to be understood that God did indeed *make* the world—the *material* world we live in, not just some spiritual essence of it—and he made it for us to be happy in. He wanted us to love it.

For Ruskin, the God of the Venite, *whose hands prepared the dry land*, is like a human artist, working with material substances to make physical things: flowers, animals, human bodies, sky, sea and earth. '[A]ll great art is the expression of man's delight in God's work…' he wrote, and 'All Great art is praise.' Praise of the work, the things, of course, is ultimately praise for the God who made them.

St George's (Anglican) Church, Venice.

So what Ruskin admires about Venice is the way the city in its very existence, constantly pays tribute and homage to nature. There is no other city on earth in which a balanced and respectful relationship between human artefact and natural force is so essential or in which it has been so gracefully and delicately managed. As I walk around Venice I notice the occasional green banner hanging from a window with the words on it: *Venezia è laguna*—Venice *is* the lagoon. It is a view Ruskin would have endorsed, and had he been able to see how endangered the city is today—from floods caused by sinking piles and rising tides, from industrial pollution, from excess tourism and consequent depopulation—Ruskin would justly have said, 'I told you so,' for these are all phenomena he warned against, and all derive from an inflated trust in human inventiveness and the profit motive, and a consequent loss of that humility that is expressed by the Psalmist. Such humility (Ruskin argued) governed the lives of the old Venetians, whose houses and churches have endured everything that has been thrown at them—earthquake, flood and fire—everything but these modern troubles which we have brought upon ourselves.

Ruskin wrote *The Stones of Venice* partly in order to warn. The situation we find ourselves in today was one he foresaw in several of his books. In *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884) he predicts climate change. In *Unto this Last* (1862) he shows how 'prosperity'—as we have recently learned—is too often the triumph of illusory riches over real wealth. In 1871, he declared, 'I will put up with it not a moment longer' and announced that he was vesting a tithe of his income in a new fund designed to establish an alternative to greed, oppression and pollution:

> I … vest my gifts in trustees, desiring them to apply the processes of the St George's Fund to the purchase of land in England and Scotland, which shall be cultivated to the utmost attainable fruitfulness and beauty by the labour of man and beast thereon, such men and beasts receiving at the same time the best education attainable by the trustees for labouring creatures.

Ruskin wanted to return to traditional agricultural communities, but he also wanted to equip them with some of the assets of modernity—their own schools, libraries and art galleries, for instance. Before the end of the decade the Fund had become first a Company and then the *Guild* of St George. It is the body which I am privileged to lead today. Soon after founding it, Ruskin's life began to fall to pieces and he suffered a series of mental breakdowns, which eventually disabled him completely. So the Guild did not really meet with the success he had hoped for. But what he created in his imagination is something we can build on today, and that is what we try and aim to do. We care for art, craftsmanship, a healthy rural economy, good housing with fair rents, and social justice; we believe in reverence for the created earth and the creatures (including the human creatures) that live on it.

Three days ago it was St George's Day: that national day which nobody celebrates. The Guild, to be honest, does not make much of its patron either, despite the fact that April 23rd is also the

birthday—theoretically at any rate—of England's greatest poet, William Shakespeare and her greatest painter, Ruskin's hero, J.M.W. Turner: a pair of fine if engineered coincidences. These days St George and his flag seem to belong to fans of the England football team, which I suppose is fair enough, and to various parties and pressure groups of the extreme right, which is anything but fair. Our patron saint should surely unite rather than divide. That at any rate was why Ruskin chose him: a champion of the weak, not the powerful and not the bigoted either; the implacable foe of dragons—perversions, distortions and corruptions of nature. In the symbol of the monster breathing out fire and smoke Ruskin saw the modern demon of industry poisoning the countryside, corrupting the air and water, shrivelling the lives of the working people on whom the nation and its economy depended.

But where did he find this saint and his antagonist? In English tradition, of course, but Ruskin was an internationalist too, and he also found him in what he once called 'the Paradise of cities'—Venice herself. St George, like the elaborations of Venetian architecture, comes from the east, from Cappadocia and Byzantium. He was brought to Venice by the Schiavoni, the Slavic people from the Dalmatian coast, just as he had been brought to England by the Crusaders returning from Palestine. Though his image is that of a man armed for combat, St George is really a bringer of concord and harmony; he kills the dragon to bring in the empire of peace. His image is to be seen all over Venice, but Ruskin was most inspired by the paintings in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni: paintings by Vittore Carpaccio, in Ruskin's day largely forgotten, but enthusiastically revived in his later work. Today, Carpaccio's saint at war with the dragon provides the Guild with its logo and its inspiration, and indeed, the confraternities of Venice—the Scuola di San Rocco, for instance, as much as that of San Giorgio—were inspirations for Ruskin's Utopian body: societies of men and women, *confratelli e consorelle*, dedicated both to beauty and to carrying out that 'new commandment' of Jesus: 'That as I have loved you … ye also love one another.'

SECRETARIES OF THE GUILD OF ST GEORGE

James S. Dearden

When, in 2014, Cedric Quayle suggested that he and I should compile a list of Secretaries to the Guild, we saw no reason why it shouldn't be ready to offer to the Editor of *The Companion* for the 2015 edition. How wrong we were. The years that we could remember—Cedric from 1969 and myself from 1979—were relatively straightforward. All we had to do was to check what we actually remembered. But we had no idea how complex the middle years of the Guild's history would be, and even worse, how almost impenetrable the early years would be.

Mark Frost has drawn attention to the fact that man-management was not one of Ruskin's greatest abilities.[1] Ruskin had made it clear that those who gave real estate to the Guild continued to be responsible for its management. Ruskin's own management of the Guild's administration must have caused many difficulties for those who helped him!

The genesis of the Guild was announced in January 1871 in Ruskin's first Letter to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain, *Fors Clavigera*.[2] Having devoted the first few pages of the Letter to deploring the state of the nation, Ruskin wrote: 'For my own part, I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer'. He said that he would devote part of his income to his attempt to make England a better and happier place, and he hoped that others would join him in his crusade. 'St George's Fund' was established to hold gifts of money or land, and in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 9 (September 1871),[3] Ruskin announced that his friends, Sir Thomas Acland and the Rt.Hon. William Cowper-Temple, had agreed to become Trustees. In announcing their appointment, Ruskin explained that their sole function was to take charge of money and land given to St George's Fund, but he also made it clear that they were to have no control over how funds were to be used or spent.

Jim Dearden in the Ruskin Library at Lancaster University, conducting research for this article, November 2015.

For the next few years, protracted legal negotiations to examine the possibilities of establishing a Company took place, and in July 1875 a draft Constitution was finally arrived at.

A few of Ruskin's friends, and some others, began to subscribe to the Fund, and at the end of the December 1873 *Fors* letter, Ruskin published the first accounts which gave details of subscriptions to the end of the year, a total of £236 13s 0d.[4]

The administration of the Fund added enormously to the strain of Ruskin's already busy life. In November 1875 William Walker, manager of the Chancery Lane Branch of the Union Bank of London, agreed to accept the post of Honorary Accountant to the Fund. His accounts to the end of 1875 were included in the March 1876 Letter of *Fors*.[5] Egbert Rydings, who had established a woollen mill at Laxey on the Isle of Man, began to correspond with Ruskin in 1875 about his books, and in March of the following year, he wrote to Ruskin pointing out some errors in the published accounts. A few days later he wrote again, applying to become a Companion of the Guild,[6] and in the following year, he wrote to Ruskin offering his services to help with the accounts.

So now the Guild had two accountants, Walker and Rydings. It is clear that some cheques for the Guild were being sent to Laxey, others to Chancery Lane, and others to Ruskin himself. In the case of the latter, some were re-directed to the Guild accounts and others Ruskin paid directly into his own account to help defray his own expenses on behalf of the Guild!

Meanwhile, in 1875, Ruskin had visited Sheffield and had determined to establish the Guild museum there. In Sheffield again in the following year, Ruskin met a group of

men who were interested in his ideas for the Guild and, as a result of the meeting, the Guild bought a small farm at Totley where the men set up a commune. The Trustees of the Guild, Acland and Cowper-Temple, disapproved of the spending of the Guild's money on this venture, and they resigned. George Baker of Birmingham, who had given the Guild seven acres of land at Bewdley in 1871, eventually became a new Trustee, as did Quartus Talbot, whose mother, Fanny, had given some properties at Barmouth, Wales, to the Guild.

Meanwhile, help was at hand in the person of Robert Somervell whose family had established the successful firm of K Shoes in Kendal. In his autobiography,[7] Somervell records that he first fell under Ruskin's spell in about 1872 (when he was about twenty years old) as he read Ruskin's *Political Economy of Art*. Somervell 'set about buying more of Ruskin's works … He opened my eyes to see, both in the world of Nature and in the world of Art … as I had never seen before'.[8]

It is not clear when the two men first met. Somervell became involved in the question of railways in the Lake District and in 1875 or '76 he issued a pamphlet, *A Protest against the Extension of Railways in the Lake District*, to which Ruskin contributed the Preface. The Ruskin-Somervell Correspondence in the Ruskin Library at Lancaster University begins with a letter from Ruskin dated May 31st 1876 in which Ruskin says, 'Well, but you can help me infinitely, if you have any time to spare. I will put you in communication with the other Companions, and with their help you can answer all general questions about what we are … I feel the need of this help more and more every day'. And on 7 June, Ruskin wrote, 'I am grateful for your letter saying you can help me … I hope you and a few other Companions will be able to manage the Company's affairs with only a question or two to me now and then.'[9]

At this time Ruskin was frustrated by the considerable pressure under which he found himself. The Guild was not yet properly constituted and this work was in the hands of solicitors. Because of this, the Guild as such could not yet become the owner of the land given by Mrs Talbot; and there was also the dispute with the Trustees over the Totley land purchase. One of the commune's projects was to make boots and shoes, and Ruskin had suggested to Henry Swan, Curator of the Guild's museum at Walkley, that Somervell might be able to give some advice.[10]

Ruskin's frustration is evident in a letter written on 25 August 1876 to Somervell from Geneva: 'You and the other Companions must now manage all such business for me … and I will not be fretted with the law business, so if the Companions can't manage it themselves, they must let it alone for the present.'

Meanwhile, Somervell had become involved in the vexed question of Thirlmere becoming enlarged as a reservoir and his pamphlet, *Water for Manchester from Thirlmere*, was distributed with *Fors* Clavigera in 1877.

Finally, by October 1878, the lawyers had completed the Guild's Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. Somervell was a signatory to both documents.

Robert Somervell (detail from a family photograph) 1886.

In the final letter of the correspondence at Lancaster, on March 14th 1879, Ruskin wrote to Somervell:

> Please, I want you to be treasurer to St G.—My own secretary can be secretary—(or almost any trained clerk) but for Treasurer, I must have someone established in business and known to be upright in it and safe—and I should like you please—if you don't mind. And if possible will you go to this meeting at Birmingham on the 28th[?] I can't and am afraid of there not being power enough to get the work done. Ever your grateful J.Ruskin.

It seems possible that there was confusion over the dates! The first Annual General Meeting of the Guild was held at the Queen's Hotel in Birmingham on 21st February 1879. Somervell's name is not included among the nineteen Companions who attended.

At this meeting, the businesslike George Baker took the chair and wrote the minutes. Among the items of formal business transacted was the election of Ruskin as

Queens Hotel, Birmingham, venue for the first Guild AGM.

'Life Long Master of the Guild'; Egbert Rydings and William Walker were appointed 'Auditors of the Guild' and Robert Somervell 'was requested to act as the Hon. Secretary to the Guild pro tem.' However, there was an Extraordinary General Meeting less than a month later when it was resolved that Somervell be appointed Treasurer and the Master was empowered to appoint a Secretary at a fee of not more than £100 per year. From this, one must assume that Somervell had turned down the original request to act as Secretary.

Robert Somervell, who had left school at the age of fifteen in 1867 to work in the family business, went up to Cambridge in 1878. However, he returned to the company for a couple of years before going back to Cambridge to take his degree. Following his final term at Cambridge, Somervell married and settled in Liverpool where he had been appointed to teach in a school. He stayed there until 1887 when he left to take up an appointment as a Tutor at Harrow (to Winston Churchill, among many others). He later became a Housemaster at Harrow, and eventually Bursar.

I can only assume that, on embarking upon his teaching career, Somervell's interest in the Guild lapsed, probably due to other pressures.

I can find no further references to him either as Secretary or Treasurer to the Guild. When he lived in Liverpool there was an active Ruskin Society in the city, but I have found no evidence to suggest that he was a member, and there is no evidence that he took any part in the activities of the Mulberry Cottage group of Ruskin enthusiasts associated with the Society.

Somervell's name is included in the list of Companions printed in the December 1883 letter of *Fors*.[11] He is also on the list of Companions in the 1884 Trustees' Report.[12] But, perhaps significantly, his name is not among those Companions of the Guild listed in the 1899 Birthday Address to Ruskin.

I think perhaps George Baker, who was running the Guild during Ruskin's incapacity, decided to manage by employing his own secretary on Guild work.

The next slightly ambiguous reference to a secretary that I have found is in the 1899 Birthday Address to Ruskin. Under the Guild listing, William White appears as 'Honorary Secretary to the Joint Committees and Curator of the Ruskin Museum'.

White had become the Curator of the Ruskin Museum at Meersbrook Park in 1890. Perhaps the 'Joint Committees' were the Guild and the Museum's committee. He was not liked at Brantwood and the arrangements for the delivery of the 1899 Birthday Address had originally received a frosty reception at Brantwood because it was thought that the Address was to be delivered by White.[13] Had he been secretary to the Guild, this would have been a logical assumption.

William White was apparently at cross-purposes with the city's Museum Committee and in 1899 he resigned as Curator. Had he also been the Guild's secretary, he would have given up this post at the same time. After all of the changes, stability came to the secretaryship when, on 28th October 1901, William Wardle was elected to the post. He was one of the group of dedicated Ruskinians who lived in Liverpool and whose activities centred on Mulberry Cottage. A founder-member of the Ruskin Society of Liverpool, Wardle, in company with J. Howard Whitehouse, founder-member and secretary of the Ruskin Society of Birmingham, took to Brantwood the National Address of Congratulation on Ruskin's 80th birthday in 1899. They both met Ruskin on that occasion. It is unclear when Wardle became a Companion, but he appears to have been admitted during Ruskin's time as Master. Whitehouse was admitted by Ruskin's successor, George Baker.

William Wardle continued as Secretary until September 1925. In June 1908, he was joined as Secretary by another of the band of Liverpool Ruskinians, Thomas Harley. The Harleys had moved from Liverpool and settled in Bewdley in 1889. In 1924 Wardle was joined by John Cuthbert Quayle. Letters held by his nephew, Cedric, show that Cuthbert had originally turned down the Master's invitation to become Secretary, but after a second, more firmly worded, letter, he agreed. In the following year William Wardle died, having served the Guild as Secretary for twenty-four years. Cuthbert Quayle seems to have retired in 1925. Both were succeeded by yet another Liverpool Ruskinian, Harrison Ruskin Fowler. Fowler served for three years until the whole structure of the Guild's administration changed. Perhaps he had only looked on his appointment as short-term.

The Master, who was also elected in 1925, was Hugh Fairfax-Cholmeley. When Fowler resigned as Secretary, it was the Master's responsibility to find a replacement. In this same year there had been an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Guild to confirm some changes to the Articles and Memorandum of Association and the minutes reveal that a Miss A. Churton was acting as Secretary. There were further discussions regarding the secretaryship at the Annual General Meeting in 1926. Discussions continued a year later when Miss Churton was still recorded as Secretary. At the 1928 AGM there was a feeling that the Secretary ought to be a Companion, but as the Master pointed out, volunteers had been sought 'but hitherto no help had been forthcoming for such services'.

It was at the 1928 AGM that the Master announced that the future secretariat of the Guild would be based in London, at Le Play House. At this meeting, Miss Spear (Secretary at the Le Play House organization) acted as Secretary.

During a discussion at the 1927 AGM, on the future policy of the Guild, J. E. Phythian, a leading member of the Ruskin Society of Manchester who had been active in the arrangements for the great 1904 Ruskin Exhibition in that city, said that 'the Guild should co-operate with Associations having similar objects to the Guild' and he had suggested co-operating with the Le Play House organisation. At this time Le Play House was directed by Alexander Farquharson.

He had come into contact with people like Patrick Geddes and Victor Branford, who were carrying on the work of the once-flourishing Sociological Society. Branford and Geddes were much interested in the work of the French sociologist, Fréderic Le Play, and from the Branford-Farquharson association grew the Institute of Sociology with its headquarters at Le Play House. Victor Branford (d.1923) in fact became a Companion of the Guild during Fairfax-Cholmeley's Mastership, and his signature on the Roll was witnessed by both the Master and Farquharson. Farquharson himself did not become a Companion until 1946, although both he and his wife, Dorothy, were listed as 'Associates' in 1935-6 and 1934-5 respectively. Alexander Farquharson was elected Master of the Guild in 1951. He had been very much involved in the running of the Guild since 1928 although people at Le Play House, such as Miss Churton and Miss Spear, both secretaries there, must have carried out most of the day-to-day administration.

During its years as the secretariat, Le Play House changed its geographical location several times. In the beginning it was at 65 Belgrave Road, Westminster, moving in 1932 to 35 Gordon Square, London WC1. During the War, the establishment moved out of London, first to Albert Road, Malvern, in 1939, and from 1945 to Ledbury.

Although he was Master for less than three years, Farquharson, as Director of the Institute of Sociology, was drawn into the Guild's work and he did much in its service. He had a deeply Ruskinian mind, sharing Ruskin's concern for spiritual well-being, physical health and cultural life, and considering them indivisible. Those who saw Farquharson at work in the conferences organised by the Institute were able to observe his power of bringing together people of widely differing backgrounds and making them talk freely of their common concerns.

By the early 1950s, Farquharson was not a well man and at the 1952-3 AGM, Bernard Wardle, William's son, and an archivist by profession, was authorised to become Acting Master.

Many changes in the Guild's arrangements were soon to take place. Sheffield Corporation found itself no longer able to make Meersbrook available for the Guild's museum, and the bulk of the Collection was put into storage which was not acceptable to the Guild. Various possible new locations were examined, including Edinburgh University and Brantwood.

Farquharson knew H. A. Hodges, Professor of Philosophy at Reading University. They shared a keen interest in both Ruskin and the Institute of Sociology. After much negotiating, the Collection was moved to Reading and, following Farquharson's retirement as Master in 1953, Professor Hodges became Master of the Guild.

The closure of the Le Play House organisation led to the need for a new Secretary, and in 1954 Bernard Wardle, having given up the Acting Mastership, was appointed Secretary, an office which he filled until 1976.

It was during Bernard Wardle's secretaryship that the re-structuring of the Guild took place, a requirement of the Companies' Acts of 1948 and 1967. From its inception, the Guild had been run by the Master with the help of the Secretary. Additionally, there had been (usually) two trustees to care for the Guild's money, but not to have control over its spending. The two original trustees had resigned as a matter of principle over the Totley purchase. As part of the re-structuring, a Board of Directors was established, chaired

Secretaries Cedric Quayle and Norman Hobbs.

by the Master, and having a formal Company Secretary. The new arrangement was approved at an Extraordinary General Meeting on 31 October 1970.

Bernard Wardle continued as Company Secretary until he retired in September 1976. For a year he was replaced by R. H. Giddings who was the Bursar at Reading University. But the situation at Reading was not a happy one, and although the Collection was more or less brought together on one site in the University by the next Master, Professor Cyril Tyler, at the end of 1977, both Master and Secretary resigned.

By happy chance, J. Peter Cordery, who had been the Guild's accountant from 1950 until his retirement at about this time (1977), agreed to take over the role of Secretary.

Being a good accountant, Peter Cordery was a stickler for accuracy. At Directors' meetings, he would carefully listen to agenda items being discussed and at the end of each item he would turn to the Master and ask, 'Now what would you like me to record?'—and he wrote the next minute there and then. Peter continued in the role of Secretary until he died suddenly in 1992.

Anthony Harris, who was Master at that time, asked Cedric Quayle if he would take on the role of secretary and the appointment was confirmed at the AGM later that year. Cedric was following in the footsteps of his uncle, Cuthbert Quayle.

Cedric had been appointed a Director in 1976, but he resigned from the board when he was formally appointed Secretary. For the next fifteen years, he carried out his duties with great efficiency, kindness and understanding.

The Annual General Meeting in 2006 was held in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. During the morning the Museum's Director showed us all the Turner watercolours which Ruskin had given to the University and spoke about them. In the afternoon Professor Sam Smiles delivered the annual Ruskin Lecture on Ruskin and Cambridge. The usual Directors' meeting preceded the AGM on the Friday and of course it was necessary for us to arrive at Cambridge on the previous day. It was while Cedric and I were having tea on the Thursday afternoon that he broke the news to me that he intended retiring as Secretary for various family reasons. During my Mastership, Cedric had been a tremendous help. We spoke on the telephone several times each week and after fifteen years as Secretary, his retirement in 2007 was a great loss. I immediately proposed his re-election as a Director.

As Master it fell to me to find 'a new Cedric'. Looking through the Roll of Companions I spotted three people who I thought might be able to take on the role, but in the event, they were already heavily committed, and turned down my request.

Then I thought of Norman Hobbs. He was an Old Bembridgian, had been a member of my sixth-form Printing class at Bembridge, I think had been the Secretary of the Old Bembridgians Association and, in fact, was the Best Man at my daughter's wedding in School Chapel. I knew that Norman had been the Secretary to a small company working in the aviation industry. He had retired from that and was now working part -time to enable him to spend more time at home with his elderly mother. Like me, he lived in Bembridge—in fact, my garage abuts the end of his garden, but it is nearly ten minutes' walk from door to door!

Norman decided that he would like to take on the role of Guild Secretary but before his first meeting he had an accident, damaging a leg. Following this, he decided to give up working on the mainland to devote himself to his home and the Guild. During his years as Secretary we met several times each week to discuss Guild business. He served the Guild well for five years before finally deciding to retire.

By now Clive Wilmer had become Master and it fell to him to find a new Secretary. His brilliant choice was Stuart Eagles, a foremost Ruskin scholar of his generation. Stuart took on the role in 2012; all Companions will know the success he made of his appointment, and some will comprehend the huge amount of work he undertook for the Guild as its operations and influence have expanded. The Guild's administrative structure was recently re-arranged to keep pace with the growth of the organisation, and the title of Secretary has been abolished, so this article is as complete an account of the Guild secretaryship as it can be. A new Administrator, Martin Green, has taken on the roles associated with the company secretary, and Stuart Eagles continues to offer his services as the Guild's Communications Officer, responsible among other things for correspondence with Companions, Associates and the wider public, editing and designing publicity material, including the website, social media and this magazine.

I am enormously grateful to both Cedric Quayle and Mike Pye, without whose help it would not have been possible to prepare this paper.

NOTES

1. M. Frost: *The Lost Companions and John Ruskin's Guild of St George*, 2011.
2. .27.11ff. (All references in this form are to the Library Edition of Ruskin's *Works* (volume no. page number) – see note, inside front cover of this magazine.
3. 28.159
4. 27.[678]
5. 28.557-60
6. Sue King, *A Companion's Story* (2012) pp.18ff.
7. Robert Somervell, *Chapters of Autobiography, edited by his sons* (1935).
8. Somervell, op. cit. p. 44.
9. Ruskin Library, Lancaster University, RF L114.
10. Mark Frost, op. cit., p. 138.
11. 29.477.
12. 30.26.
13. James S. Dearden, 'The Ruskin Galleries at Bembridge School, Isle of Wight' in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. 51, no. 2 (Spring 1969) p. 311.

See overleaf for a table listing all the Secretaries of the Guild identified in this article.

RIP
DR MICHAEL HUDSON

Formerly a lecturer at the Department of Chemistry, University of Reading. Dr Michael Hudson became a Companion of the Guild in 1974, under Master Prof Cyril Tyler.

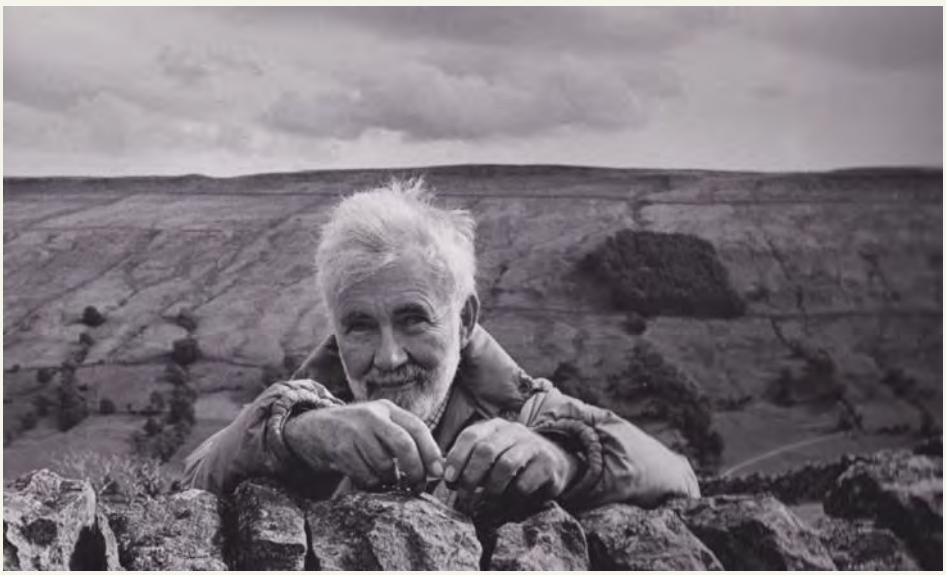
Secretaries to The Guild of St George

William Walker	November 1875
Egbert Rydings	1876
Robert Somervell	Acting, May 31 1876
Robert Somervell	*'pro tem'* Feb 21 1879*
? William White	1890-99
William Wardle	October 28 1901
William Wardle & Thomas Harley	June 12 1908
William Wardle & J.C.Quayle	1924-25
Edith Hope Scott	1924 (assistant)
Harrison Ruskin Fowler	1925
Miss A.Churton	1926
Institute of Sociology	1928
(Miss Spear & Miss Wrigley)	(from 1932)
Bernard Wardle	1953
R.H.Giddings	1976
J.Peter Cordery	1977
Cedric Quayle	1992
Norman Hobbs	2007
Stuart Eagles	2012

* perhaps only for one month.

(Right) 'Territory of the Owl, Barker Farm' (1996) by Derek Hyatt.

(Below) Derek Hyatt at his home near Bishopdale, North Yorkshire. Photo courtesy of Sally Gallagher.



DEREK HYATT
(February 21st 1931 – December 8th 2015)

Derek Hyatt was famous for his use of the postal service as an unofficial art gallery. As anyone who was regularly in receipt of his letters will confirm, Derek seems to have had his best ideas the moment the letter was sealed—causing him to sally forth on the envelope in all manner of delightful and wildly eccentric ways. It was part of the irrepressible and excitable man that just burst forth when he had something to share. He was a compulsive communicator and an inspired teacher, but first and foremost he was a great artist. Being playful didn't always serve Derek well when it came to being taken as seriously as he deserved. There were those who found his confidence in matters metaphysical unnerving, but as his final exhibitions at the Michael Richardson Gallery revealed shortly before he died, Derek was an artist of enormous integrity and individuality of vision who occupied an important place in late twentieth-century British art.

Derek was the living embodiment of a shamanic-souled artist. There was nothing fake or put-on in his other-wordly embrace of nature. For him the hidden voices and spirits of the earth were as real and powerful as anything; indeed, more real and powerful than the mundane and conventional. Derek grew up in Yorkshire and its landscape never left him. It was the spiritual home to which he returned both physically and artistically in the second half of his life with a renewed sense of wonder. He was childlike in the inspiration he drew from his 'meetings on the moor'. An owl, a pre-historic inscription, some melting snow and a sycamore seed: he could weave the forms and colours of nature and symbols from ancient wisdom into a tapestry of rare expressive force. He held closely to Ruskin's dictum on the importance of seeing clearly. He knew that time spent drawing trained hand and eye and his hand was never idle recording forms and discovering relationships between things. One of his talents was that of bringing unlikely elements into proximity to one another in a way which triggered an unexpected and often inexplicable emotional charge. In this Derek was drawing deeply upon our imaginations as 'brooding and dream-gifted' where another form of pictorial and emotional logic is at work.

Always an admirer of Ruskin, Derek was proud to be a Companion of the Guild. For all that his own approach was so distinctive, Derek thought of art in a collegiate fashion, sharing ideas and enthusiasms. It didn't matter whether you were an artist or not. He knew his Ruskin intimately. When he had a show of his work at Brantwood, rather than write about himself, Derek imagined Ruskin and Paul Klee encountering one another at a train station—with Derek there to record it. He wrote 'Every artist is part of a tradition'. The show's catalogue thus took the form of a small plastic wallet of conversation cards decorated with Derek's outline drawings of mystical symbols and sycamore seeds.

At his heart, though, Derek had the secret of silence. 'One skill I have always had since childhood is the ability to sit quietly in a wood. My breathing slows. I just sit and watch Nature. Always something unexpected happens. Always I feel better afterwards … So I sit in the wood and rediscover all those moments when I first saw things. Then the new comes forth and looks me in the eye.'

Howard Hull

I was saddened to hear the news of the death of Derek Hyatt on December 8th 2015.

I first met Derek when I attended one of his workshops at Higham Hall, Cockermouth, Cumbria in 2004. His teaching style was engaging and invoked a degree of magic about working with the landscape and particularly its trees. He led us all to a deepened appreciation of the gestures of the ash trees and how they always turn the ends of their branches up to the sun.

During a week in which we visited Brantwood, we explored the Ziggy Zaggy garden. Ruskin had designed this in his early years at Brantwood, inspired by the mountain farmers of Northern Italy. He created a series of terraces on the steep ground to support cultivation experiments. This 'paradise of terraces' was an allegory of the Purgatorial Mount in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

In 2003 Derek had been artist in residence at Brantwood and had done a wonderful piece of work imagining Paul Klee in conversation with Ruskin. In this work Derek looked at Ruskin as a kind of Shaman in Victorian society. He had dared to tell his contemporaries the downside of industrial wealth. Derek led us on a tour of the gardens. Seeing the Ziggy Zaggy gardens through his eyes—with its textures, colours, forms and imaginative planting—was inspirational and brought Ruskin and Klee to life.

The garden representation of the seven deadly sins had been recreated with the help of students from Glasshouse College in Stourbridge, part of Ruskin Mill Trust.

Shortly after this visit I was invited by Aonghus Gordon Director and Founder of Ruskin Mill Trust, to help him set up Freeman College in Sheffield, the third Ruskin Mill college for young people with developmental delay. I thought of Derek and his connection to Ruskin and he was delighted to come and help launch the college in September 2005. This was part of the Ruskin Festival which was a wonderful celebration of Ruskin's ideas; events were held across the country at each of the Ruskin Mill Trust sites. Derek had an exhibition of his paintings at the Merlin Gallery in Sheffield. He also shared the stage with Richard Parry, author of *Slugs and Angels*, Dr Margaret Colquhoun. founder of The Pishwanton Project, and Companion Kevin Jackson, who wrote *How to be Rich*, a Ruskinian comic book. They held a lively debate in the Millennium Gallery in Sheffield and Derek spoke energetically about art and his sense of connection to nature.

Derek helped launch Freeman College with enthusiasm. He visited the cup and ring stone in Ecclesall Woods, which was very much in keeping with his own love of stone, of their keen exploration, and the stones' magical significance, something he wrote about in his book *Stone Fires-Liquid Clouds*. He held a charcoal drawing workshop using charcoal made from the trees in the woods. Derek believed in the work that Ruskin Mill Trust does with young people, engaging them in practical crafts and biodynamic land-work as a way of empowering them to take charge of their own destiny in spite of their struggles and challenges. This is now recognised as an educational method known as Practical Skills Transformative Education and can be studied to Masters level.

It was a pleasure and an inspiration to work with and know Derek and I like to think that he worked some of his artistic magic when he helped launch Freeman College.

Helen Kippax
Trustee, Ruskin Mill Trust

PETER EMMET
(January 21st 1946 – June 26th 2015)

My father Peter Emmet was a Companion of the Guild of St George from 1993 until his death last summer. He was introduced to Ruskin's work by his grandfather who bequeathed him a number of Ruskin volumes. Dad was a great enthusiast of Ruskin for many years, and would continually regale the family with stories about the latest gems he had found as he added to his increasingly large collection of books by and about Ruskin.

Brought up within an Anglican family he moved into teaching, but found the imposed structures of the educational curriculum too restrictive, and so he found a calling in social work, initially working with adolescents, and then later with children and adults with learning difficulties. An intellectual contrarian, he would challenge those around him to be the best they could be, and encourage them to consider the implications of everything they did. He considered Ruskin a visionary, almost a prophet, someone whose ideas have become commonplace, yet it is not widely appreciated who these ideas came from. He admired Ruskin's writing style and his attempt to integrate apparently unrelated ideas into a single, coherent aesthetic. I remember Dad's delight at a remark Ruskin made to the effect that he did not feel satisfied with an idea until he had contradicted himself at least three times.

Dad's initial interest was in Ruskin's social philosophy – in particular, Ruskin's views on the education of women, his combination of social and environmental projects, at Brantwood and elsewhere, and Ruskin's concept of *illth*. Later on he also came to appreciate Ruskin's role as a draughtsman and painter, especially his sketches and detailed drawings of the Gothic cathedrals of northern France. I recall a memorable holiday to Normandy where Dad's enthusiasm involved us all getting up at the crack of dawn to collectively re-experience a moment Ruskin describes when he saw Rouen Cathedral in the early morning light.

Although Dad was not an academic, his reading was very wide and deep. He liked nothing more than a well-tempered but ferocious discussion without boundaries. Often he would be asked at a Ruskin meeting, 'So which university do you teach at?' which tickled him greatly. He presented a paper on Ruskin and George Watts at one such symposium in Oxford.

He is sorely missed by all who knew him. He is survived by his wife Lesley, his two children and four grandchildren.

Luke Emmet

ASA BRIGGS

(May 7th 1921 –- March 15th 2015)

There can be no member of the Guild who does not know that Professor Lord Asa Briggs was one of the great modern historians, one of our most creative and determined educational innovators, and a passionate Ruskinian. He was also a warm, friendly, accessible, open-hearted man. He married Susan Banwell in 1955, and they had two sons and two daughters. He died at his home in Lewes, Sussex, peacefully, on March 15th this year. Their great loss is our loss, too, but we can be very thankful for his extraordinary life.

Lord Briggs in his study, with John Spiers (standing). Photo: John Spiers.

Asa gave the first of the Guild's Ruskin Lectures in 1978 and became a Companion at about that time. He had always hoped to edit a volume of Ruskin's work, in parallel with his edited volume of William Morris's *Selected Writings and Designs*, published by Pelican in 1962. Alas, although writing almost to his last days, this was one of several projects which did not come to fruition. Yet his whole multi-faceted life itself stands in witness to Ruskin's works.

The bibliography of Asa's published writings runs to a bibliography of 30 close-typed pages. A recent collection of historical essays (edited by Professor Miles Taylor) was very properly titled T*he Age of Asa*. His reach and his grasp were amazing. As *The Times* obituary said, 'You can read Briggs on Victorian cities, people and things, on steam and transportation, public health and education, science and technology, music and literature, food and drink, sport and public entertainment, books and broadcasting.' He was never happy, indeed, unless he could write 1,000 words a day. And he worked hard, and every day.

He virtually invented modern social history as a subject, extended significantly by his later work on communications and the BBC. Similarly, he pioneered Urban History. His work was always focused on human nature, human passions and hopes, fears and struggles, triumphs and setbacks, cares and joys, sorrows and change, on the lives of 'ordinary' people, and on a future possibly understood by appreciating the past.

Asa was, in addition to his many other passions, a secret poet. He had only recently revealed this further important facet of his vivid and complex life. The leading young prize-winning poet Hannah Lowe had welcomed the work as 'A very memorable collection, and the necessity of poetic expression for the artist is brought home most poignantly.' Asa wrote what he called 'A Strictly Necessary Introduction', telling the story of his poetry and his inspirations and meanings.

He had written poems since his schooldays but had not published any of them. However, in his last weeks he had held in his hands the first printed and bound finished copies of *The Complete Poems of Asa Briggs. Far From The Pennine Way* (published by Edward Everett Root Publishers Co. Ltd., of Brighton on April 28th this year). Ultimately, his body let him down but his mind remained razor-sharp to his last day. He had been re-reading Darwin, re-reading some of his favourite detective stories, and also planning out the chapters for a further volume of memoirs.

Asa was one of my tutors at the University of Sussex (1965-70), an author for my firm The Harvester Press, and a friend for more than 50 years. I was one of several students that I knew who in 1965 decided to go to Sussex, rather than to Oxbridge, specifically so that we could be taught by Asa.

The public record of Asa's career—and of his daunting industry—is open to all. The enormous and detailed obituaries in *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian* etc. record the adventure of his life, from his beginnings in a lower middle-class family in the mill-town of Keighley in Yorkshire to global significance. From a scholarship to Keighley Grammar School, he was admitted to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge aged 16. He achieved a Double First in History, and a First in Economics from the LSE in successive weeks. Then he went to secret war-time work at Bletchley Park. This was followed by academic posts at Worcester College, Oxford (1944-55), and the Professorship of Modern History in 1955 at Leeds. From 1961 he was Professor of History, Dean of Social Studies, and Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Sussex; Vice-Chancellor, 1967-76; a Life peer in 1976. Then Provost of Worcester College, Oxford 1976; on the planning committee 1966-79, and Chancellor of The Open University, 1979-94. He was also President of many learned societies, as well as a member of several government review bodies.

His books remain of permanent significance. Wherever he worked he always asked new questions, rather than framing his writings in the strait-jacket of theory.

As an educator at Sussex he set himself the task of redrawing the map of learning, reflecting his prime interest in social and cultural change, in the past and in his present. He supported what Sir John (later, Lord) Fulton, his predecessor as Vice-Chancellor, had done in framing the University around innovative Schools of Study—including The School of Oriental and Asian Studies. Students joked that there might even be a School of Culture and Anarchy—but the realities were creative and much valued by the students and faculty. The Schools were fundamentally inter-disciplinary. Asa also demolished old barriers, notably between the Arts and Sciences, every undergraduate being required to take a course from whichever side of that fence stood their major subject. It was a source of great personal disappointment that the pressures of student numbers and government direction ultimately undermined the Schools-structure, and he opposed those changes all his days. He was, however, an admirer of the present Vice-Chancellor, Michael Farthing.

A man of the left, but not a Marxist, he was asked by Attlee if he would become a Labour MP. He declined, but retained this affection. However, the student riots of

the 1960s had troubled Asa with its irrational violence. One day he said to me that this time had shown 'the limits of liberalism, and of a liberal Vice-Chancellor.'

As a working historian and as a teacher at Sussex he originated many important courses in his own field. Two notable examples were *The Late Victorian Revolt in Politics, Literature and Culture* and *Poverty and Society*, both of which he taught initially before handing on to Stephen Yeo, E. P. Hennock, and Patti Thompson—each of whom became important historians in their own right. This was my own (and many other students') introduction to Ruskin, Morris, Hardy, and to the social investigators Charles Booth and B. Seebohm Rowntree.

It is too easy now to overlook how daring, dramatic, and innovative was Asa's approach to higher education in the 1960s and 1970s. The Schools of Study which he invented, and such over-arching, inter-disciplinary, and demanding courses as 'The Modern European Mind', were truly new. As were the first year courses, two of which all arts students had to take in their first two terms. The 'Introduction to History'; 'Language and Values'; 'The Economic & Social Framework' all came directly out of Asa's ever-fertile and restless mind. Without him this key approach to contextualisation would not have been in place at all.

In developing Sussex University on its beautiful downland campus, Asa relished all the freedoms of being able to invite who he wanted to come to Sussex. He picked the teaching and research talents, asking David Daiches, Marcus Cunliffe, Michael Hawkins, Boris Ford, Maurice Hutt, Patrick Corbett, Roger Blin-Stoyle, John Maynard-Smith, Donald Winch, Beryl Williams, and many others to join. He also recruited the brightest as graduate students and as young lecturers—many of whom have gone on to be distinguished figures (and authors) in their fields: Peter Burke, Stephen Yeo, Eileen Janes (later, Eileen Yeo), Daniel Snowman, Cedric Watts, etc.

Asa meant what he said about redrawing the map of learning, its content and how to think about it. He was always concerned as a historian with how people felt, too. And he looked beyond the GCE 'A' level production line to encourage mature students, who contributed much to the life of the University. This long before 'access' courses became a major issue in public policy

One key to success was the quality of the administrators with whom he worked. The University Registrar, Dr Geoff Lockwood, was a crucial supporter in helping to make the inter-disciplinary schools of study workable in terms of faculty, timing and teaching. Dr Lockwood had been a founder member of the new University, and was there for 35 years, 25 of them as its Head of Administration. He joined with Asa, too, in building global links with other institutions, notably in the Far East where each became well known. If you seek their monuments, look around you now.

Asa was indefatigable in every respect. As a researcher, author, servant of many organisations, and as a traveller. His historian's eye never slept. At one conference in Hobart, the capital of Tasmania, he used the two spare days to rout out convict papers which no one had used. At a conference in India he took a 500-mile train journey, diverting to see an archive until then unexplored. In his last weeks he was mapping out the chapters of a further book of memoirs. He remained future-focused in this work, looking for what we could still learn to guide us forwards.

In the mid-1960s it was said by Sussex students that you could not hope to keep up with reading Asa's books, at least not as fast as he wrote them.

He told me he hoped that, one day, somebody would write his biography. Most of his papers are now at Boston University: a wonderful opportunity for a young scholar.

Genuinely, we shall never see his like again.

John Spiers

THE CREED OF ST GEORGE
A TRIBUTE TO SUZANNE VARADY

To begin my tribute to this remarkable Companion, I am first going to focus on seven of the eight principles which Ruskin intended as axioms which should be accepted by anyone wishing to become a Companion of what is now the Guild of St George.

One of the things that is most admirable about Ruskin is the fact that, although he was defeated time and again in bringing his plans for making the world a more humane and loving place to fruition, he never abandoned the attempt, even in his saddest and maddest moments.

He announced the formation of St. George's Company (as it was then called) in the early letters of *Fors Clavigera*, the sadness already long resident but before the madnesses began their visits (the first came in 1878). Tired of hoping that people would resolve to take better care of nature and their fellow human beings, he had determined that real change would only arrive when a group of like-minded individuals came together to *make* it happen. And so, in the midst of the Industrial Revolution which was at the time despoiling the environment and enslaving the people of England, Europe, and America at breakneck speed, St. George's Company, a band of *living* (not metaphorical) slayers of dragons, was born. Born, intentionally, on his hero, Turner's, birthday— that peerless painter having already proven to be a slayer of dragons with few equals.

The Company's task was to make England habitable and beautiful once again, to create an island of kindness on which people lived at ease with nature, and that would, in due course, supplant the degenerate state which had come to dominate his native land—largely, Ruskin believed, the result of what he called his contemporaries' unfettered 'rage to be rich'. Instead of exploiting and polluting nature, the members of St. George's Company would live in tune with it; instead of exploiting their neighbours for their own advantage, the members of St. George's Company would work not only with each other but with everyone whom they came in contact with–for the mutual advantage of all.

Those wishing to join the Company (or Guild, as it became known) would accept as their own the principles Ruskin drafted (in his own inimitable, occasionally wry, way) in 1875. While our responses to the articles, a century and four decades on, may vary (we would probably wish to substitute less gendered language than that which Ruskin used), there is much in them which remains wonderful and useful. In the capricious, often heartless whirl in which we presently live, there is ample room for a set of resolutions such as these, edited or rephrased as we may prefer.

Suzanne Varady was a Companion of the Guild of St George. She died quite peacefully I've been told by her loving friends, after a very short illness. She was born and lived in Geneva, Switzerland. She had a second home in Mornex, about five miles from Geneva, just across the border into France. It was because of that second home that I met her. It was during the early summer of 2006. Having a few weeks to myself after my teaching responsibilities ended in May, I

THE CREED OF THE GUILD OF ST GEORGE

I

I trust in the Living God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things and creatures visible and invisible. I trust in the kindness of His law, and the goodness of His work. And I will strive to love Him, and keep His law, and see His work, while I live.

II

I trust in the nobleness of human nature, in the majesty of its faculties, the fullness of its mercy, and the joy of its love. And I will strive to love my neighbour as myself; and, even when I cannot, will act as if I did.

III

I will labour, with such strength and opportunity as God gives me, for my own daily bread; and all that my hand finds to do, I will do with my might.

IV

I will not deceive, or cause to be deceived, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor hurt, or cause to be hurt, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor rob, or cause to be robbed, any human being for my gain or pleasure.

V

I will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, nor destroy any beautiful thing, but will strive to save and comfort all gentle life, and guard and perfect all natural beauty, upon the earth.

VI

I will strive to raise my own body and soul daily into higher powers of duty and happiness; not in rivalship or contention with others, but for the help, delight, and honour of others, and for the joy and peace of my own life.

VII

I will obey all the laws of my country faithfully; and the orders of its monarch, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its monarch, so far as such laws or commands are consistent with what I suppose to be the law of God; and when they are not, or seem in anywise to need change, I will oppose them loyally and deliberately, not with malicious, concealed, or disorderly violence.

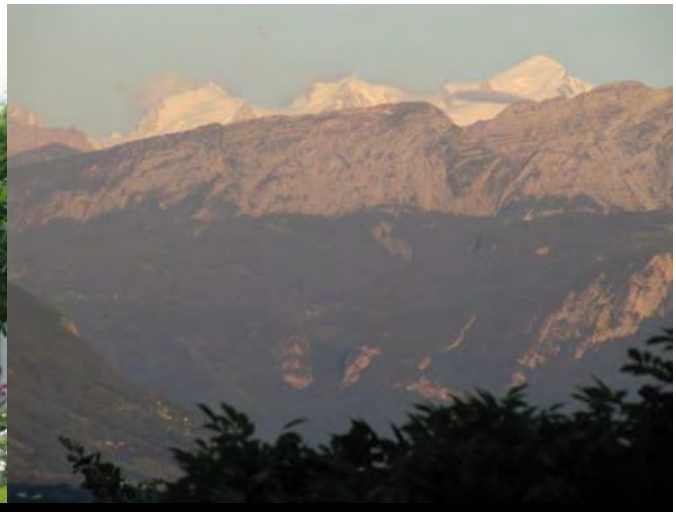
determined that I would travel on Mr Ruskin's Road, my goal being to visit as many of the places where he had lived and worked in France and Switzerland as I could in the time I had available.

I knew that, for much of the last half of 1862 and most of the first half of 1863, he had lived in the little village of Mornex on the southeast-facing slope of the lesser of two contiguous mountains known locally as 'The Saleve'. I knew, too, that he had selected that particular vantage-point because, during a prior visit, he had noted that a few of the houses in the village afforded a magnificent view of the central peaks of the Mont Blanc range in the far distance. Although my French was (and remains) laughable, on this particular day, somehow I had made my way to the house where he had lived. (I carried a picture of it taken during Ruskin's lifetime; the shopkeepers, not understanding anything I said, kindly pointed.) Because the main part of the house was well above the street, there was no front entrance. Walking around, however, I discovered a door in the garden wall on the house's east side. Hearing some gentle digging going on behind the wall, the garden where, once, Ruskin had walked, I knocked. The digging stopped. Moments later, from the other side, I heard: 'Qu'est ce?' (I knew that!) 'Ruskin!' I said loudly. 'Qui?' (Knew that, too!) 'Ruskin!' I repeated, still louder. Then a brilliant thought! I added: 'Ruskin … Recherche!' Another pause. 'Ah!' came back. Another pause. Then: 'Un instant!' Then came the sound of stairs being climbed. Moments later, above me, to the left above the wall, I found a lovely face peering down at me, trying to decide, I later learned, if the enquirer might be a wolf in American clothing. 'What do you want to know?' the fine lady asked in fine English. Surprised, I said: 'I'm a Ruskin scholar. I'm trying to visit places where he lived. I believe he lived in this house for about a year a century and a half ago.' 'Ah,' came the response: 'I believe you are right.' The face vanished and, once again, the sound of feet negotiating stairs reached my ears.

Seconds later the door opened and a smiling Suzanne Varady welcomed me into the garden. Immediately we toured it, with Suzanne showing me all the different flowers she had planted, the crowning achievement being the beautiful wisterias she had caused to grow in such a way that they formed an arbor over some of her more sun-sensitive flowers. Then came the *piece de resistance* (my French was getting better!): the incredible view of Mont Blanc looming above the Valley of the Arve, the view which had so captivated the tenant of so long ago. Next we were in the house where Ruskin had slept and worked! As we talked on, Suzanne kindly (she was *always* kind!) made us tea and lunch. I was thrilled! We talked deep into the afternoon with, as the shadows lengthened, some fine rose wine supplanting the tea.

As it turned out, Suzanne knew almost nothing of Ruskin other than the fact that he had lived in her house. But I quickly learned that she was an accomplished classical musician and, for that reason, had become a walking encyclopaedia on the life and music of Richard Wagner, another eminent individual who had lived in her house for a time, a decade before Ruskin.

And so began a truly wonderful friendship. You know how it is, you meet someone for the first time and feel you have known them all your life. You leave, come back two years later, and pick up the conversation just where you had left off as if



(Left) Suzanne in the garden of her house in Mornex. (Right) The view of Mont Blanc from Suzanne's garden.

Suzanne and Jim at Ruskin's Rock, Chamonix, France.

it was the night before. That kind of friendship. Linked souls.

As it happened, Suzanne was delighted to listen to my (many!) stories about the 'other famous person' who had lived in her Mornex house; she was delighted, as time passed, to receive numerous postings from America, packages containing articles and books about this remarkable Englishman; she was happy, too, in later summers, to travel with myself and other Ruskin folk, and, even later, with my wife, Jenn, to and through the French Alps (not far from Mornex), through most of the loveliest places of France, Switzerland and Northern Italy (Siena, Florence, and Venice!), all places beloved by Ruskin. And, as all these good miles and days passed, she was always our delightful, good-spirited, good-hearted guide, translating, asking directions, enjoying herself—and (I like to think) *us*—immensely. Wonderful times! Times full of wonders!

It was as if, across the years, a continent, and a language, Suzanne had been waiting for Mr Ruskin and his ideas to make their appearance. So great was her appreciation, some years after we met, I asked if she might like to become a Companion of the Guild of St George. Immediately, eagerly, she said, 'Yes!' And so, on the November 16th 2013, at the Annual General Meeting of the Guild in Sheffield, it happened. With myself standing proudly nearby as her sponsor and devoted friend, she signed the Guild's roll making her Companionship official.

But, in a way, that signing was unnecessary because, not long after our first meeting, I knew that Suzanne, although she was completely unaware of him, had always been a life-long subscriber to the principles (though she might have changed a word here and there) Ruskin had set down as The Creed of St George because, for her, these articles for living had always been the articles she held sacred in her own heart.

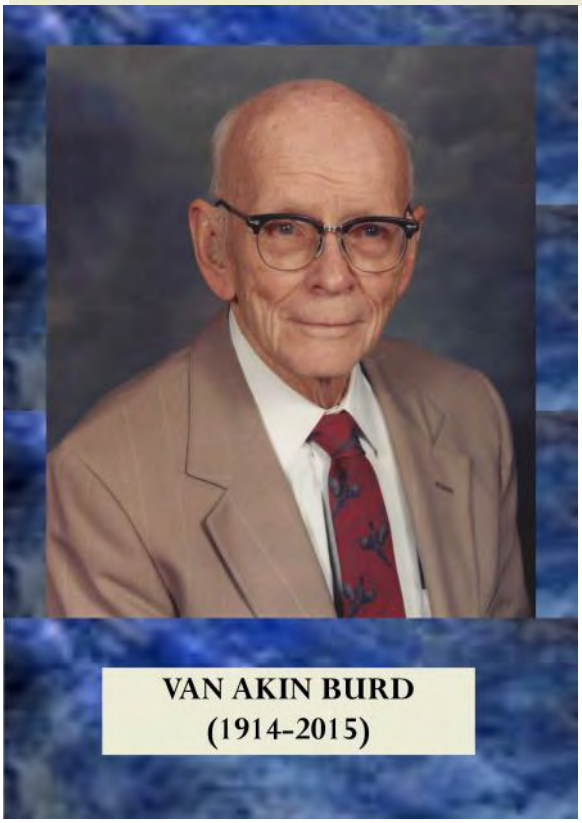
Along this path of life, I have been fortunate enough to meet many marvellous people. In that company, experience has taught that there are few who are as intrinsically good of soul as Suzanne. For all of us who knew her, she was a gem brightly shining through pebbles and stones. I loved her. Jenn loved her. *All* who knew her loved her! How could we not? Had he known her (he may now!), Ruskin would have loved her. She was a living, breathing example, an archetype, of what he termed, in the second article of St. George's Creed, 'the *nobleness* of human nature.'"

Jim Spates

VAN AKIN BURD

(April 19th 1914 – November 7th 2015):

A Tribute by Jim Spates



[A] book is essentially not a talked thing but a written thing, [a thing] written not with a view of mere communication but of permanence. [It comes to be] not to multiply the voice merely, not to carry it merely, but to perpetuate it. The author has something to say which he perceives to be true and useful, or helpfully beautiful. So far as he knows, no one has yet said it; so far as he knows, no one else can say it. He is bound to say it, clearly and melodiously if he may; clearly at all events. In the sum of his life he finds this to be the thing, or group of things, manifest to him; this, the piece of true knowledge, or sight, which his share of sunshine and earth has permitted him to seize. He would fain set it down for ever; engrave it on rock, if he could, saying: 'This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved, and hated, like another; my life was as the vapour, and is not; but this I saw and knew: this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory.' That is his 'writing'; it is, in his small human way, and with whatever degree of true inspiration is in him, his inscription, or scripture. That is a 'Book'.

So said Ruskin in 1864 in Manchester, during one of his greatest lectures, 'Of Kings' Treasuries'. By 'Kings' Treasuries' he meant books. Not just *any* books, however; the *greatest* books, those 'books for all time' that contain the most brilliant posings of the essential questions with which we all must wrestle as the decades pass, the books that force us to confront the issues of what it means to be a human being and what constitutes a meaningful life. Such books are, Ruskin argued, true treasuries, far more valuable than gold. Among these he would have included the Bible, *The Divine Comedy*, (most of) Shakespeare's plays, (most of) Plato's dialogues, the poetry of Byron, Keats, and Tennyson. Reading such books regularly with care, he said, made us, over time, by that very act, more human and humane. His lecture was intended to make it palpable to his audience that, if they were reading such books at all, they were not reading them with that requisite care, and that such ignorance or negligence was directly responsible for the human and environmental catastrophe which was unfolding in nineteenth-century Britain. It was a hypothesis anyone could test. For decades, these have been among my favourite Ruskin sentences.

I've been lamenting the loss of a great friend, a fellow Ruskin scholar, one of— perhaps the *greatest*—Ruskin scholar ever, **Van Akin Burd**. Van died in Cortland, New York; he died quietly and painlessly in his sleep in the home where he had lived for more than a half century. His passing was not unexpected. He was, after all, 101-and-a-half years old. But, for myself and not a few others, his leaving us was particularly poignant because Van held an unusual status. He was one of those few 'great friends' we are blessed with in the course of our lives.

Van Burd was a scholar whose special talent was to tell us things about Ruskin's days which we had not known. His was great work, work fit, like those 'kings' treasuries' for the ages. Without it we would know so much less about Ruskin and how he came to have his glorious and challenging views of life and the world. And so it seemed only right that I compose something to honour him and his contributions to the study of this great Victorian to whom he gave the majority of his life's energies.

One of my favourite films is *Enchanted April*. Set in the early 1920s, just after the cataclysm known as The First World War, it focuses on four wonderfully different women who are bored with their lives or husbands, or both, who decide, for daring and excitement, that they will escape to a beautiful rented villa overlooking the beautiful Mediterranean in beautiful Italy. They won't tell anyone (including those tedious husbands) where they are going. Among them is the youngish Ruth Arbuthnot. One evening during the days when plans for the great disappearance are still evolving, Ruth is home alone, and having a miserable time of it. Her loquacious (and likely philandering) husband, Frederick, is at a party in a London mansion where those foppish folks Dickens calls 'The Fashionable Intelligence' are toasting and drinking to the publication of his new book, a novel which, like all his others, is a sensationalistic, scandal-riddled account of a London society girl's misadventures. In due course, all his approaches having been rebuffed, he returns home more than a little the worse for wear, and asks the still awake and sad Ruth if she would read his book. She asks what it is about. Appalled by the forthcoming description, she says that 'No one should ever write a book that God wouldn't want to read!' She is, of course, quite right about this, as Frederick's chagrined face tells us.

Van Burd wrote books, quite a few of them (and dozens of articles), and I believe I would not be alone in saying that not a single one contains anything that would ever offend a curious deity.

Actually, Van did not write books; he *crafted* them, books containing some thousands of his meticulous transcriptions and interpretations of Ruskin's letters which had not, until he published them, seen the light of day; letters—'those beautiful letters' I heard him call them more than once—which allowed us to see, as Ruskin had not been anxious for us to see, the great heart and incomparable genius of the man who had written them, letters which allowed our hearts to break along with their author's as his troubles threatened to overwhelm him or when he worried that the messages he so urgently wanted to impart in his books had gone awry because he lacked the imaginative ability to find the words which would convince his readers to do what had to be done to transform the needy world into a much better place.

Three of Van's most important books are *The Winnington Letters of John Ruskin* (1969)—frank and profound letters sent over the course of a decade (1858-68) to the headmistress and students of a girls' school, composed during a time of great personal crisis; *John Ruskin and Rose La Touche* (1979)—the tragic story of Ruskin's star-crossed love of a young Irish girl; and *Christmas Story: John Ruskin's Venetian Letters of 1876-77* (1990)—a series of private letters written during a winter in Venice, the year after Ruskin's beloved Rose died, a period when he was desperately searching for some way to communicate with her.

Of the first of these books, *The Winnington Letters,* Van wrote, as he closed his 'Introduction' to the collection, the following–simultaneously a testimony to his commitment to doing as perfect a job of editing as was possible and to bringing 'the real Ruskin' to light:

> It is hoped that this volume of Ruskin's letters brings us as close to the flat table on which he wrote as does any edition of his correspondence. In later years, he believed that his books were inadequate as records of his inner feelings. 'But the truth is,' he wrote Kate Greenaway in 1886, 'my *life* never went into my books at all. Only my time.' For the record of his heart, we must turn to his autobiography, his journals, and his letters. [When writing of] his love for children—'sunlight upon lilies' [he called them] … —Ruskin was his most spontaneous. The plan of the editing of the letters in this volume is to release this spontaneity.

When it came to crafting a *book*, Van understood, as did the thinker who was both his subject and hero, that:

> The fine arts cannot be learned by competition, but, rather, only by doing our quiet best in our own way … [We] must paint and build [and compose] neither for pride nor for money, but for love, for love of the art, for love of our neighbour, and whatever better love may be than these, founded on these.

Of this first book, Van's obituary in *The Guardian,* said: 'The publication of *The Winnington Letters of John Ruskin* … was instrumental in initiating a Ruskin revival.' The dozens of reviews the book received in the scholarly and popular press were all laudatory in the extreme, as would be equally the case for all Van's books. Of Van's work as a whole, Clive Wilmer, the Master of the Guild wrote, in a retrospective review: 'Van's books are masterpieces of the editorial art. Through them, our understanding of Ruskin has been immeasurably enlarged: his character, his life, his emotional attachments and, above all, the relation of his ideas and preoccupations to his experiences of the world.' 'He was, by common consent,' Wilmer wrote in another place, 'the towering figure in modern Ruskin studies.'

Another remark of Wilmer's gives a sense of Van's enduring influence. 'In 2009,' he wrote in the retrospective just noted, 'I was writing a paper on Ruskin and Charles Darwin. Searching through my files for notes and quotations that would help me with it, I came across the offprint of an article on William Buckland who had taught and befriended Ruskin at Christ Church, Oxford, "Ruskin and his Good Master, William Buckland."' [Buckland, an eminent geologist, was one of the last in that discipline who believed in the basic truth of the Biblical account of creation.] 'The article,' Wilmer continued, 'had been published the year before in an academic journal. Last year, when I was writing a paper on Ruskin and female sexuality, I riffled through my offprints and photocopies again, and up came another article that had been published in 2007 in an academic journal. It was called "Ruskin: On his Sexuality, a Lost Source." Both these articles were works by the same scholar, Van Akin Burd, and he wrote them at the ages of 93 and 94 respectively.'

Here's another measure, a memory shared by the English Ruskin scholar, Ray Haslam. It serves as a testimony both to Van's eminence and character (a character to which we shall return). He wrote: 'The Lancaster University *Ruskin Programme Bulletin Number 12* (January, 1997) contained a short article by myself entitled, "Ruskin, The Reverend John Eagles, and *The Sketcher."* To my amazement, the following month a letter arrived from Professor Van Akin Burd in America containing some encouraging comments and also a related article of his own, "Ruskin's Defense of Turner," the subject of his Ph.D thesis. I was dumbfounded that he should take the trouble to write and show such interest in what I was doing … We all know Van Akin Burd as a great scholar and author of some of the finest works in the field of Ruskin studies. He has been for me an inspiration: the master researcher and editor who has set for us all the highest of standards.'

As 'final' proof of the importance of Van's scholarly work (his 'books' as Ruskin defined them), consider that when he retired from the State University of New York at Cortland, the institution where he had taught for more than three and a half decades, Van was the first in the university's history to be accorded the status of *Distinguished* Professor Emeritus; or, consider that, shortly after that retirement, a volume of essays written by the most prominent Ruskin scholars of the day appeared bearing the title, *Studies in Ruskin: Essays in Honor of Van Akin Burd*; or, consider that, during the celebration of his hundredth birthday in Cortland in 2014, Shoji Sato, long a friend of Van's arrived from Tokyo to present Van and all who had assembled to commemorate his accomplishments with newly bound copies of a volume, *Short Essays by Dr. Van Akin Burd in Honor of his Centenary Birthday*, the contents of which he had recently finished translating into Japanese; or, consider that, during that gathering, his long-time friend and colleague in the Department of Comparative Literature at SUNY, Professor Emeritus Robert Rhodes, read a Proclamation forwarded by the New York State Assembly making Van a 'Distinguished Citizen of the State of New York'; or, lastly, consider that, at that same assembly, the Mayor of the City of Cortland, the Honourable Brian Tobin, issued a second proclamation, this one making the day of his birth (April 19th) 'Van Akin Burd Day.'

Mayor Tobin reading his proclamation—with Van, his daughter, Joyce Hicks, and his great-grandson, Thomas Cain to the right; on the occasion of Van's 100th birthday.

All that I've said so far concerns the creation of one kind of 'book'—the one appearing on printed pages. But there is a second sort of 'book' worthy of note: the book of a life and, as Ray Haslam mentioned, of the example that life sets.

A short time ago, I used the word 'character' and said I would come back to it.

Perhaps the event which might have signalled to a curious observer how remarkable a character Van Burd was to become occurred in 1937 when he was just 23. Already a literary soul and much under the influence of Eugene O'Neill's sea plays and Melville's novels of the South Seas, *Typee* and *Omoo,* Van determined in 1937 that he would voyage, alone, to the Pacific to see for himself where the great novelist had gotten his inspiration. As it happened, he spent a considerable amount of time on the island of Fiji, being hosted and toasted by the local tribes–and meeting there, he told me in one of our many chats, an Englishwoman on her travels: 'She was a real Lady,' he said. 'But,' he added, 'she didn't act like a Lady! I very quickly learned to keep my distance. I could see that she would be trouble and saw as well that she was determined to cause it!'

A second story illuminating his character is more poignant. It was 1944 and Van, then in the Navy, was in the South Seas again but this time it was for a much deadlier reason. His unit had been among those chosen for the invasion of the island of Okinawa as the American forces made their embattled way north toward Japan. It was a harrowing experience and although, during the landing and after, Van came out unscathed, many of his compatriots did not. When the fearful fighting was over and the island was secured, some American forces were assigned to stay on to help rebuild the island's shattered villages. Van, a lieutenant, was one so assigned. With his fellow Navy officers and regular seamen, he spent some months at the task, becoming in the process a revered figure among Okinawa's inhabitants. Here is how his long-time friend, Bob Rhodes, put it during his eulogy at Van's funeral service a few days after Van's death: 'When he was leaving, the townspeople gathered to say farewell and the mayor spoke some words that Van kept and, later, shared with me: "The town of Kochiya is on the way to re-establishment and this has been accomplished primarily by Lt. Burd and his staff's sincere efforts. [The process] is not finished yet, but it has been greatly shaped by these efforts. You will never be able to find anyone who does not respect and love him in this town."' Another measure of this admiration was in the way the people of Kochiya addressed him. Having a collective difficulty pronouncing his name, our English sounds very foreign in their ears, he was always called, 'Ben Bardo San,' the Honourable Van Burd. Character.

Here's another indicator. I was privileged to know Van for twenty years and, during all that time and all our conversations, I never heard from him (if I can alter a line from an old cowboy song) a disparaging word–about *anyone.* The closest I ever knew him to approach the negative, and the instance barely touches the outer orbit of the word's meaning, was a comment he made about a younger Ruskin scholar whom he thought should have been a bit more careful in how he transcribed and interpreted a previously unpublished Ruskin letter. That was it.

Here is Bob Rhodes' praise of his friend: 'For 63 years, Van was my teacher,

mentor, colleague and friend, and in all those years and in all those roles, he never failed me, even once.'

Some years ago when we were talking about that inevitably approaching moment, Van asked me if, 'when the time comes' (always his phrase), I would make sure that his books and papers would go to places where future Ruskin scholars could use them. I, of course, accepted. And so, in partial fulfilment of this charge, I travelled to 22 Forrest Avenue in Cortland about two weeks after his death to collect these vital materials. As I was placing some of his papers into a box to take home, a card fell to the floor. Picking it up, I found that it had been sent by a much younger friend, David Janik, to commemorate Van's 100th birthday. David had grown up knowing Van well, his father, Del, being one of Van's colleagues at SUNY Cortland. On the card's cover was a single line from Tennyson's 'Ulysses.' It read: 'I am a part of all that I have met.' Opening the card, one finds this heartfelt message: 'I am lucky to know you!' Inside as well are written the following lines:

> Dear Van,
>
> I could not find a card with a Ruskin quote, so Tennyson will have to do! It is true! [Here an arrow draws the reader's eyes to the quote opposite.] You are one of the most remarkable people I know. I have been blessed to have you as a friend, neighbor, teacher, grandfather figure, and storyteller. You have had a rich and beautiful life full of spectacular adventures. I continue to enjoy these stories each time I see you.
>
> I have appreciated all of your advice and encouragement. I so much appreciate that you listen to my views and stories in return. Visiting with you is something I look forward to every time I come to Cortland.
>
> I am so pleased to have been with you on your 100th birthday. So let's celebrate!
>
> You have been lucky to have had such a long, healthy life, a life filled with love, intellectual pursuit, and friendship.
>
> Love, David.

It is only *character* which spontaneously generates such sensibilities.

In the days following Van's passing, many comments and tributes to him came my way, all telling of how special, how wonderful he was. They were all profoundly worded treasures—like David Janik's, expressing enduring gratitude for having had the chance to know him and telling of great reverence for the gifts his life had bestowed on them. In my view, one sums up them all. It was written by Howard Hull, Chairman of the Ruskin Foundation and Director of Brantwood. Thinking of Van's departure, Howard wrote:

> It was a day set in the stars; but who among us could have guessed that Van's candle could burn so wonderfully long and bright? I rejoice in the beauty of the man. The beauty of his spirit, his kindliness, his integrity, the clarity of his mind, and the wisdom of his judgements. Pamela and I were privileged to encounter Van in the best of moments: working at a Ruskin letter on his typewriter on a packing case deep in the woods of Michigan; at home with us at Brantwood; on the balcony at Jim's house overlooking lovely Seneca Lake in Geneva. Van was an impeccable scholar—really, the very definition of all that a scholar should be—guided always not only by the empirical evidence but by his humanity. He recognised the responsibility that he assumed in studying so closely another man's life. It seems to me that with great generosity of spirit he marvelled and he cared.

One of Van's favourite photos of Jim and him together. They are pictured at Michelle Lovric's palazzo on the Grand Canal, Venice.

A reminiscence of my own. For many years, at approximately three-week intervals, I travelled to Cortland from Geneva, New York to visit Van. As I entered his home, almost always he would welcome me from his living-room couch where he had been resting or reading. Next to the couch, on a small table, would be his most recent *Times Literary Supplement* and his current Ruskin reading. During his last months, among the latter were Robert Hewison's *Ruskin on Venice* (the definitive account of Ruskin's time in and love for that incredible city on the Adriatic), Robert Brownell's *Marriage of Inconvenience* (a recent interpretation based on new and convincing evidence concerning the catastrophe of Ruskin's marriage to Effie Gray, suggesting, in the main, that Effie, rather than Ruskin—who, for decades, has gotten the bulk of the blame—was primarily responsible for the calamity), Sara Atwood's lecture, *'The earth veil': Ruskin and Environment* ('She's a fine new, young Ruskin scholar,' Van said repeatedly) and Jim Dearden's *Rambling Reminiscences: A Ruskinian's Recollections* (Jim being, by Van's description, 'My great Ruskin friend of almost six decades!')

On one of my last visits, as I walked toward him, he proclaimed: 'Jim, there are two new books on Ruskin we must get and talk about. One about hundreds of his daguerreotypes, all of which have been lost for nearly a century and a half (Ken and Jenny Jacobson's *Carrying Off the Palaces: John Ruskin's Lost Daguerreotypes* reviewed elsewhere) and another by Sarah Quill, a revision of her book, *Ruskin's Venice:*

The Stones Revisited. Do you remember how we took her first edition with us when we went to Venice in 2004 and, using her map, spent at least two days hunting down the most interesting of the palazzos Ruskin wrote about? The most interesting ones were those hidden down the by-streets? And do you remember how we spent hours studying the figures on the capitals of the Ducal Palace in St. Mark's Square? What a wonderful time that was! How I wish we could go once more and take this new edition with us!' And all this from a 101 year old man who was perfectly well aware that he would never leave Cortland again.

It *was* a wonderful trip! *The* highlight of the many we took together.

About a week after Van died, I said, in an email to Howard Hull: 'As the days pass, his loss is ever more keenly felt. It is hard to *realize* that there will be no more trips to Cortland. No more soup, egg salad sandwiches, and coffee for lunch. No more talk about recent Ruskin publications. No more Ruskin gossip! (Not that there ever was much!) Even to the last, when we were both aware that that end was nearly upon us, we never acted as if it would arrive. Our last lunch together, about a week before he left us, was as sweet as the dozens which had preceded it.'

I saw him last two days before the end. He was, by then, bedridden. Though his ability to communicate was impaired, we had a lovely visit, recollecting our many travels in the service of the great Victorian to whom he had dedicated his life's work. At his request, I read him the passages from Jim Dearden's *Reminiscences* where Jim recalls his first and subsequent meetings with Van. Van was delighted.

It is hard to know how to say goodbye to such an incredible life and friend. Van was unique among the people I have known. He was not only a great intellect, he was possessed, like the genius he taught us so much about, of the greatest of hearts. He was unfailingly kind, generous, and loving. It is a rare thing to have such traits so pronounced in one soul. At the same time, he was remarkably down to earth, in some essential way just a regular person living a normal life—unpretentious, never disingenuous, never envious of others.

Two years ago, I conducted an interview with him about his 'life of Ruskin' for *The Companion*. At the end, I asked if, after nearly seventy years of working on Ruskin, he had any regrets. Van said: 'Well, there are things I'd like to have done and things I'd still like to do but, to tell the truth, I've no regrets. I've lived a magic life.' We are so very lucky to have known him. As another great writer once had one of his characters remark of another great character: 'Take him for all in all, he was a man. We shall not look upon his like again.' Van's life, like his printed books, was a 'Book' in Ruskin's sense, a book that God would have been delighted to read (and who, almost surely, already has).

I was first, in a very real sense, a student under Van's remarkable mentorship. After a short while, we became colleagues. Then, finally, dear friends. But he was cherished by a multitude. By his beloved family, his devoted friends in Cortland, his equally devoted friends in the Ruskin world, and by the wonderful caretakers who did just that–took 'care' of him during his last years. We all loved him.

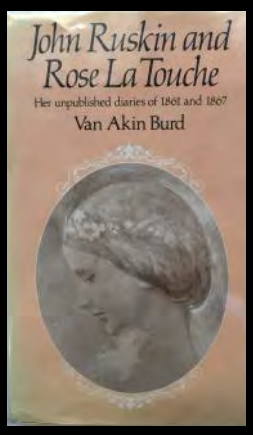
The angels have sung him to his rest and I presume (a little enviously, but I will gladly wait my appointed turn) that by now he has already had some fine chats with Mr Ruskin about the meaning of it all. Not being privy to that, I thought I would end with one of my favourite imaginings concerning 'the meaning of it all,' the last stanzas of Yeats' 'Lapis Lazuli,' a poem 'about' a large green stone with some quite unique carvings. Yeats composed it in 1933, just a few years before a young, adventurous Van Akin Burd sailed for Fiji.

Two Chinamen, behind them a third,
Are carved in lapis lazuli.
Over them flies a long-legged bird,
A symbol of longevity;
The third, doubtless a serving-man,
Carries a musical instrument.

Every discoloration of the stone,
Every accidental crack or dent,
Seems a water-course or an avalanche,
Or lofty slope where it still snows;

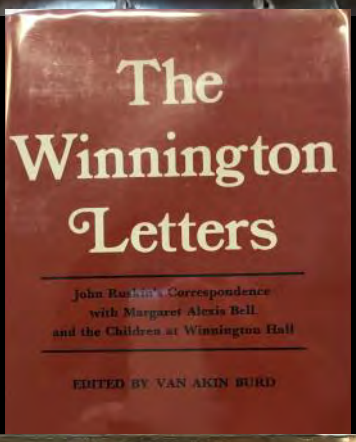
Though doubtless plum or cherry-branch
Sweetens the little half-way house
Those Chinamen climb towards. And I
Delight to imagine them seated there;
There, on the mountain and the sky,
On all the tragic scene they stare.
One asks for mournful melodies;
Accomplished fingers begin to play.
Their eyes mid many wrinkles, their eyes,
Their ancient, glittering eyes, are gay.

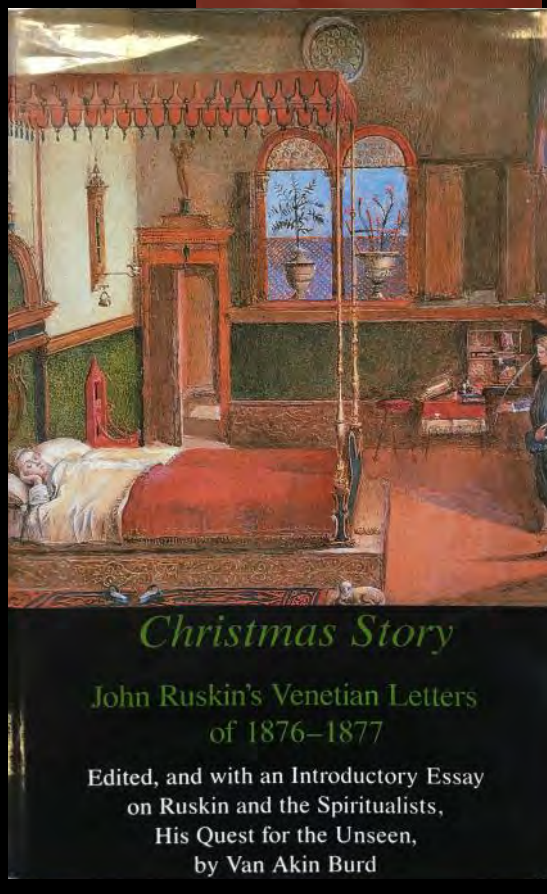
My thanks to Stuart Eagles for the image of Van used at the beginning of this tribute, and to the Guild for the use of quotes from Clive Wilmer and Ray Haslam. Thanks are also due to the ever-patient, ever-keen-eyed Jenn Morris for her editorial suggestions.



(Above) The candle lit for Van by Michelle Lovric in the Church of San Giovanni Crisotomo in Venice, a few days after his death.

(Right and below) The images of some of Van's finest books—his enduring legacy.





Craftsmanship To-Day

Detail from Philip Hagreen, *Dunstan Pruden's Workshop*, wood engraving, c. 1933

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