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The Guild of St George

The Companion

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(Above) St George's Farm, Ruskinland, Bewdley.
(Below) Three Guild Masters: Jim Dearden, Clive Wilmer and Julian Spalding at the Companions' Weekend, Bewdley Museum.
(Right) Ruskin Bread from Gerry's Bakery, Walkley, celebrating RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD.





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THE MANY FACES OF JOHN RUSKIN

This edition of the magazine is, as I am sure you agree, another cornucopia, thanks to the variety of reports, features, reviews and other contributions provided by Companions and friends of the Guild. It is also late, so I trust that it is a gift worth waiting for.

I shall be sparing with my editorial comments because you already hear enough from me. Thanks to the apparently evergrowing number of Ruskin-related events, publications, items of news and so on, I am never short of things to communicate with

you about in my capacity as Secretary of the Guild. I have very much appreciated the feedback I have received from so many of you in response to my frequent if irregular e-mail 'newsletters': thank you.

Last summer, not long before the referendum, I was in Scotland, and I joined the audience at the Edinburgh Fringe to watch Paul O'Keeffe re-enact, in full costume, one of **Ruskin's** lectures originally given in that

impressive city. O'Keeffe's memorable performance, which successfully captured many of the mannerisms reported in journalistic accounts of Ruskin's lectures, reinforced my belief that it often isn't enough simply to read Ruskin. The lectures were, after all, performed, and to experience them is to feel anew the depth of Ruskin's insights. As Ruskin poked fun at his audiences, and often-deliberately-made them laugh, he challenged assumptions that were not only deeply ingrained in the 19th century, but which, despite his enormous eloquence and influence, still persist in certain quarters to this day. I left the lecture theatre seeing the buildings around me through Ruskin's eyes.

If only recent film portrayals of Ruskin had achieved anything like such an effect. You'll read a review of both Effie Gray and Mr Turner elsewhere in this issue (see pp. 30-31), but O'Keeffe got me thinking about other portrayals of Ruskin, too. Tom Hollander most recently brought Ruskin to us on the small screen, in the series I like to call *Carry* On Desperate Romantics in 2009. But who saw Ruskin's take on contemporary news stories in the same year, when he appeared on More4 News courtesy of Companion, Prof. Bernard Richards? If only Richards or O'Keeffe had been asked to reprise their roles by the movie-makers, we surely wouldn't have suffered the slings and arrows of this outrageous cinematic fortune.

Many of us have wrestled with the

difficulty of how to answer the thorny questions that Ruskin's life continues to pose. Nobody should deny the existence of what a friend recently called Ruskin's 'sharp edges', but I think Companions agree that it is Ruskin's ideas, rather than his (lack of) love life, that are really interesting. That's why I recently enjoyed so much two lectures given by Companions, both very different but stimulating occasions. Marcus Waithe gripped an audience of about eighty



Dr Marcus Waithe explores the history of St George's Museum to an enthusiastic audience at Walkley Community Centre in February 2015.

> residents in Walkley, talking about Ruskin, St George's Museum and the Guild in Sheffield. His was one of the best public lectures on Ruskin I have heard. And Cynthia Gamble engaged with an audience of Oxford medievalists at University College to talk about Ruskin and Proust. They both demonstrated, like O'Keeffe, how far audiences are still stimulated by Ruskin's ideas in the 21st century. I know that another example of this was Sara Atwood's talk last October at the Ruskin Studio on Ruskinland, though sadly I was

not present on that occasion. The Guild's tentacles are reaching out everywhere. When the RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD project was launched on

we were



in Russia: Tatiana Nikitina's 1st February, Unfamiliar Ruskin (2014).

delighted to be joined by Chiaki Yokoyama, one of our three Japanese Companions. Our Russian Companion at Yasnaya Polyana, Tatiana Nikitina, has recently written a book whose title in translation is Unfamiliar Ruskin, introducing the sage who helped to inspire Tolstoy to a modern Russian readership. It includes a chapter on the Guild. Our Master, Clive Wilmer, has recently been living and teaching in Venice, strengthening existing connections and making new ones between the Guild and Ruskin's 'Paradise of cities'. You still won't believe me when I insist that he really did turn 70 in February and I know he was grateful to the many well-wishers who got in touch to congratulate him from among the Companionship.

The Companion, and the Guild, reflect the strength, diversity, vitality and enthusiasm of those who contribute to its success. This is our magazine, and our organisation, and I hope and believe that we all continue to look forward to working together to pursue the fruitful journey which Ruskin has set us on. **Stuart Eagles**

Ruskin in the theatre and on TV: Tom Hollander (above), Prof Bernard Richards (near right) and Paul O'Keeffe (right-most). O'Keeffe reprised his role at this year's Edinburgh Fringe.

Scottish National Gallery HAWTHORNDEN LECTURE THEATRE Tue 12 Aug 2014 15:00 UNRESERVED Age: 18+ £10.00 Ter 26 Jul Tor 22 Jul Stort Falls

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A LETTER FROM THE MASTER OF THE GUILD

Dear Companions

As I'm sure you'll agree, the Master of the Guild should be stable and trustworthy. Alas, I've been something of a vagrant Master recently—living in Venice for five months, delighting in almost everything that offered itself to my senses, and depending on Stuart Eagles and my fellow Directors to keep the Guild afloat. I did have an excuse, however. Venice is so central to our first Master's thinking that it with Titians and Carpaccios in the background. She and Paul, who wrote the very scholarly introduction, answered questions. There were speeches from a number of scholars including Jeanne and Donata Levi, and Paul took us to see some of those 'principal pictures'. The great and the good of Venice turned out in force.

A few days later I went to another launch at which Ruskin (unsurprisingly) wasn't named. But my goodness, he was present Ambrogio Lorenzetti's great painting *The Allegory of Good Government* at Siena something more strongly felt in Italy than I'd judge it to be in England. Venice, he says in his new book, is dying. The evidence is in the population statistics—175,000 in 1951 to 58,000 now—and in the uncritical toleration of mass tourism at the expense of the interests of ordinary citizens. Venice will also die by drowning if something is not done soon to prevent the lagoon from

THE MASTEI

(Right and centre,) In March, architecture students from Sheffield University, led by Carolyn Butterworth, toured Venice with the Master.

(Below) The Master at 70. In Venice with his partner, Patricia Fara. February 2015.

Photo: Gabriel Wilmer

constantly inspired me and the Guild was never far from my thoughts. I was there to teach Victorian literature (including Ruskin, of course) in the

language department at Ca' Foscari University, and our Companions there we have two, Jeanne Clegg and Emma Sdegno, with Paul Tucker an occasional visitor from Florence—are keen to make Ruskin a *presence* in the University and in the city itself.

And he has begun to be just that. Emma has long argued that there should be at least one Ruskinian event a year at the University and, if I may describe myself as an event, I suppose my term there was this year's offering. But there have been other happenings too. On 4th March, Emma's new Italian translation of Ruskin's *Guide to the Principal Pictures in the Academy of Fine Arts at Venice* was launched in that very gallery in spirit! The book in question was Se Venezia muore ('If Venice dies') by Salvatore Settis, who has made something of a mark in Italy's recent life. He is a distinguished art historian and archaeologist, the author in particular of a book on Giorgione, and he retired in 2010 as Director of the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa. Now in his early seventies, he has become the focus for a major challenge to the orthodoxies of modern politics. He is a conservationist, who speaks up for the necessity of art for civilised democratic life, beauty and the national patrimonio-what we, less happily, call 'heritage'. He is especially concerned with the traditional bond between the urban and the rural, as ideally depicted in

Photo: Carolyn Butterworth

flooding it periodically, and MOSE, the new system of flood barriers, which *would* be coming into effect just

now if it were not for another of Italy's massive corruption scandals, is already out of date and anyway likely to endanger the ecology of the lagoon in the process of saving the city. Yet the triumph of Venice-what makes it for many of us the most beautiful city in Europe and a source of constant pleasure when you live thereis the practical harmony its people have achieved between city and nature, nature in this case being the possibly threatening sea. The loss of Venice, Settis argues, would be the loss of any hopes we have for that form of civilisation and that kind of relationship. He says these things in the most magnificent prose, trenchant, lyrical and lucid, and to hear him speak is to know that one is in the

Photo: Carolyn Butterworth

presence of a major modern prophet. Ruskin came immediately to mind and I understand that Ruskin is one of the writers he has absorbed.

A third big Ruskin event was, as you know, our Guild meeting and tour there at the end of March. When I knew I'd be going to Venice, I somewhat rashly decided that, if Directors took responsibility for some of their own expenses, we could afford to hold a Board meeting in the city. But I also felt I could only justify this if it was part of our purpose to build on our Venetian links, add to Directors' knowledge of the city and offer support and friendship to those of like mind in the Venetian community. So I proposed that we set up a public conversation—we called it a 'colloquy'-between the Guild and the most famous of the charitable confraternities that played so vital a part in the history of the Republic. The so-called scuole were among the models Ruskin had in mind when he founded the Guild, above all the Scuola Grande di San Rocco where in 1845 he discovered the work of Jacopo Tintoretto-or 'Tintoret' as he always called him. On 27th March we met the Guardian Grando (Grand Master) of the Scuola and his fellow trustees and the discussion between us was open to the public. The following day we held a Directors' meeting, and on Sunday 29th March, the Directors, several other Companions and friends visited some of the Venetian sites that Ruskin wrote about. (You can read a full report on pp. 28-29.)

Meanwhile, elsewhere, events proceed apace. Under Ruth Nutter's skilled and passionate guidance, the *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* project has taken off with *élan*. You will be reading more of that in this issue and the next, so I won't go into detail here, but let me say something of our Guild event in the summer. On 27th June, we unveiled a plaque on Ruskin House in Walkley, the building which originally housed St George's Museum. We then proceeded to the very picturesque Walkley Cemetery to unveil a similar plaque on the grave of Henry Swan, the Museum's first curator. It should be added that the Guild was also responsible for restoring his severely damaged gravestone. These acts of tribute and acknowledgement were associated with a traditional ceremony called a 'well dressing', which was conducted by the Revd. Melanie Fitzgerald, the vicar of the local parish church, and they provided the focus of this year's Companions' Day. (A full report of this inspiring event will appear in next year's issue.) Special thanks are due to Richard Watts, the stone cutter we commissioned, who has now become a Companion, and to Companions Marcus Waithe and Mark Frost, who wrote the texts for the stones, as well as providing the key lectures that have got the project launched in the spirit of Ruskin.

Much else goes on in Sheffield still. Please remember to check the website. Apart from the project itself, there was also Louise Pullen's exhibition of bird prints and watercolours recently-The Illustrated Aviary-which mainly drew on the Ruskin Collection and deservedly received high praise. On 19th January 2016, the third of our Triennial exhibitions will open, this time on the theme of Craftsmanship. Last year's John Ruskin Prize exhibition, run by the Campaign for Drawing and financed by the Guild, was held in Sheffield at the Millennium Gallery (see pp. 19-23). The theme was Recording Britain Now and focused on landscape and urban spaces. This year it will be Recording Britain Now for a second time but with a focus on people rather than place. The show will be held in Walsall and then London.

Things are also developing fast in the Wyre Forest. As you know, our long-standing tenant at St George's Farm, Jack Bishop, died some eighteen months ago and the Board has ambitious plans to develop our land and properties there. These will probably involve the setting up of a saw-mill there and the development of former farm buildings to provide housing for workers important to the Wyre projects and possibly craftsmen's workshops. Companion Tim Selman is moving his main office into St George's Farm and when his work with the Wyre Forest Landscape Partnership ends in December, he'll be taking over as manager of the Wyre Community Land Trust. Much more is being contemplated. Expect news of it later in the year.

There is much else I could talk about—the Guild is in a very active period just nowbut I mustn't hog your attention and I want to communicate some words of thanks. We said goodbye last November to two of our most committed labourers in the vineyard: Jim Dearden and Cedric Quayle, one an important former Master, the other an exceptional Secretary. Much has been said about them in the last few months and more will be said before the year is through. Just for now I'd like to thank them for loyal and creative service. I'd also like to thank my fellow Directors for the hard work they have put in this past year, and I'd especially like to single out our Secretary Stuart Eagles, editor and designer of this publication, for the depth of his commitment to the Guild and the back-breaking hours he works for small recompense. This year, however, I want most of all to thank a significant number of my present readers, who have responded generously to my plea to renew the habit of donation. Three years ago, the figure on our accounts under the heading 'Donations' was simply Nil. This year, as you'll see at the AGM, the same space includes a substantial figure, which is really beginning to make a difference. Several Companions have taken out Standing Orders and Gift-aided their donations. This is especially helpful, of course, because it enables us to plan things in advance, and I hope others of your number will think of doing it. I would like at some time in the near future to hypothecate donations and, with predictable funding, that will be easier to achieve. But in any case, the expansion of our work has recently involved a (manageable) deficit, and these donations will do more than help with that. I am most grateful to you. If I don't see you beforehand, I hope to catch up with you at the AGM on 7th November. All good wishes for now,

cl: v

Clive Wilmer



COMPANION FOUND

Companion Dr Mark Frost is adept at locating the final resting places of early Companions. Together with his father, he was responsible for drawing to the Guild's attention the whereabouts and neglected state of Henry Swan's grave in Walkley Cemetery. We have now been able to repair that grave, and we have added to it a commemorative plaque, as part of the *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* project.

The Frosts have also located the grave of 'lost' Companion, William Buchan Graham, in the churchyard of St Leonard's Church, Ribbesford, Bewdley (*right*). The photos of Graham's grave (*left and far right*) are his.





'Impossible hopes'? Mark Frost's The Lost Companions and Ruskin's Guild of St George: A Revisionary History. London: Anthem Press, 2014. XIV+250pp.10 b/w illus. £60.

'Anyone reading through the letters I had from Ruskin may wonder seeing the trust he put in me, how it was that I somehow ceased to be entirely under his influence, and may feel that I rather deserted him.'
—Robert Somervell, For Thirty-Three Years Assistant Master and Bursar of Harrow School: Chapters of Autobiography, 'edited with additional material by his sons' (London: Faber and Faber, undated) p. 59.

So wrote one of the Guild's most interesting early Companions Servant, Robert Somervell (1851-1933), the son of the founder of K Shoes, who is remembered now by Ruskinians principally for his campaign to resist the extension of the railways in the Lake District. He seems to have been the Guild's first Secretary, in all but name. I offer extracts from the account given by this significant Guild administrator of his experiences in the 1870s, as a useful complement to Mark Frost's revisionary history of the Guild, which draws on evidence from Companions Militant who laboured on the land in an attempt to make a working reality of Ruskin's utopian ideals.

Though Somervell's reminiscences were published, they seem to have been overlooked by scholars, whereas much of the material Frost has unearthed was not even known about before now, at least not by anyone still living. William Buchan Graham (see grave, opposite), it turns out, stoically undertook back-breaking work in the Wyre Forest, doing much almost alone to establish the Guild's footprint near Bewdley. The tragic John Guy and his beleaguered family led an unimaginably tough life in Cloughton, Yorkshire. William Harrison Riley presided at Totley over a chaos that was not of his making but for which he would ultimately be blamed. And then there is the quite special case of James Burdon, on which I shall dwell later.

For them, Somervell's plea might be reversed, for on the whole they felt that as disciples who volunteered themselves to Ruskin's cause, they had put trust in him, and it was they who felt abandoned. All of them, however, share a sense of Ruskin's waning influence upon them. Assuming that most of you reading the present article have already read Frost's excellent book-and, if not, why not, for you should certainly read it without further delay! -- I will attempt to present here not so much a review as a response, one that goes back to (at least some) original sources in an attempt to appreciate more fully both the work Frost has done to recuperate the early history of the Guild, and to suggest further work that might yet be done.

The book is the result of scholarly serendipity turned into academic treasure by diligent research. Frost's journey began with the chance discovery (at Wellesley College, Massachusetts) of uncatalogued testimony written by Graham. It was a 'Eureka!' moment that led Frost to seek out and to find several more hugely revealing sources, including letters at the Rosenbach Library in Philadelphia, and a Guy family history published in New Zealand. Piecing together fragments of an unfamiliar story is an art that Frost has mastered here with considerable skill and elegance, and whilst the picture he paints of Ruskin and his closest allies—in particular an insensitive George Baker and an often bibulous David Downs—is anything but flattering, it is vitally important that we do not avert our gaze from what he shows us.

Somervell sat with a pen in *his* hand, whereas Frost's 'lost' Companions stood with spades in theirs. But the work of



Companions Servant and Companions Militant was not unconnected. 'I was able to give [Ruskin] some little help in the business of founding his "Guild of St George," Somervell wrote (p. 57). 'It was curious and interesting to go with him and confer with a Chancery barrister, [the conveyancer] Mr [William] Barber, Q.C., a very delightful man, just out of Court, and regaling himself with tea and a bun, while we "conferred." In Letter 67 of Fors (July 1876), Ruskin announced that Somervell was in charge of co-ordinating legal matters 'regarding the tenure of the Company's land and property, now and in future. And I hold myself quit of all responsibility touching such tenure, maintaining simply the right of the Master to direct their current

expenditures' (*Works* 28.659. See also 29.27 and 29.47). These working men might well have nodded with a vigour enhanced by bitterness as they felt the consequences of a Master quitting himself of responsibility in



other areas, too. Even in the matter of expenditure, Ruskin was neglectful, Frost reveals, leaving his working Guildsmen under-paid, if paid at all, and often paid late even then.

Somervell explained how he came slowly to withdraw from the Guild and to grow apart from the Master:

The change came gradually. I could not of course have really taken up the work that was involved if his St. George scheme were to be realised, and I came more and more to feel that at his age he never could realise it. After his first serious illness-in 1880-this was certain, and I felt I was not justified in seeing him or writing to him, as I should only stir up impossible hopes, while his great need was quiet and peace, and such writing as he could do without strain. I shall never cease to be grateful for all I learnt from him, and I should not like it to be felt, that I had deserted him. In all our intercourse he was ever the most modest, gentle, and charming man I have ever known.

—Somervell, op. cit., pp. 58-59. Frost shows in painful detail that Ruskin's conduct was anything but exemplary when it came to his working-class followers, but Somervell's evidence supports a long-held view among Ruskin scholars that what really undermined the Guild in those early years was that no sooner had Ruskin set it up than he became too ill to run it. Frost argues convincingly that this is only part of a more complex story. For Frost, what is crucial is the tension in Ruskin's philosophy between his commitment to educate the working man and his simultaneous denial of the inevitable consequences of it-the workers' rising sense of ambition and desire to improve their social status. For him, it explains much of

Ruskin's apparently contradictory and insensitive behaviour towards those enthusiastic disciples of his trying to lead lives on the land.

Frost's account of Ruskin's early schemes and social interventions are the best summaries available: of the street-sweeping, the tea shop, the Hinksey road-digging, and Margaret's Well in Carshalton. And there are, besides the 'lost' Companions on whom Frost concentrates, others who emerge from this history whom we should also have known more about before now, some women key among them, including Isabella Tylor, Susan Miller and most notably, Emily Swan, 'curatress' at Walkley.

Somervell's part in the Guild, I would argue, also deserves further attention and reassessment. His sons (who together unusually adopted the first person singular!) noted that, 'It looks as if, were it not for Ruskin's breakdown, my father would have become deeply involved in these undertakings. His loyalty to Ruskin and his keen sense of the dividing line between the possible and the impossible might have combined to put him in a difficult position' (p. 57n.). Ruskin's failure to locate this dividing line himself certainly made life excruciatingly difficult for Guy, Riley, Graham and Burdon. Guy eventually emigrated to New Zealand, and Riley to the USA. A poignant metaphor in Frost's book is provided by the photograph on its cover-of Graham's gravestone at St Leonard's Church, Bewdley (see p. 4). The inscription has been, like Graham's story, almost eroded away. Even Ruskin's most ardent disciples, on reading the details of

St. George's Musem Walklen Dear Friend I hereby certify the following particulars regard to my brother anth Leonard Swan Shringfield Rd addrep altrincham Cheshire at Dec 22 Vate of Death Bloors, 26 Burial Bloors Registry. Crookesmoos oide Sheffield al istered office, Wackley Bank Cometery al Sheffield Howard Swan 19 1886 an Hling

Graham's many reasonable but ultimately fruitless appeals to Ruskin for compassionate understanding, will find it impossible not to sympathise with his frustration and to feel the injustices he suffered. Only Burdon strikes me as truly difficult to like among this company. Only he sought redress by direct and illegal means, and his case is worth turning to for reasons other than its exceptional nature.

Burdon's trial for forging cheques in Ruskin's name took place at the Central Criminal Court on 31st March 1879 (Frost's record can be found on pp. 188-189 of his book). 'The Burdon trial cast a long shadow...' Frost writes: '[it] permanently darkened [Ruskin's] attitude to Companions Militant, any of whom, he felt, might at any moment lead him into further calamity' (p. 189). As such, it was a hugely significant episode that might explain, though never excuse, much of Ruskin's subsequent high-handedness.

Turning to the Proceedings of the Old Bailey (ref. t18790331-379 on <www.oldbaileyonline.org>) one is able not merely to add to the account Frost gleans from Burdon's obscure, selfpublished Reminiscences (printed, presumably with an eye for a profit, in the centenary year of 1919) but also to contradict a couple of Burdon's claims. The first of the two cheques Burdon forged, for example, was for £35 10s, not £30 as he claimed (incidentally, the second chequethe value of which Frost does not givewas for £20). That said, Burdon's name is misspelt Burden in the court transcripts, and more alarmingly Ruskin's home is

given as 'Brightwell'-so the official record might equally be flawed. More significantly, though, the court document reveals that whilst it is true that Burdon was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, this was not accompanied by hard labour. Indeed, none of the sources Frost cites support that (including The Times for 1st April 1879, the Brantwood Diaries and Collingwood's biography of Ruskin). It was Burdon's claim alone, and it gives the measure of the man that he should so choose to exaggerate the punishment meted out to him for his crime. His dishonesty certainly marks him out from his colleagues. As Frost asserts, it is understandable if this incident damaged Ruskin's opinion of a class of men for whom he felt an instinctive and genuine sympathy, but whom he would perhaps never fully understand.

It would make for quite an

impressive scene if one dramatised the attempted forgery. Who would play William Walker, the cashier at the Chancery Lane branch of the Union Bank where the cheques were feloniously uttered? And who could take on the role of John Nolleth, the policeman who apprehended James Burdon—characters named in the court record!

Frost is right that Burdon's account had fallen into obscurity (he cites one instance of its only half-acknowledged use by a scholar), but it might be added that at least one other person was aware of it. Quentin Bell gave a lecture on Ruskin and Burdon at Abbot Hall, based on Burdon's *Reminiscences*, oddly enough in support of the Ruskin Appeal Fund to save Brantwood! We might be glad that it was sparsely attended (the unlikely source is Joe Boden, *Bird's Custard Island: A Culinary Memoir* (Xlibris Corp, 2007) (not paginated) though it is also referred to in Lucia Adams, *Memoria Academia 1960-1976* (Author House, 2014) p. 190.)!

Even Frost's hugely illuminating account of Ruskin's relationship with the Swans, which sheds so much light on St George's Museum, Walkley, might yet be augmented by the efforts of the current RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD project. In a day of research undertaken to ascertain whether there might be any descendants of the Swans still alive, I discovered a fascinating article about the Museum written by the Swans' son, Howard. Published in the Sheffield Independent on 26th January 1900, it was unknown even to the exceptionally well-informed Frost. I have no doubt that the dedicated volunteers being led by Bill Bevan in Walkley over recent months have uncovered material of equal and even greater value.

I do not for a moment mean to suggest that Frost's book ought to have presented even more evidence than it does. He deliberately privileges the first-hand accounts of (mainly working-class) participants in these events (even what he acknowledges to be untrustworthy witnesses like Burdon). Frost is always explicitly alive to the pitfalls of doing so. Lines have to be drawn somewhere, for reasons of editorial policy, time limitations and personal sanity. And Frost makes sensible decisions about where to draw them. He has done a magnificent job of bringing these 'lost' Companions back to us. The achievement of the book is to do nothing less than re-define the scholarly landscape of Guild history, not merely to revise it. If it were not for Frost's diligence as a researcher, we would still be in the dark about these Companions Militant. But by sharing with us such rich material, he inspires us to go looking for more sources, too. In a very small way, I have tried to do that here.

Stuart Eagles

A letter in the Archives of the Society of Friends from Henry Swan's son, Howard, regarding the death of his brother, Leonard, on Museum notepaper.

MARK HARVEY: SOME GUILD MEMORIES¹

I became a Companion of the Guild in 1947—quite some time ago now! Memory is an odd thing; it seems to become, with increasing age, increasingly selective—hence so many gaps.²

When I became a Companion, the Guild had several properties but little or no money with which to maintain them. Of particular concern were our properties at Barmouth—several dilapidated cottages in urgent need of attention, all let at peppercorn rents. The Westmill properties were in better condition, but again the rents barely covered the cost of upkeep. For many years—as I remember—the Guild's properties were the chief topic of discussion at Annual General Meetings, with no mention of The Collection.

Meetings were often held at station hotels, such as The Paddington Hotel. Sometimes there might be as few as five or six present, The Master, T. Edmund Harvey (at that time MP for Joint Universities, a seat long ago discontinued), his wife, ³ myself, perhaps two or three of the faithful, and the truly valiant Secretary Bernard Wardle, who on at least one occasion provided supper at his home in Vanbrugh Fields. It is fair to say that it was his selfless service—and I suspect considerable financial assistance—that kept the Guild going at that time.⁴

One most vivid recollection. The Master, T. E. Harvey, and Alexander Farquharson—at that time Principal of the Institute of Sociology, and later to become Master himself—seen from behind. These two elderly gentlemen side-by-side, two Cheeryble brothers in both looks and benevolence, visiting the Westmill tenants.⁵

Neither of these old gentlemen was in good health. In 1949, T. E. Harvey resigned, and after several approaches to Oxford and Cambridge academics, the 'Special Committee on Mastership' recommended that Alexander Farquharson be asked to undertake the Mastership. This Committee also suggested that a Deputy Master be appointed, but I do not remember this coming about. However, a panel of 'Master's Visitors' was formed, and this continued to function for some time.⁶

It was during Alexander Farquharson's Mastership⁷ that the whole question of the right housing of the Collection arose. The Museum at Meersbrook was found by Sheffield to be in need of more repairing than they felt able to undertake. They suggested that the Collection be put into store, with the possibility of some items being exhibited from time-to-time in the Graves and Mappin Galleries. This proposal both shocked and alerted the Guild. Alexander Farquharson made several approaches—to Edinburgh, to Brantwood itself, and to Reading. This last because Professor Hodges of Reading University had delivered a very wellreceived lecture on 'Ruskin and Nature' at the Graves Gallery, which had organised a



small exhibition of items from the Guild's Collection to go with the lecture.

At the time, the case for Reading seemed strong. There was a well-established Art School, with a very sympathetic head— Professor Betts—and it was a University eager to make use of the Collection for its academic studies. There was a keen interest in the purpose, form, and function of museums as evinced by the University's recently established Museum of English Rural Life. Andrew Jewell, its first curator, became a Companion in 1976 and served the Guild valiantly for 25 years.

There were many meetings between the Guild and the University, and with the Mastership being offered to Professor Hodges,⁸ the future of the Collection seemed assured.

My next recollections are to do with meetings held in Professor Hodges' booklined sitting-room. A major problem arose when we were informed that the Guild's 'Ruskin Madonna'⁹—perhaps the jewel of the Collection—was in urgent need of repair, or conservation. The advice of a then highly thought-of conservator—John Brierley— was sought, and eventually the work was entrusted to him.

The work took much longer than expected, and the eventual cost far exceeded Brierley's original estimate. Eventually, after much heated debate between Guild

> representatives and Sheffield, it was decided that the only way to settle the debt was to sell the picture.

The Guild was determined that the picture should be sold to a public gallery, and this is how it ended up in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh.¹⁰

This bizarre event did, however, result in the Guild finding itself in possession of very considerable funds, enabling it to finance a wide variety of schemes.

From that time on, there was a real change in the Guild. Up to then, its activities had been limited to the upkeep of properties donated to it, the May Queen presentations,¹¹ a nominal contribution to the CPRE, and the annual essay prize open to Ruskin College students. Now there could be Craft Awards, grants to the [Henry] Doubleday Research Association [now Garden Organic], scholarships for painters and art teachers, grants to establishments providing country holidays for town children, grants to City Farms. A wide variety, hopefully reflecting in some way the breadth of Ruskin's interests and sympathies.

A major event was the return of the Collection to Sheffield. For some

time, the Guild grew increasingly concerned about Reading's inability both to house the Collection appropriately and to ensure easy access for the general public. There had been talk of custom-built accommodation, but this came to nothing. Eventually, there was something of a show-down and this resulted in the return of the Collection to Sheffield.

With the housing of the Collection in premises provided by Sheffield-a restored and re-vamped former off-license in Norfolk Street—things were at last coming together. The Collection was back where it truly belonged, and the Guild could feel that it had a base. It had come home.12 Many memorable features were added by the Guild-stairs and stair-rails, the mezzanine floor balustrade and window bars were commissioned from the smith, Giuseppe Lund, who was later to make the Queen Elizabeth Gates in Green Park. Some of the window bars now supplement the planting in the Sheffield Winter Garden. The master letter-cutter, David Kindersley, was commissioned to design and cut a large name



tablet in green Cumberland slate to stand at the entrance to the new gallery. He also cut a smaller tablet installed inside the new gallery to commemorate its official opening in 1985 by Lord Strabolgi.

Edited by Jannes S. Dearden and Cedric Quayle

NOTES

1. Mark recorded his memories of the Guild at the suggestion of Cedric Quayle, but he did not want them published during his lifetime. His wife, Jo, has now suggested that they should be published. Some additional material, included here as endnotes, were added following conversations between Mark and Cedric. 2. Companionship was given to Mark Harvey by his uncle, T. Edmund Harvey, then Master, for his 21st birthday. The matter of the Guild Creed came to the fore and Mark, uneasy at signing his acceptance of it, approached his uncle who replied 'Well, dear man, thee must go along with the spirit of the Creed.' The Roll of Companions shows that Mark was admitted in 1946. His address was 1 Manor Way, Letchworth. A 21st birthday gift would make the date 1941. The report of 1945-1946 states, 'I have been happy to have been able to enroll my nephew Mr. Mark H. Harvey, of Letchworth, and Mr. Ian Porter, of Barnsley, as members of the Guild.' 3. His wife, Irene A. Harvey, was admitted a Companion at the same time as Mark, in 1946. Her address was given as Rydal House, Grosvenor Road, Leeds, which I remember from my student days as one of the very posh roads!

4. Mark recollected travelling to Bewdley to meet Ruskin Williams, then the tenant of St George's Bungalow in Ruskin Land.
5. It was on this occasion that Mark first met Admiral Kyrle Pope at Westmill, a man who, until the 1990s, was a great influence on life in that village, being Chairman of the Greg Trust, the other Trust holding property there.

Mark's early Guild memories included the Ruskin College essays—on a set subject—which he and another Companion would need to read in order to select the prize winner. Mark remembered it being 'quite a wadge' of papers, especially some specifically for 1950-51. The scripts are still in the Guild's archives.

6. Mark went to visit the Guild's field at Sheepscombe, as 'The Master's Assistant' in about 1946.7. Master, 1951-1954

8. Master, 1954-1973

9. The painting, *The Madonna and Child*, now known as *The Ruskin Madonna*, was acquired for the Guild's Collection by Ruskin. Charles Fairfax Murray, acting on Ruskin's behalf, bought the painting from the Venetian Manfrini Collection in 1877 for £100. It is the work of Andrea del Verrocchio, the Master of Leonardo da Vinci. Some are of the opinion that Leonardo himself may have helped with the painting.

10. The Guild subsequently commissioned Philippa Abrahams to paint a copy of the picture, using only the pigments available to Verrocchio. This copy, now in

the Ruskin Collection, shows what *The Ruskin Madonna* would have looked like when it left Verrocchio's studio.

11. A May Queen Ceremony was instituted at Whitelands College by Ruskin, who annually gave copies of his books for the May Queen and her attendants. After Ruskin's death, the Guild continued the custom, but for some reason it lapsed. The custom was revived in 1979.

12. Mark's manuscript ends at this point. From here, the additions are as the editors think he would have continued.



MATLOCK BATH: A FOOTNOTE



The Companion is a pleasure to handle and read! Thank you for all your efforts on behalf of the Guild.

Having read the article on Matlock Bath

in the last issue of *The Companion*, I was reminded of a small promotional pamphlet in my collection (*front and back covers*, *pictured*). The pamphlet measures 9cm by 12cm and consists of 8 pages, including the covers. Pages 2-6 print most of a letter written by Ruskin to

the editor of the *Manchester City News* on 13th April 1884 (*Works* 34.570-2) on railways. The letter is preceded by the following paragraph:

Mr. John Ruskin, who has been a frequent visitor to the New Bath Hotel, Matlock, and whose autograph occurs repeatedly in the Visitors' Book, has recently penned, in reference to a threatened Railway extension to the more secluded parts of the Peak district, the following eloquent protest, which gives some idea of what the Eminent Art Professor thinks of the Picturesque beauty of Derbyshire in general, and of Matlock Bath in particular.

Page 7 contains an excerpt from *The Lancet* entitled 'Derbyshire As A Health Resort'. The article argues that the 'moorlands of Derbyshire and of its neighbouring county, Yorkshire' are just as beneficial to a person's health as any continental destination. **Bob Knight**

FRANK CONSTANTINE O.B.E. (1919-2014)

Frank Constantine was the head of Sheffield City Art Galleries between 1964 and 1982. He was invited to become a Companion of the Guild in 1977 at a time when the Guild was increasingly unhappy about the way the Collection was being treated at Reading University. Frank was soon elected a Director of the Guild.

Frank was keen that the Collection should be returned to Sheffield, the home intended for it by Ruskin. At his invitation the Guild's Annual General Meeting of 1979 was held in Sheffield. It was at this meeting that I became a Companion and a Director; here too I met Frank, and his wife Eileen, for the first time.

Behind the scenes, negotations were taking place, and in the summer of 1981 an agreement was signed with Sheffield to return the Guild's Collection to the city. At this time there was no permanent home for the Collection and it returned to Sheffield to go into storage for some time. The then volunteer museum-worker, Janet Barnes, was responsible for checking it in. Eventually, the Collection found a new home in specially prepared galleries in Norfolk Street, in the city centre. Frank, of course, was much involved with the arrangements, but he was shortly to retire from his city appointment and his deputy, Julian Spalding, also a Companion, succeeded him.

When Tony Harris was Master, Directors' meetings were occasionally held in his office at Chelsea School of Art and we had lunch at the Chelsea Arts Club. At that time the Guild made annual Craft Awards, in conjunction with the Crafts Council. One



year, Frank, Mark Harvey and I were to sit in on the awards meeting, and Tony had reserved over-night accommodation at the Chelsea Arts Club. When we arrived there they said they were a little over-booked, and had arranged for us to stay on a barge on the river-and they directed us to it. On arrival at the river bank, we found it was low water-lots of mud. There was a precarious jetty leading to two barges, ours being the outer one. Both leaned heavily riverwards. On arrival on our barge, we found the owners were not at home. Breathing a sigh of relief, we all beamed at each other! Mark went off to stay with his daughter who lived in London, and Frank and I went off and found an hotel in South Kensington.

Directors' meetings were held increasingly in Sheffield. Frank always knew the best places in the city for dinner, and he masterminded some enjoyable evenings when he often regaled us with tales of his gastronomic experiences in France.

Like his father, Frank was an accomplished artist; he was a painter in oils while his father was essentially a watercolourist. He was responsible for the re-opening of the Mappin Gallery in Surrey Street and during his time as Museums Director many notable accessions were made to the city's collections.

I liked Frank. We always got on well together. I suppose we had our Curatorships in common, and we often talked about our various collections.

Frank resigned as a Director of the Guild when he gave up his Sheffield appointment, but he remained a Companion and I was always delighted to see him at Annual General Meetings. He will be greatly missed.

DBIRUAR



Gerald Taylor, who died earlier this year, was for a long time the Senior Assistant Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum's Department of Fine Art, which later became the Department of Western Art. He became a Companion of the Guild of St George in 1982.

Gerald joined the Ashmolean's staff in the late 1940s and continued there until his retirement in 1990. Despite suffering frequently from incapacitating headaches resulting from a war wound, Gerald was always very busy in his department. His particular specialities were silver and glass. But he also took a great interest in the Ruskin Drawing School's collection which is lodged at the Ashmolean. He recatalogued it and was really the forefather of the current website, The Elements of Drawing.

I had met Gerald a number of times at either the Ashmolean or Guild meetings. By chance we met again, soon after he retired, at a meeting of Olive Madden's Ruskin Society-held for some strange reason in the Star Chamber at

Westminster Abbey. During the course of conversation, I asked Gerald if he wanted a retirement job. 'Doing what?' he asked. I said I thought there was a great need for a Catalogue Raisonné of all Ruskin's drawings, and because of his work on the Drawing School Collection, I thought he

was the chap to do it. He agreed, but insisted that we would work jointly on the project. And so it began.

Gerald and his wife Hilary visited all of the Ruskin collections in this country and photographed everything. With the help of a Leverhulme Grant, I wrote to all the overseas holdings of Ruskin drawings and obtained photographs. And Gerald began to write. The catalogue of course included works to which Ruskin himself referred, and to other works which were catalogued in various places, in addition to the actual drawings which we located. As the years passed Gerald told me that he could only concentrate for a couple of hours daily-but eventually by the end of 2005 he had completed the catalogue: some fifteen years' work. Gerald did tell me how many words he had written. I fear I can't remember whether it was a quarter or a half a million-either way, a very considerable number. He insisted that the Catalogue should appear in our joint names. But eventually, because of the size of the project, we were unable to find a publisher. So Gerald's greatest academic achievement may never see the light of day.

James S. Dearden

WHITELANDS RUSKIN LECTURE AND MAY FESTIVAL 2014

In 1881, the Revd. John Pincher Faunthorpe, Principal of Whitelands House, a highly-reputed teacher-training College for young women, wrote to Ruskin asking whether he would donate a copy of Proserpina annually as a prize for his students. Four years earlier, Faunthorpe, an avid reader of Ruskin, had sent a donation of £5 for the Guild of St George. Ruskin returned the $\pounds 5$ noting that it might be put to better use in the school. Over the succeeding years, they corresponded regularly and Ruskin sent books and pictures to enhance the girls' education. However, he was cautious about Faunthorpe's new proposal:

I will give the annual Proserpina but not as a prize. I have a deep and increasing sense of the wrong of all prizes and of every stimulus of a competitive kind. There should be a strict and high pass standard in all skills and knowledge required, but one which it should be dishonourable to fall short of, not a matter of exultation or ground of praise to reach. In all competitions, success is more or less unjust ... while I intensely dislike all forms of competition, I believe the recognition of an uncontending and natural worth to be one of the most solemn duties alike of young and old. Suppose you made it a custom that the scholars should annually choose by ballot, with vowed secrecy, the Queen of May? And that the elected queen had, with more important rights, that of giving the 'Proserpina' to the girl she thought likeliest to use it with advantage?

Ruskin's counter-proposal appealed to Faunthorpe and the very first Whitelands May Queen, Queen Ellen, was chosen by her peers that same year. Faunthorpe sent Ruskin a picture of Ellen. 'I'm rather frightened of my queen', he replied. 'She looks to me between 35 and 38 and rather as if she would bring back the inquisition and trial by the rack.' However, after receiving letters directly from Queen Ellen his mood changed: 'It's very nice getting these pretty letters of thanks, with a little at the end of each, which one can save up and keep.'

Remarkably, these 'romantic



Revd. John Pincher Faunthorpe This photo (and photo opposite) are reproduced with the kind permi sion of the Library of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

fancies' (as Ruskin later wrote) still continue. There have been some changes over the years—the 'May Queen' became a 'May Monarch' in 1986 to allow for the election of men as well as women; Whitelands House has now become Whitelands College, part of the University of Roehampton.

Although Ruskin himself never attended a Festival, he provided copies of his books each year and corresponded avidly with the May Queens. The Guild has followed his lead, in supporting the Festival for several decades. However, last year, the partnership was extended with the establishment of an annual Whitelands Ruskin Lecture. Held the same week as the May Day Festival, the inaugural lecture was delivered by Professor Dinah Birch and entitled 'Thinking Through the Past':

John Ruskin and the Whitelands College May Festival. It proved to be both a fascinating introduction to the Festival and a persuasive, well-argued statement of Ruskin's progressive beliefs on the education of girls.

Professor Birch deftly explored a wide range of themes surrounding the history and meaning of the Festival. She described Whitelands House as a progressive institution founded by the National Society for the Promotion of Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church to provide a professional training for girls from poor backgrounds to become teachers. Faunthorpe, who became its Principal in 1874, worked tirelessly to improve its standards and curriculum, such that by 1878 inspectors hailed it as amongst the finest schools of its kind in the country.

This progressive establishment appealed to Ruskin because it shared his own concerns about social welfare and the limited educational opportunities for girls. Professor Birch noted how his own early education, directed by his mother, reflected female values in contrast to the traditional education of young boys. Women's aspirations and abilities were to be taken seriously, he believed; as he later wrote in *Of Queen's Gardens*: 'You bring up your girls as if they were meant for sideboard ornaments, and then complain of their frivolity. Give them the same advantages that you give their brothers.'

Yet, as Professor Birch highlighted, his views on those advantages were not always in tune with his times. He was concerned about an increasingly utilitarian approach to education, driven by examinations, which ground down young people like machines. Education, he felt, should nurture and develop the potential of young people encouraging them to experience and appreciate the world around them.

Professor Birch discussed *Proserpina*, the text intended to be given to the May Queens. Referring to its complex play of ideas around flowers, beauty, transience and loss, she argued that Ruskin's May Queens were similarly beautiful, imperfect

The May Day Festival at Whitelands College was instituted at Ruskin's suggestion.



and mortal. He had Arthur Severn design a delicate golden cross incorporating hawthorn blossoms for each May Queen. Professor Birch observed that the hawthorn blossom symbolised the fleeting nature of the may blossom and intriguingly connected this idea of transient beauty with Ruskin's private grief over the death of Rose La Touche in 1875. This conceptualisation of a mortal May Queen thus transforms what might be dismissed as simply an idealisation of female beauty into something far more complex and evocative. Furthermore, Ruskin's wish that the title be bestowed on the May Queen by her fellow students reinforces the importance of co-operation, duties and responsibilities, rather than competition, themes Ruskin returns to throughout his writings.

The rich interplay of ideas in Professor Birch's lecture provided an illuminating backdrop for this first-time attender to enjoy the May Day celebrations the following Saturday. On a perfect spring day, Whitelands College looked magnificent. Now part of the University of Roehampton, it moved to its current location, Parkstead House, in 2011. Constructed in the early 1760s, the House has gone through many changes, but still retains much of its external grandeur. There is, however, a certain irony in the fact that a celebration initiated by Ruskin now takes place in an eighteenth-century neo-Palladian mansion, owned in his time and until recently, by a Jesuit training college.

When the College moved to Parkstead House it took with it several prized possessions from its earlier Chelsea home. A splendid series of stained glass windows depicting female saints designed by Edward Burne-Jones and made by Morris & Co. have been carefully installed along two corridors, enabling them to be admired close up. A William Morris-designed reredos, previously in the Chapel, now graces the lecture theatre where the Investiture of the May Monarch tales place. Corridors

> throughout the building display photographs of May Queens from generations past and the event remains a firm favourite with alumni of the College. Former May Queens and Kings return for the day, wearing their coronation outfits (or a version thereof!). It is as much their day as it is that of the newly crowned Monarch. They processioned first into the lecture theatre, a reminder of the lineage which the new monarch is about to join. Indeed, these processions were among the

most spirited aspects of the day—a celebration of women (and more latterly, men) of all ages.

The Investiture of the new May Monarch was conducted by the Bishop of Kingston in an enjoyable service. The Head of College, Companion Revd. Dr Mark Garner, channelled the spirit of Ruskin as he read several extracts from the correspondence with Revd. Faunthorpe. College musicians and singers provided very professional performances.

This year's May Monarch, Queen Elle, was chosen by a vote of her peers, but not, as Ruskin might have hoped, in a secret process unbeknown to her. She had clearly had her eye on the title of May Monarch since arriving at the College. Yet, in handing over her responsibilities to Queen Elle, Queen Sara—elected in 2013—reminded all of the charitable works expected of the Monarch during the year, and one had the sense that



The first and second Whitelands Ruskin Lectures are available now from the Guild <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/shop> A review of Sara Atwood's lecture will appear in the next issue.



Whitelands College May Day Celebration

Investiture of Elle Sophie Osborne Saturday 17th May 2014 11:00 am Coffee is available in the Dining Room from 9.15 a.m. Please take your place in the Lecture Theatre no later than 10.15 am and show this card to the Usher.



ADMIT ONE TO THE SERVICE

this notion of service was equally important to Queen Elle.

Lunch followed, in a marquee on the beautiful and tranquil lawns of the College, reminding one that festivities remain connected with the English folk traditions of



May Day, another of the themes explored by Professor Birch. The year of the first May Queen Festival—1881—was also when the 'Old English Fayre' took place at the Albert Hall with a maypole at its centre. Professor Birch perceptively identified this folk revival as a means of resisting the

changes of industrialisation, expressed both as an idealisation of the rural past, but also as a focus for early socialists, including William Morris, whose 'Chants for Socialists' included the poem 'May-Day'. Our afternoon also saw Maypole dancing

COMPANIONS' WEEKEND, BEWDLEY

by the Queen and her attendants, albeit without the socialist chants.

Just before the return of competitiveness to the proceedings—with the Whitelands Old Boys taking on the College's first eleven football team—the jazz band in the marquee quietened and the tea-cups were held still and silent as the Master of the Guild mounted the stage to give a few well-chosen words of Ruskinian congratulation to Queen Elle and her attendants. As he presented them with copies of *Ruskin's Drawings* by Nicholas Penny, it brought us back full-circle to Professor Birch's lecture and to the origins of the Festival itself, a reminder of a tradition that continues, renewed and refreshed. Long may it continue!

Mark Lewis

EPORT

Although we only spent just over a day in Bewdley at the Companions' Weekend on 11-12th July last year, there was so much to do, that it seemed like a short holiday. Proceedings began on Friday evening at Bewdley Museum, with a reception prior to a private view of Ruskin Yesterday and To-Day: Drawing on Nature, an exhibition exploring the Guild's involvement in the Wyre Forest, which was followed by the official opening and dedication of the Anthony Page Library. As it was a beautiful summer evening, we were able to eat supper outside (*pictured*, *right*); it was a generous and well-cooked meal, served in an open space in the museum, the informality making it an ideal opportunity to meet some who had come for the weekend and other more



The Master being tutored in spinning by Companion, Jeannette Lock, at Uncllys. Sketch by Companion Michael Riggs.



local people who were just attending that

local people who were just attending that evening.

We met up again on Saturday morning at Uncllys Farm in the Wyre Forest, the idea being to immerse ourselves in the activities of the rural economy, and to experience some Ruskinian activities hands-on. The day more than lived up to expectations, helped considerably by the summer weather, which meant that most of the time was spent outside, with a rustic barbeque lunch. There were two practical morning workshops.

1) *Natural Wealth*, led by Ruth Nutter (Producer, *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD*). Ruth used the session as a trial run for an activity she was planning for the *Wealthy Weekend* in November in Sheffield when she was hoping to create a *Tree of Wealth* made up of small wooden discs on the floor of the Millennium Gallery, (*see pp.* 24-25).

In the Ruskin Studio, the beautiful rebuilt barn at Uncllys, Ruth had set up the large table as if for a meal, with an empty Menu Card for each guest, titled 'Recipe for Wealth', which was standing up in front of each place-setting. Ruth's aim was for us to discover what was precious to us; she wanted us to think laterally about the wealth that mattered to us. Each person was given a charcoal pencil, a piece of string and four pieces of paper which were holepunched ready to be inserted into the Menu Card. We were given four questions and we had to answer them by drawing or writing on the pieces of paper. The questions were: what is your favourite view?,

what makes you smile? who would you like to thank? and what do you want to pass on? On completion, our task was to thread the string through the holes, inserting our drawings inside the cover, so making a 'Recipe for Wealth'. The final task was then to select a small wooden disc and draw on it something which was precious to us, bearing in mind our thoughts whilst making our 'Recipe for Wealth' menus. It was an extremely interesting exercise, because by working through the four assignments, my final decision as to what to draw on the wooden disc was surprisingly different to my original idea.

2) Spinning and Textiles Workshop, led by Rachel Dickinson, Linda Iles and Jeannette Lock. Two spinning wheels were set up outside Uncllys, alongside a table which displayed an assortment of wool. We were shown the art of carding and the results of spinning different sorts of wools. The pulling and spinning of the threads looked so easy and relaxing, during the demonstration, but it was actually extremely hard to co-ordinate pumping the feet to get the wheel turning, whilst pulling and encouraging the threads to spin. Nevertheless, we were all encouraged to try and master the art of

spinning, and it was hard to break away from the task for the barbeque lunch.

The programme for the afternoon included a walk through the Wyre Forest led by Cedric Quayle, John Iles and Tim Selman. We were told the details of the Wyre Forest Management Plan. The place of woodland management and coppicing in the Plan were explained and we were shown the difference between areas which had been cleared, allowing more light in and encouraging regrowth, compared with trees which

had been left to grow tall, reaching for the light, which in turn prevented light getting through to the undergrowth. The walk also included a visit to St George's Farm, with



Workshop: Writing Recipes for Wealth in the

Tim Selman explaining how the Guild was hoping to develop the outbuildings to create offices and accommodation and to

run courses and workshops for architectural students from Cardiff University who were studying the diverse uses of oak (see pp. 18-19).

Tea and cakes were laid on back at the Farm after the walk and time was allowed for a recap on the day and for farewells, before everyone set off in different directions to return home. As a fairly new Companion, I very much appreciated the opportunity of spending time informally with other Companions and seeing and experiencing the continua-

tion of Ruskin's ideas in practice.

Christine Parker

'EDUCATION FOR EDUCATION'S SAKE?': A SYMPOSIUM AT TOYNBEE HALL

Download the programme and listen online: <www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/education/>

On Saturday, 11th October, about 35 Companions and guests gathered at Toynbee Hall for a symposium on Ruskin and modern education. Organised by Companions Sara Atwood and Paul Tucker, the day consisted of two shorter papers and a plenary lecture, followed by a panel discussion joined by three further contributors who made introductory remarks to set out their views. This was the third time the Guild had collaborated with the Ruskin Library and Research Centre at Lancaster University to run a symposium.

The Master welcomed everyone to the original university settlement where many graduates from Oxford, deeply influenced by Ruskin's values, lived at the turn of the nineteenth century into the twentieth. For many, living among the poor in the East End was the beginning of a life of public service. Several prominent Guild Companions were among them: two Masters, Hugh Charles Fairfax-Cholmelev and T. Edmund Harvey; John Howard Whitehouse, whose collection forms the basis of the Ruskin Library, was Toynbee's Secretary immediately before Clement Attlee assumed that role; and Howard Hull, Director of Brantwood, who attended the symposium, worked at Toynbee Hall helping to organise its centenary celebrations in 1984. The artsand-crafts building provided the perfect setting for the day's events. Lunch was served in Ashbee Hall-Charles Ashbee, the founder of the Guild of Handicraft, having run a Ruskin Society at Toynbee in the 1880s.

The Master said that whilst for Ruskin knowledge and understanding were valuable, they must be interwoven and

enhanced by experience to count as education. Ruskin focused his educational efforts on women and workingclass men, groups largely ignored by other Victorian



educationists. He had contributed to the teaching of art and industrial design, and had lectured at Oxford, the Working Men's College and elsewhere. His concern was to educate the eye, hand and heart, believing in the inseparability of body and soul. Ruskin derived much of his educational philosophy from his mother, who taught him to read, specifically to read the whole of the Bible and learn much of it by heart. He taught that pictures, buildings and landscapes can be read, too. 'If only', Wilmer concluded, following Ruskin, 'our educators could teach us to admire.'

Sara Atwood's paper followed on perfectly, eloquently exploring the question of how we value education in a market economy. She cited the 'one million words' challenge of a school in Arizona where she lives. It's fine to have a target, she said, but were these words worth reading? It is the question Ruskin would have asked. The incursion of

market forces-the imperative to measure, quantify, and calculate-had driven down the number and duration of recreational breaks and had led to less emphasis being placed on art. Ruskin wanted people to look closely at the world, to see something, a philosophy that was underpinned by his conviction that the 'Law of Help'-the interdependence of all things-was an inviolable Truth. A thirst for applause is easily quenched today by social media. Education should be about much more. The aggressive market demands that have penetrated to the heart of educational policy have led Governments to stake claims that they are out-educating the rest of the world, a phenomenon encapsulated in ideas such as the 'race to the top' in the US. Good governance, social justice, happiness, peace, community, citizenship, mutualism, and responsibility are all subordinated to the marketplace and to the perceived necessity of economic success. Prizes, cash incentives, leader-boards, competition: extrinsic



motivation has a long-term negative effect. The 'real' world, we keep being told, requires preparation for employment. Even at school, we are producers and consumers now. We don't make happy carpenters any more. Dr Atwood related how her own college students in Arizona were, on the whole, unwilling or unable to engage in meaningful discussion. Unmeasurable Ruskinian virtues are out-of-favour and the difference between education and training has become blurred. We need to ask what sort of society we want? Do we want children who can Google paintings in an instant, or who take time to look at them? Curiosity, wonder, even confusion surely play a more important role in the transformative process of a proper education than much of what counts for education today?

Picking up directly where Dr Atwood left off, Dinah Birch's keynote lecture was characteristically eloquent, an exploration of the roots of Ruskin's thinking about perfection, or more precisely of imperfection and failure, and how it relates to nineteenthcentury notions of education. How can we connect those Victorian ideas with our twenty-first century understanding of education? she asked. The belief in the imperfection of humanity is born out of Ruskin's Christian faith-man's fallen nature was a dominant doctrine among Evangelicals. Like Wilmer, Prof. Birch saw the role of Margaret Ruskin as crucial. She believed that humanity has a duty to use its talents in God's service. Margaret had hoped her son would be a preacher or a teacher. But Ruskin also drew on the Romantic inheritance from his father, with whom he read novels and travelled.

Prof. Birch then traced Ruskin's uncompromising insistence on the absolute law that imperfection is vital in art, craft and architecture, to the same quality in nature itself. Prof. Birch traced this thread in Ruskin's life by reference to Turner, to 'The Mystery of Life and Its Arts' and 'The Nature of Gothic' and argued persuasively that this belief in imperfection lies at the base of Ruskin's philosophy of education. Ruskin's perspective was in exact and stark contrast to Matthew Arnold's. Arnold famously defined culture as 'the study of perfection'. In part the contrast can be explained by the difference between Arnoldian

(From the top) Clive Wilmer; Sara Atwood; the audience in the Lecture Hall during Dr Atwood's talk; Prof. Dinah Birch; Paul Tucker; Howard Hull; and Prof. Stephen Wildman. All photos: John Iles. *thinking* and Ruskinian *doing*. Both Arnold and Ruskin opposed the mechanical in education. Ruskin's enduring hatred of competitive exams derives from this belief in imperfection and its role in the creative imagination:

Good pictures do not teach a nation; they are the signs of its having been taught. Good thoughts do not form a nation; it must be formed before it can think them. Let it once decay at the heart, and its good work and good thoughts will become subtle luxury and aimless sophism; and it and they will perish together.—*The Cestus of Agaia.*

For Ruskin, it was not so much a case of 'education for education's sake', but education for the liberation of the individual. The drive for perfection in the twenty-first century is destructive. There are those who expect too much and who often burn themselves out, and those who expect too little because perfection is unreachable. Yet the acceptance of failure is crucial. One answer is that we should recognise the value of the creative arts in education. The Guild's Campaign for Drawing had been a fine example of the value of doing just that. Creative writing is vital, too. We need opportunities positively to acknowledge failure. The system is over-prescriptive, and whilst skills of course need to be honed, people do need guidance and something to imitate—copying and practice are indeed vital-yet people need space to explore and to create, to allow the opportunity for individual development and growth. The current educational struggle has deep roots, and Ruskin is among those who can help us to find new answers to an old challenge.

In the discussion that followed, a dominant theme was the gender divide: young men and young women can be casualties of not having internalised a work discipline. There was a feeling expressed that there needs to be a move away from the culture of unrelenting assessment. There is too much 'dividing up' in education-making for small packets or snippets of unconnected learning. It is not exceptional for 18-yearolds, Prof. Birch said, to go to Russell Group universities without ever having read a novel in its entirety. The Master added that this packaged approach kills the joy of reading, because the experience is incomplete. Reading gives a sense of what it is like to be someone else, or at least to understand someone else's point-of-view. Prof. Birch spoke of the 'fizz' one feels when making new connections, and forming ideas in the mind: it is an example of deep pleasure. Children will find books that adults don't approve of that will mean something to them. But there are growing issues of access because of the running down of school libraries.

Co-organiser and Companion Paul Tucker (University of Florence) spoke on "Thoughtful labour": Ruskin and the nature of education" analysing the asymmetrical relationship between learner and teacher. Drawing on Stefan Collini, Tucker argued that higher education was no longer considered a public good guided by educational judgment, but rather by a lightly regulated market in which student choice is sovereign. For Ruskin, to educate and to govern were one and the same: a vital, formative process subordinating learner to educator, a process that might be characterised as 'thoughtful labour'. Tucker delivered a careful analysis that probed the intricacies of Ruskin's precise distinctive use of language, and which looked closely at the education process through the lens of speech -act theory. Ruskin wrote that, 'I know myself to be a true master, because my pupils are well on the way to do better than I have done.' We live that we may learn.

Stephen Wildman then introduced a panel of three short presentations that preceded a panel discussion that included all of the day's speakers, as well as participation from the audience. This session was chaired by Andrew Tate of Lancaster University. Dr Tate ably and humorously summarised the papers up to that point, and reminded us that Ruskin was the defender of Modern Painters, as well as Old Masters: we must be open to new and emerging ideas, too.

Melissa Benn, an education campaigner enthusiastically delivered 'Some thoughts on Ruskin's relevance to present-day debates on education'. Commending thoughtful labour, she underlined the limitations of the three Rs; spoke of the role of families and household relationships in shaping children's education; and the importance of process compared to outcomes-and she lamented that in practice our emphasis is typically reversed. Learning by heart is 'Goveite', she insisted; learning by transfer was what was needed. A fact-led curriculum could never give the arts and humanities their proper place. We have lost sight of the paramountcy of doing things in order to lose oneselfand losing oneself in doing. Ruskin understood the connectedness of different subjects. Education was rapidly becoming an increasingly expensive prize, a vehicle for ambition, striven for because it confers status. Put children themselves in charge of art budgets and canteen budgets, she suggested: they and we will learn a great deal from that.

Aonghus Gordon (Ruskin Mill Trust) spoke inspiringly on 'Education from the inside out'. Ruskin underpinned the coordinating principles of the Trust's work, he said: charity, education, enterprise, science, nature and co-operation. The Trust deliberately embraced those excluded from mainstream education, and Gordon related the example of finding room at the Trust for the 'Croydon tyre-slasher'. In concentrating on the hand, on touch, on sensory boundaries; in nurturing craftsmanship; in 'accurate discipline in doing'-it was possible for individuals failed by the state system to thrive. Neurologists have validated Ruskin before educationists have, he said. Funding streams have to be declared in medicine, Gordon remarked, but not in education, and why not? Rolemodelling was a way of re-forging relationships. Emotional cognitive resistance is the embodiment of the heart in the head, and the head in the body. In education, we need to go to nature, as Ruskin did. We need to disestablish the classroom and take the pupil to the tree-not the tree to the classroom. Our mission should be to draw (to attract) not to push (or repel).

Challenging much of what had gone before, Anthony O'Hear (Professor of Philosophy, University of Buckingham) proved provocative with his short paper, "You alone can bring them into their right minds": a few Ruskinian thoughts on education'.

It was necessary to know things, not by learning facts, but by initiation in culture. Introducing children to the worlds of Art, Music, and History was vital. Reading Ruskin on Milton, O'Hear found conflicting elements in Ruskin's thought. We cannot hope to be original so we learn from others. What, O'Hear asked, is the intrinsic value of education? It is a question not sufficiently examined by anyone, including Ruskin. Enjoyment and happiness are not necessary, O'Hear insisted. Do we want, as Mill put it, to have 'a fool satisfied, or

(From the top) Dr Andrew Tate; Melissa Benn; Aonghus Gordon, Prof. Anthony O'Hear; Benn and O'Hear in conversation; and (below) Dr Jim Dearden talking with Dr Sara Atwood and Chris Harris. All photos: John Iles.



Socrates dissatisfied'? 'We should be trying to make children *un*happy with what they *are*, and to aspire', O'Hear said. Education *is* an end in itself, but how should it be 'produced'? O'Hear's belief was that the state was not the right provider of education because it would always defer to economic imperatives and political aims (what he called 'indoctrination'). It could and should still be free, but provided by others.

Thanks in large part to O'Hear, the debate that followed was lively, though he found himself in a minority of one in the disputatious dialogue that ensued. Benn was first to respond. Cultural literacy is important, but how it is delivered is vital. Enjoyment is essential to learning, but difficulty within learning is crucial, too. She totally disagreed about the role of the state. O' Hear responded that cultural literacy is a means of being creative. Prof. Birch commented that 'happiness' was perhaps being misunderstood. Put more accurately, the view she had been advancing was that pleasure and enjoyment were derived from conquering difficulty, that education should mean making new connections, not simply confirming an individual's sense of identity. The love of puns among children is a powerful example of this, she said: a real and challenging expansion of meaning and self. Dr Atwood agreed, and underlined the distinction between this and traditional notions of what fun means. Howard Hull spoke of the need to train and discipline the mind: we need to know things-but not by rote; technology has set us challenges and opened up opportunities in this respect.

The independence of the independent sector is vital, O'Hear said. But Benn argued that for the type of students in the independent sector, their privileged position was such that it would be difficult to fail. O'Hear further provoked debate when he spoke about the duties and responsibilities of parents. Prof. Birch pointed out that many parents have not had a sufficient education themselves to make informed decisions on behalf of their children. O'Hear said that he found this position deeply patronising and unconvincing. The State, he said, could compel parents who neglect their children to take an interest in their education. Benn argued that often middle-class advantage is often confirmed by the system. Peter Miller commended the comprehensive system as an equaliser. Gordon responded that he did not trust the state to deliver education because of the dangers of political interference. State methodology was leading to rising

cases of exclusion. Benn countered that the dangers of corporate interference were potentially greater, but acknowledged that the state as it was now run was often not a good education provider, but that it *could* and *should* be. John Iles, busily handling the roving mic all afternoon, remarked that most people didn't crave choice, what they wanted was their local school to be of a high standard, and of value to the community. Prof. Birch also warned of the dangers of parents perpetuating social divisions. In her comprehensive school, Birch was confronted by new ideas and experiences that would not have fallen to her from her farming parents, she said.

It was a lively and successful symposium which took place at a venue rich in Ruskinian associations on an unusually sunny and warm autumn day.

Stuart Eagles



PAST MASTER: HENRY ELFORD LUXMOORE (1841-1926)

This portrait of Luxmoore, which hangs in the Hall at Eton College, where Luxmoore was both a student and a Master, is by Charles Wellington Furse (1868-1904).

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CARDIFF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS ON RUSKINLAND

'Discoveries are made through the act of making that cannot be anticipated in the code space of an architectural drawing.'—(Kate Darby, architect)

This is our fifth and final year of full-time architectural study and all nine of us have fought off competition to join Kate Darby's 'Tectonics, Form & Place' unit at Cardiff University. The unit is dedicated to developing a place-specific architectural language by exploring the links between place and material through first-hand interaction with both. Oak is the material we are focussing on for our year-long project and the source of this is the 120-year -old trees that surround Ruskinland in the Wyre Forest. Comprising 6000ha of ancient woodland, the Forest in the early Industrial Revolution was intensively managed for charcoal production to supply fuel for the smelting of iron in the Black Country. Since then, however, the timber supply-chain has broken down and many of the skills for working with hardwood have been lost. As trainee architects, our interest in the timber is for construction purposes; but as citizens of a fragile global economy and an unstable climate, our task is also to take responsibility for our role within the life-cycle of the timber. From planting and growth, to felling, construction and use, we have been striving to understand the impact that this cycle has on those dependent on the forest for life or livelihoods. The autumn term was therefore dedicated to research and developing our individual areas of interest; and from this we each created a design for a 1:1 scale 'fragment'-an architectural taster-that we set out to construct during a ten-day stay in the forest.

We arrived at St George's Farm—our home for the ten days—in a heavy frost and in cars laden with bedding, tools and crockery. Despite weeks of preparation, our level of inexperience for what was to



come was evident in our instant desire to nest and prepare lavish menus for the week. After negotiating which would be the girls' room and which the boys', and learning how to stoke the Rayburn for heat and hot water, we were given our first task of compiling a cutting list for the wood miser. This proved harder than we had

All photos on this page show architecture students and/or their Ruskinland oak



imagined. Co-ordinating nine people to provide a simple breakdown of the cuts of wood they each needed for their fragment, including tolerance for any wobble in the cutting, and-horror-converting metric into imperial measurements, took two days, at least three different lists and a lot of miser-operator patience to complete. Meanwhile, we were given an induction to the well-equipped workshop up at Uncllys Farm and we were allowed the opportunity to practise using the enormous table saw and planer/thicknesser under the supervision of experienced eyes. Most of us had already learned how to use the tools in the university workshop, but none of us had worked with oak before, let alone built anything sizable. The reality about oak that we discovered first is that it's tough. Either seasoned or green, oak puts up an almighty fight at every opportunity which meant that for the first few days we spent most of our

time helping each other just to carry and manoeuvre the timber around the farm and workshop, or to replace the multiple drill bits that we snapped just trying to put screws into it.

These early days taught us two things: that we were extremely dependent upon each other for help, and that we were going to be up against it to complete our projects in the time remaining. This sense of a shared challenge seemed to bring out the best in everyone. Despite the great ambition of many of the projects, it became completely normal to drop one's own work to go and help someone else when asked, or simply offer a hand if you could see someone might struggle. A system of help-trading quickly became established both in terms of labour and problem-solving, and a spirit of mutual support and encouragement kept everyone in good spirits, even as the work days crept into the small hours. As days passed and the workload for some of the projects remained considerable, it started to become clear that elements of the projects would have to be abandoned. The challenge presented was to streamline the designs so that the end result could still be achieved, but without as much material or complexity as originally intended-a valuable lesson in economy of design.

Eight days of fabrication, two days of installation: during the autumn term, our scope of research covered an area of the UK that runs from St George's Farm to the centre of Birmingham, along the train-line. Our group analysis had aimed to capture the history, character and nature of the places we encountered along this route, and as individuals we had chosen sites in which we would like to focus our own projects. These



were the sites where our fragments would now be installed. To achieve this, each of the projects that would require transportation had been designed to be dismantled and reassembled, and a van was hired that could accommodate the largest pieces. Determining the schedule of installation was a logistical challenge with several constraints: daylight hours in which to assemble, photograph and disassemble; packing and arranging the pieces into the van to avoid damage and facilitate easy removal; and pre-arranged permission from the owners of the designated sites of installation. Those planning on assembling their works in city centres had the hardest time gaining approval. It seems it was all too easy to ignore an email or reject a phonecall making an unconventional request, but harder, apparently, to do so face-to-face. Meetings in most cases proved more productive and in several cases the activity was greeted with enthusiasm.

Constructing each of the fragments was a very physical process and required the strength, co-ordination and cooperation of each member of the team. With the fragment's designer initially directing us as to her/his intentions and aims, the project then became a group activity, as individuals made suggestions as to how the piece might be manoeuvred or assembled to improve its structural integrity, achieve the effect sought by the designer, and be best angled for photographing. Each project become

Each project became a group project and each member of the team became a part of other's work. This led to a spirit of excitement and enthusiasm for each other's projects and an opportunity for



Students gathered in the Ruskin Studio at Uncllys.

the designer to learn how others responded to their work. Ultimately, it was thanks to this level of cooperation and commitment that every project reached its end goal of completion and installation within the time limits.

The vast majority of university and professional work that we have undertaken so far has been executed using a computer and printer. Desk-based and drawingcentred, architectural training, and the profession itself are, it seems, inherently disconnected from buildings and their locations. For this reason, having the opportunity to work first-hand with such a beautiful and historical material, and to create a space that one can bodily enter and inhabit, is an immeasurably valuable experience. There are lessons that we have learned handling oak and working with it that can never be taught in the studio; and there are experiences and feelings that can never be imagined or expressed with the architect's drawing. During the week, each of us developed a powerful respect for oak as a material, but also for those who work with oak, with their hands and with the challenges of ever-changing environmental conditions. Such a learning experience is one that we will all take forward into our future training and practice.

Gemma Wheeler

RECORDING BRITAIN NOW: THE JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE 2014

When Clive Wilmer suggested an annual John Ruskin Prize, I jumped at the opportunity to create a platform for less established artists. During thirteen years as the Serpentine Gallery's founding director, my constant aim had been to exhibit exceptional artists, especially those from outside London, who had been overlooked, or were simply not good at self-promotion. Two John Ruskin Prizes later, the Guild's inspired sponsorship has allowed the Campaign for Drawing to win greater support from the creative community by offering much-needed exposure for their work. It has also extended knowledge of the Guild and its founder, whose beliefs inform everything we do.

The John Ruskin Prize is open to all artists, amateur and professional, based in the UK and aged over eighteen. The Prize's emphasis on observation upholds Ruskin's belief that drawing helps us to see the world more clearly, and to become more aware of its fragility. All shortlisted artists are included in a public exhibition, and the first two winners received £1,000 each to help further their practice.

The first John Ruskin Prize—*A New Look at Nature*—attracted 300 entries and was exhibited at Ruskin's home, Brantwood, a location greatly appreciated by the 16 shortlisted artists. When planning its sequel, we were fortunate that Kim Streets and Kirstie Hamilton welcomed the exhibition as a companion to the V&A tour of *Recording Britain*. Our *Recording Britain Now* invited contemporary documentation of Britain's urban, rural and social environments to complement the work commissioned by Sir Kenneth Clark in 1939. Clark's purpose was to depict the country as it faced the damaging effects of 'progress', development—and the threat of war.

Thanks to the Prize's growing reputation and the theme's appeal, there were more than twice as many entries in 2014 as in 2012, many of remarkable quality. The shortlisted artists clearly thought today's environmental threats most likely to arise from neglect, and they focused on urban sprawl, dereliction and the endangered countryside. Ruskin would surely have applauded their powers of observation, but he would have been disheartened by many aspects of today's cities and countryside. Human beings were absent from all but one painting, though their negative impact on our environment was clearly implied.

Despite this, the exhibition was enjoyable and uplifting, thanks to a rich mix of techniques and materials—paint and charcoal, lithography, typewriting, woven tapestry and embroidery. As you will read in her contribution, runner-up Mandy Payne used spray-painted and oil-coated concreteslab canvases in her work based on the notorious Park Hill Estate in Sheffield. One of her small, but powerful, reliefs of the estate has been purchased for the Ruskin Collection.

Kirstie Hamilton and Lucy Cooper did a magnificent job of installing the exhibition in the V&A's Craft and Design Gallery, where-happily sandwiched between the V&A's touring exhibition and the Ruskin Collection—it was seen by over 35,000 visitors and received very positive feedback. The critic Daniel Dylan Wray wrote in Creative Tourist: 'There is a beauty to be found within much of it. This is an exhibition that makes for varied, intriguing and immersive viewing.' He continued, 'In a country more heavily populated than ever, with our lives becoming increasingly busy and manic, these artists-almost universally-chose some kind of seclusion when asked to capture Britain. They offer a retreat, an escape from humans and the business of life. The two most prominent themes of 'rural' and 'urban' often seem divided and opposed: the encroaching presence of urban life on rural life is



captured. This is city versus the country; industry and concrete versus nature and grass.'

We were determined to bring the exhibition to London, and found space in an intriguing location. Trinity Buoy Wharf is a surviving vestige of London Docklands' history, home to London's only lighthouse and the place where Trinity buoys were

SELECTING THE BEST

After displaying the first John Ruskin Prize winner in the Force of Nature exhibition, I was delighted when Sue Grayson Ford, Director of the Campaign for Drawing, contacted me to discuss working together on the second John Ruskin Prize. Sue's drive and enthusiasm is infectious. We immediately agreed that the V&A's *Recording Britain* exhibition was the perfect starting point for the Prize's theme. Sir Kenneth Clark's *Recording Britain* project was initiated in 1939 with an emphasis on drawing and watercolour painting and the exhibition mainly consisted of works from the '40s and '50s, inspiring Sue and me to consider how the Prize could bring this theme into the present day. Thus Recording Britain Now emerged.

Alongside being flattered at the invitation to be on the selection panel for the Prize, I felt a strong sense of responsibility. The chance to look at the submissions is a great opportunity for a curator; seeing large groups of work always stimulates new thoughts and ideas but there is also the responsibility to select the best works in a short time. The panel was made up of Gill Saunders (Curator of *Recording Britain*, V&A), Laura Oldfield Ford (artist), Clive Wilmer, Sue and myself—and with a list of over 600 submissions to look at in one



once made. The hut where Michael Faraday conducted experiments to improve lighthouse lighting still stands on the site.

Dr Jonathan Foyle, TV presenter and CEO of World Monuments Fund Britain, opened the London version of *Recording Britain Now*, emphasising his agreement with Ruskin that drawing could connect people of all ages to their heritage. To

day it was a difficult task. I was conscious that we needed to create a shortlist that was also an exhibitiontwo quite different things. The shortlisting was done by viewing images of the works rather than the actual works themselves, which can be problematic as it is often difficult to appreciate detail and scale. We debated long and hard, discussed the lack of figurative work and what seemed to be a preoccupation with the often forgotten and less immediate spaces created by urban sprawl. At times we were at odds, with some of us passionately supporting a work while the rest did not recognise the same degree of significance. However, we all agreed that there was no shortage of outstanding work. As I calculated on the spot whether everything would fit into the gallery, we agreed to display work by 23 artists, more than we had initially planned. My colleague, Lucy Cooper, who is Exhibition Curator at Museums Sheffield, had the challenging and rewarding task of hanging the exhibition and did a wonderful job. The clear theme helped give coherence to the exhibition and the artist's works complemented each other beautifully.

Once all the works were on the wall, there was one last task to perform. Who would win the John Ruskin Prize 2014?



attract a wider audience to this somewhat remote part of East London, we staged a successful series of public events alongside the exhibition—from a Sketch Crawl and family 'building site' project to a sell-out symposium. The latter, *Tide of Change in East London*, was a discussion about the changing face of London's historic docklands led by Paul Finch, Programme Director of

We had all remembered certain works, but to see them 'in the flesh' exceeded expectations. We met as a panel once more and as the discussion progressed, there was a definite group of favourites emerging. The winner, Maggie Hargreaves, astonished us all with the atmosphere and level of detail and skill she was able to achieve working on such a large scale and using charcoal.

One of the most rewarding aspects of being on the selection panel was to meet the artists at the private view and hear their perspectives. Our selection process was informed by looking at the work and the artists' statements; age and experience had not come into it. From Maggie explaining that this was a new career for her, and Colin Maxwell making a special trip from Ireland, to Evy Jokhova sharing her pleasure at the way her work was displayed, and Michael Cox explaining that this was the first time he had entered something like this-I felt privileged to have been part of bringing them together. The support they expressed for one another, and their enthusiasm for the Prize, will stay with me for some time. In the end we had over 35,000 visits to the exhibition and some very positive feedback, leaving me with the hope that Sheffield will display another John Ruskin Prize in the future.

Kirstie Hamilton

the World Architecture Festival. It included presentations from many of the architects of these major changes.

Although not conceived as a selling exhibition, eight pieces were sold, to the delight of their creators. The stunning charcoal drawing by our winner, Maggie Hargreaves, was purchased by Mike Davies of Rogers Stirk Harbour, designer of the Millennium Dome (now the O2), directly across the Thames from Trinity Buoy Wharf. The sale of Jennifer Morgan's hand-embroidered trio of Student Finance letters was equally special—the first sale of her career. As a Sheffield art student, Jennifer could not afford to attend the London Private View, but her three works were bought by a sociology lecturer, in whose university office they now hang. Extraordinarily, both our 2014 winner and runner-up are in their second careers. Maggie's forensic methods as a biologist for twenty years are apparent in the superb huge charcoal drawings we exhibited, where nature is seen taking revenge on earlier human intrusions. Mandy's exquisite miniatures reveal the skills she acquired during a 25-year career as a children's dentist. Other pieces from her Park Hill series were on the shortlist of five for the £25,000 John Moores Painting Prize.

As we plan the third John Ruskin Prize, *Recording Britain Now: Society*, we hope—with the help of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust (sponsors of the original 1939 *Recording Britain Now* in the V&A)—to provide yet more contemporary relevance and to restore the human presence noticeably absent from the 2012 and 2014 shortlists. Once again, we will invite artists to engage with a society in rapid transition.

The grant has enabled us better to support the shortlisted artists in delivering their work to a regional venue, to increase the Prize's value and to produce a catalogue to provide a lasting legacy. We are approaching additional sponsors for purchase prizes, thus increasing the rewards available to Prize applicants. Having recruited artist Adam Dant (described in *The Observer* as 'the Hogarth for our times', and the official chronicler of the 2015 general election campaign) as one of this year's judges, we know we will again attract work of an outstanding calibre, and make even more discoveries. **Sue Grayson Ford**

The winner of the John Ruskin Prize 2014 was announced on 27th June. (Top left and right) The Master congratulates winner, Maggie <mark>Hargreaves. Mil</mark>lennium Gallery, Sheffield.

MILLENNIUM GALLERY Recording Britain Now, the exhibition of 23 artists' works shortlisted for the John Ruskin Prize, ran at the Millennium Gallery from 28th June to 12th October.

All those shortlisted for the John Ruskin Prize in attendance at the Private View of Recording Britain Now (pictured above).



JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE WINNER

I have been interested for some time in our interaction with the natural environment. When I saw the advertisement for the John Ruskin Prize, I was immediately drawn to it as the theme was *Recording Britain Now*, inviting 'fresh, contemporary visions of the UK's urban, rural or social environment'. This theme fits well with my own practice. We live on this Earth amongst the multitude of other species, all of which have their part to play in the complex network which makes up our ecology. I am concerned for our loss of direct contact with and understanding of the natural world. As children play out less, and people live and work in cities, it is all too easy to forget that the rest is out there and its huge importance to us.

The competition was well run and the staff at the Millennium Gallery were very efficient and helpful, especially Lucy Cooper. I was thrilled to receive the email saying that I was included in the exhibition, and when I went to Sheffield to take my work there (my first visit to the city) I found the gallery easily, in its prominent position. The exhibition produced a very varied collection of drawing styles and processes which led to very interesting and informative discussions with the other artists at the private view. I was delighted to be part of such a show, and it was exciting to have the awards announced by Sue Grayson Ford of the Campaign for Drawing and Clive Wilmer of the Guild of St George at the opening, without any pre-warning to the winner! After a (very) short speech—and photos—I met the other judges, Laura Oldfield Ford, Kirstie Hamilton and Gill Saunders, and also Ruth Nutter of the RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD Project. They all warmly congratulated me on winning and I congratulated them, for putting together a great show.

(Above) Prize-winning Slowly Creeping by Maggie Hargreaves. (Right) Maggie Hargreaves with her works —Changing Space II (bottom).





It is clear that drawing takes many forms, from expressionist mark making to detailed modelling using a great variety of materials. For my part, in drawing a complex image, I like to place the basic elements first then gradually sharpen the detail all over the image, so I work on one area then another, then return to the first. This process goes on repeatedly over the whole drawing as I continue to understand how to depict textures, structures, spacing, light qualities and so on.

Drawing allows time for detailed examination of a subject, so that, as you look closely, you begin to understand how a structure works, its form, texture, scale and relationship to its surroundings, and so gradually the whole image becomes clear. In drawing the outdoor places I choose, the multitude of plant and animal species we live amongst becomes apparent. Using charcoal, the marks are drawn and erased and redrawn until I am satisfied with the image. This reflects the changing nature of the places shown, as species grow and die, compete and gain and lose territory (ourselves included).

Drawing is not only the process of looking, understanding, decisionmaking and mark-making. It is also the finished object. But it is not just the image that is important—the support and materials used can be included in the meaning of the work. In these drawings, I left certain elements blank so the bright white paper shows through the image, reinforcing the object-ness of the work but also creating highlights in the image. When I draw, I am very aware that I am producing an object—a surface with marks on it which will be encountered and considered, usually within a gallery space. In doing very large-scale drawings, I want the viewer to be transported into the space of the drawing, entering and connecting with that place, so that there is a 'vacillation' between the two, the drawing space and the gallery space.

As a fairly recent graduate of Fine Art, I am still finding my way, discovering what direction my practice will take. Winning the Prize was a great thrill and a huge encouragement to me to continue drawing in detail, as a central element of my art practice. **Maggie Hargreaves** My journey as an artist has not been very conventional. I originally trained as a dentist and spent 25 years working in the NHS, specialising in Children's Dentistry, working largely in the Community and Hospital Dental Services.

I was always interested in art and studied A level art before my dental degree. After qualifying, I took many evening and weekend classes in painting, etching, drawing and sculpture.

In 2007, wanting to take my art further, I embarked on a part-time HND in Fine Art at Sheffield College finishing in 2010. The credits obtained from this qualification enabled me to study part-time for a BA in Fine Art at Nottingham University, from where I graduated in 2013.

In 2012, I took a career break from dentistry to work as an artist full-time.

My work is largely inspired by landscape, particularly the urban and edgeland areas of Sheffield, and the rural backdrop of the Peak District, which are close to where I live. I am particularly drawn to locations that are often overlooked or neglected, and I am also fascinated by the capacity of a place to absorb memories and experiences. My principal painting medium is mixed media, working primarily in acrylics, aerosols and oils. The physicality of paint is an essential element in my work, as is exploring different media and processes, from staining, pouring and splattering to more layered and impasto processes. Colour and texture are also important to me, I often incorporate different materials into my paint such as sand and cement to produce a distinctive surface quality. I like to work in situ initially, working from direct observation and drawings, and then using photographs to complete the piece, particularly for colour referencing.

A large part of my practice also involves printmaking

and I have explored many techniques including; screen-print, collagraphs, etching, stone lithography, lino and woodcut in an attempt to interpret the landscape.

The three paintings that were accepted for the John Ruskin Prize were based on my explorations of Park Hill, the Grade II* listed council estate in Sheffield and one of Britain's largest examples of Brutalist architecture. I have been visiting the site for more than two years and the work was first undertaken as part of my studies for my Fine Art degree.

Park Hill is currently undergoing regeneration and, as such, it is an interesting place to observe. Part of the estate has undergone transformation into shiny, luxury flats, whilst half remains boarded up and derelict. A small part is still inhabited—the residents remaining defiantly loyal.

I am particularly drawn to the un-refurbished parts of the estate, where the memories and layers of the past are almost tangible.

I wanted to create observational paintings that spoke of the desolation and displacement of the established communities, and the temporality of urban landscapes.

Spending time at Park Hill underlined for me that concrete was the unifying link throughout the estate and could be regarded as a potential palimpsest. In the refurbished sites, the concrete has been restored to exacting standards, but in the old parts it is spalled, weathered and tarnished, which gives it a rawness and beauty of its own.

I wanted to work with materials that were integral to the estate itself, namely concrete and aerosol spray paints. I started working with concrete mixed into the paint to give texture, but then cast up slabs of concrete to work

on directly. I drew the image onto the concrete first and then, using micro masking tapes, I masked areas out depending on what shade of aerosol was required in a particular area. It was a process not dissimilar from producing a multi-coloured linocut.

Mandy Payne, runner-up, John Ruskin Prize 2014

Il That Remains by Mandy Payne. Purchased for the Ruskin Collection.



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'There is no wealth but life'

REPORT

The welcome extension of the Guild AGM into a whole (wealthy) weekend made for a relaxing and convivial atmosphere, but also permitted all kinds of interesting themes and connections to emerge across a pleasingly diverse range of events and activities. Many of Saturday's events articulated a great deal of discontent with modern civilization: Gray Brechin's Ruskin Lecture elegiacally recalling the social and cultural vigour, ambition, and breadth of America's New Deal; Janet Barnes's recollections of the equally ambitious cultural programme of 1970s Sheffield museums in her moving tribute to its much-loved and recentlydeparted former leader, Frank Constantine; and a slideshow of the challenging artworks that made the shortlist for the latest Guildsponsored John Ruskin Prize. It was pleasing, therefore, that Sunday balanced the weekend by its consistent focus on the contents of civilization-both in terms of what constitutes our collective culture, and what it is about our culture that makes us feel content, or that might bring us greater contentment in future. One of the joys of

WEALTHY WEEKEND

the Guild's Wealthy Weekend was the manner in which it brought together people of diverse backgrounds, opinions, skills, interests, and hopes to think about quintessentially Ruskinian questions concerning how we conceive of and place value on wealth.

Prominent amongst Sunday's pleasures at the Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, were the series of craft and other activities that drew in pretty impressive numbers: about 300 people attended throughout the day. Those attending could hear about a project, *ReMake Castlegate*, run by University of Sheffield Architecture students to consult on the future of the Castlegate Market site, and then join in with some architectural model-making of their own to add to a 3D map of the city centre.

They were also able to contribute by creating a charcoal drawing of what they valued on a section of birch trunk. Together, the various sections will form a Ruskinian Tree of Wealth. Both the charcoal and the birch were provided by the Guild's enthusiastic Wyre Forest community, as part

of a more general deepening of relations between the Guild's principal sites. Youth theatre specialists stepped out of their comfort zone (outdoor performance and theatrical set-design) to offer visitors the opportunity to create something beautiful from natural materials; while Opus Independents, a local not-for-profit independent media organisation, offered a video and pictorial installation, 'Fairness on the 83', featuring filmed interviews and photographs showing what users of Sheffield's no. 83 bus route made of issues of inequality and fairness.

It was clear from the latter that the city's long reputation for radicalism is still justified, and this feeling was only reinforced by attending the 12 noon talk, *Manifesto For Wealth*. This brought together six local speakers to discuss what wealth meant to them. Ably chaired by Jane Hodson of the English Department at the University of Sheffield, the broad range of views articulated in the short presentations collectively challenged us to widen our definition of wealth.

Julia Udall's inspirational talk outlined the way in which 500 local artists, craft workers, and members of the community had joined



Images and words of Wealth projected on to the front of Upper Chapel. Photo: Carole Baugh.

in a share issue purchase of the Portland Works building in order to continue 140 years of making on the site. Intelligent use of small, varied workshop spaces has opened up opportunities to provide a community hub and improve social relations. Udall was particularly keen to underline that the most important source of wealth at the site was its human resources.





This theme was even more strongly underlined by Tony Bowring, co-ordinator of the sterling *Arts on the Run* scheme that draws immigrants to work on diverse projects and, in doing so, uncovers a wealth of inspiring and troubling back stories that feed the project's aesthetic aims, but also its desire to create a forum for progressive discussion and debate about multiculturalism in the United Kingdom.

Felicity Stout, Woodland Historian at the University of Sheffield, turned to James I's 1612 Proclamation about the future of British forests and its call to protect the precious collective inheritance or commonwealth of our woodlands. Outlining the economic, environmental, and cultural wealth offered by forests, and celebrating Sheffield's position as the European city with the greatest proportion of trees, Stout directed our attention to the continuously vital role of woodlands.

Sheffield Equality Group was represented by Jason Leman, who asked the audience to think of control as a form of wealth. Skilfully outlining the ways in which a lack of control over our personal and working lives can deleteriously affect our attitude to the world, our confidence, our engagement with society and politics, and our mental health, Leman argued that access to wider cultural wealth is dependent on an overall sense of individual self-control, and he closed by calling for a re-distribution of the wealth represented by control.

In many ways, Sara Hill's talk for Opus Independents exemplified the possibilities of answering Leman's call. As an independent media outlet, Opus (the makers of 'Fairness on the 83') see their role as taking the opportunities offered by the digital revolution to democratise access to media and culture, and, in challenging traditional gatekeepers to knowledge, to enhance access to the power of knowledge.

The final speaker, Chris Bennett, Philosopher at the University of Sheffield, made a case for considering voting as an extremely important form of wealth. Arguing that some aspects of wealth are essentially social, Bennett suggested that collective wealth would be enhanced by greater engagement in the political process, and argued that voting had intrinsic rather than merely instrumental value in our society.

The speakers faced a number of interesting questions from an audience of around 60, and it was a shame, given the collective articulation of a democratising agenda of widening participation, that more time was not available to extend this phase. Questioners queried the practical limits of technological democratisation, pointing out that growth in online forms and information disproportionately discriminates against the poorest members of society; and led to an extended discussion of the complex problems of urban tree planting; before closing with a final intervention from John Iles, of the Guild's Wyre Forest estate, pointing out that perhaps the most important form of wealth-a sustainable climate and environment-had not been mentioned, and that the huge challenges in this area had not yet been faced. With that sobering thought, a most useful and challenging hour came to an end. It would have been interesting to hear if Ruskin's ideas had directly influenced any of the speakers. In terms of those

attending the day,

there was a pleasing demographic mixture, from young children to pensioners; and ranging from people who knew a lot about Ruskin to those who knew nothing at all. Much of the buzz of the day, as well as its sense of openness and welcome, came from this mix of people, and from the manner in which events were set up for anyone to come in and engage with in any way that suited them. Around half the visitors dropped in rather speculatively and stayed for quite a while, trying more than one activity. A significant number (almost half) came from other towns in South Yorkshire and happened to be in Sheffield for the



Photo: Ruth Nutter

day. There was often a real sense of intensive engagement between those attending and those organising events. The vibrancy of the weekend has much to do with leadership—of the organisation as a whole, by the Master, Secretary, and directors, to the local, with Ruth Nutter (Producer of the Guild's *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* project) deserving particular commendation for her ability to create communities and enthusiasm wherever she goes.

Mark Frost

We will carry a full report in the next issue about the day's seminar, Wealth That Matters.

RUSKIN DRAWING WALK

Photos from the **Ruskin Drawing Walk** run by Ruth Nutter with Kate Genever last September as part of Museums Sheffield's *Drawing the Summer* project. Ruth and Kate introduced the group of 13-16 year-olds to the Ruskin Collection and the *Recording Britain Now* John Ruskin Prize Exhibition, before taking them to the activity room to do some warm

-up drawings. This was followed by a walk to Persistence Works (Yorkshire Artspace Studios) rooftop to draw views from there, and finally on to the roof at Portland Works,



where the group also heard about the history of the building. Every participant produced a beautiful series of sketches ranging from natural history objects to sweeping views of the city skyline. The sketchbooks were on display during *Wealthy Weekend*.

A HORSFALL SPACE FOR ANCOATS

It is with huge delight that we are able to announce funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to further develop our plans for a

permanent Horsfall Space in Ancoats, Manchester.

Our journey-a truly transformative process-began with a simple Google search for '+Ancoats +Art' in 2013. What quickly revealed itself was a fascinating, relevant and littleknown story; that of Thomas Coglan Horsfall, the Ancoats Art Museum and Ruskin's influence on Horsfall as an early champion of arts education and an innovator in arts and public health or wellbeing. This story informed A Different Spirit; an 18-month programme working with young people experiencing mental health problems, contemporary artists and residents of Ancoats to better understand the story of Horsfall

and to contemporise his project for young people in 21st-century Manchester. You can read a report from me in last year's magazine.

Partnerships were formed with Manchester Art Gallery and crucially with the Guild of St George whose invaluable advocacy, advice and financial support made our funding case to the HLF all that



more compelling. After 18 months, we can look back at four incredible projects: a photographic register of Ancoats, its fauna and flora; a pop-up shop selling useful and beautiful objects developed with Grizedale Arts; a public realm artwork delivered with artist Lucy Harvey (*see montage below*) and a magical night of music and film with Open

> Music Archive. This latest project, which closed the programme, saw young people from 42nd Street taking pianola roles of music played in Victorian Ancoats, digitising them and reinterpreting them as dance music to a crowded Halle St Peters in Ancoats. These compositions were then represented as a concerto by pianists from the Royal Northern College of Music. The night was concluded with an interpretation of the pieces by Graham Massey, founder of 808 State and innovator in digital music in the Manchester dance scene in the 1980s. A far cry from the Smoking Concerts and

orchestras of the Ancoats Art Museum but true to the spirit and essence of Horsfall; art making a difference in the lives of ordinary people.

Julie McCarthy

USEFUL WORK VERSUS USELESS TOIL: AN EXHIBITION AT 42ND STREET





REPOR

THE RUSKIN LECTURE 2014

'Necessitous Men Are Not Free Men': Bridging Ruskin's Thought and the New Deal by Gray Brechin

Gray Brechin's talk on the New Deal opened with a dramatic photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in his home State of California. Through a sleight of his PowerPoint hand he contrived to part the bridge in the middle and, like Tower Bridge in London, it was as if we were passing through, rather than across this bridge, at the start of a great voyage. As indeed we were. For Gray's fascinating talk upon the debt of Franklin Roosevelt to Ruskin was about the journeys that some very practical people undertook, enabling Ruskin's ideas to cross the Atlantic, spanning time and cultures, reforming and reshaping even as they did so, until they found themselves instrumental in one of the greatest enactments of political and economic vision to hallmark the first half of the twentieth century.

Gray is no apologist. From the start he affirmed the worth of the New Deal and made no bones of his belief that history has not recognised its importance or its enduring value. Throughout his talk and in questions that followed, he spoke of recovering our awareness and understanding of the New Deal's history -and reasserting its values. With gentle humour he threw out cutting asides to lament today's lack of political vision, or to expose the aridity of economic analysis that only measures value in terms of the market. He attacked that branch of Christianity which remained adamantly theological, insisting that the New Deal was an enactment of Practical Christianity. The strength of Gray's talk, however, lay in combining his passion with an underpinning scholarship so that what might, in other hands, have become mere polemic, was closely argued and carefully evidenced.

The history of ideas is very much the history of people and Gray has a talent for bringing the characters of his story to life. At the start we were introduced to Mary Ward, Marie Souvestre and Eleanor Roosevelt. Exemplary in the practical expression of Ruskin's ideas from 1884 onwards was the emergence of the Universities' Settlement Movement, starting at Toynbee Hall in London's East End. In the closing decades of the 19th Century, Europe still formed an essential reference point for socially committed and open-minded Americans and Gray spent time unpacking the route by which Settlements came to North America. In the process he described the experience and relationships which helped to shape the young Eleanor Roosevelt during her visits to Britain and Europe.

Central to the story, however, was the relationship of Eleanor to Franklin. In a nice touch of biographical portraiture, Gray compared the young Roosevelt cousins as two distant branches of the family destined to bring together in marriage very different life experiences—he, wealthy, privileged and entitled, with doting parents; she, orphaned and discouraged, rescued by her experience of London and the friendship

"Necessitous Men Are Not Free Men" Bridging Ruskin's Thought and the New Deal



Gray Brechin The Guild of St George

she made with Marie Souvestre, doyenne of the Allenswood finishing school to which she had been despatched. Gray's portrait of Franklin Roosevelt was, however, also well rounded. We heard of his practical Christian upbringing, his innate sympathy with the poor and disadvantaged, of the train journeys in which he would point out to his young wife how to read the signs in the landscape that told the story of people's living conditions. And then, in 1921, Franklin was struck by polio and thereafter his own disability (he was confined to a wheelchair) taught him empathy with those in difficulty and how the helpfulness and generosity of others could make a difference.

It is against this rich background that Franklin Roosevelt's political career was formed. Gray treats the question of the directness of the influence of Ruskin's writings with the caution it deserves, referencing Stuart Eagles' masterly study of Ruskin's legacy, *After Ruskin: The Social and* Political Legacies of a Victorian Prophet, 1870-1920 (OUP, 2011). Gray notes that Roosevelt did read Ruskin, as did Eleanor, but that many of the ingredients of 'Ruskinian' behaviour were in the air—and in Franklin and Eleanor's personality. The power of the Settlements is rightly invoked to show evidence that by the time the couple were growing up, Ruskin's ideas were being put into practical form on an institutional scale across continents. Roosevelt's appointments to his Administration show evidence of selection from Settlementexperienced staff.

So what of the New Deal itself? In Gray's description, 'More than three decades after Ruskin's death in 1900 those prescriptions [i.e. Ruskin's] merged with other streams such as the Social Gospel and trade union movements to emerge in a geyser of practical solutions to the Great Depression in the United States.' A richly illustrated telling of the sheer variety, character and number of programmes enacted by the Civil Works Administration (CWA), Federal Emergency Relief Agency (FERA), and above all the Works Progress Administration (WPA), concluded Gray's important and often moving talk more eloquently than any dry description of economic or social data could have done. Much that has since defined American society-its culture and community—can be seen as taking shape here.

Gray treated us to a television recording of Roosevelt's 'Second Bill of Rights'economic rights-given just a year before he died. He showed how this remarkable document was intended to stand as a model for all mankind and how, within three years Eleanor Roosevelt pioneered the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the United Nations, unanimously adopted on 10th December 1948. Like Gandhi's revolutionary politics in India, Roosevelt's New Deal and Second Bill of Rights drew on streams of thinking fed in their headwaters by Ruskin. As the twentieth century gets a little further away from us we can, perhaps, see it a little more clearly. Listening to Gray trace the roots of the New Deal back to Ruskin, and thinking of the influence of Ruskin upon the foundation of the Welfare State in Britain, one wonders if history may yet speak of the world passing through a Ruskin era-not because all such things owed a debt to Ruskin, but because his writings might be said to most perfectly speak to the ambitions of those who, often unwitting of Ruskin, recognised that their journey towards the Law of Help was necessary and did not hesitate to embark upon it.

VENICE WITH THE MASTER

The meeting of Friends and Companions of the Guild over four days in March (a lightning tour of Ruskin's Venice led by the Master of the Guild, Clive Wilmer) was a dazzling success, yet is almost impossible to describe. So perhaps Ruskin's words

following his first meeting (or union) with the Tintorettos in the Scuola di San Rocco are the best way in: 'It was a mystery.' 'I have been overwhelmed today...' Or maybe Ruskin on the 'range of glittering pinnacles' of San Marco, 'their confusion of delight'. The truth is that words alone won't do justice to overwhelming experiences, and recollections in tranquil prose cannot hope to match the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings generated by such an experience. Readers, it was awesome.

For this Friend (and new Companion) the texture of what was seen and learnt was a 'confusion' in the best possible sense. One of the first things to stress is the intangible, inestimable quality of direct experiencemeeting and befriending those around one being at the heart of it. This makes one realise first-hand the inextricable bonds of art and life, the aesthetic and the social, one of the pillars of Ruskinian thought. The group had to observe closely, study, and then reckon the forcesthe qualities of life-that brought about such beauty. So my memories of the

trip are peopled and underpinned by the faces and words of those I walked with; these made the intensity and the lyrical nature of what we experienced even more special.

We met at the Taverna San Trovaso on

Thursday evening and an enquiry into local specialities (risotto and tiramisu, for example) blended into a flow of exchange, learned yet unstuffy, wide-ranging and heartfelt-an achieved and generous openness that was sustained over the four



venerdi 27 marzo 2015 ore 17.30 Scuola Grande di San Rocco - Sala dell'Albergo

Venezia e l'Inghilterra. Comunità culturali ieri e oggi

La Guild of St. George di John Ruskin incontra la Scuola Grande Arciconfraternita San Rocco

Saluti delle istituzioni

Flavio Gregori, Prorettore alle Attività e Rapporti Culturali di Ateneo Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Interverranno

Franco Posocco, Guardian Grando della Scuola Grande di San Rocco Emma Sdegno, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e mparati Clive Wilmer, Master of the Guild of Saint George, Visiting Professor Università

John Iles, Guild Director of the Wyre Forest project, Bewdley, Worcestershire

Louise Pullen, Curator of the Ruskin Collection, Millennium Gallery. Sheffield Maria Laura Picchio Forlati, già Professore Ordinario Università di Padova

> days. I was lucky enough to be staying over with the Master, and we stopped off afterwards to study the Palazzo Soranzo in the Campo San Polo, in one of many impromptu lessons, to marvel at the dogtooth and cable, the infinite variety in design, re-animating Ruskin's drawings of

the orders of Venetian Arches. I was privileged to be learning from a man whose soul was at one with the place. I suppose that this was the cornerstone

of the visit: words, images and drawings brought to life, by the

spoken word, to make them again living presences. This happened inside the Church of the Frari the next morning, with fresh illuminations on paintings by Titian and Bellini, followed by the overwhelming impact of the Tintorettos in the Scuola

> Grande di San Rocco, with the words of another inspiring host, Emma Sdegno, in our heads. Apparently simple things to bear in mind (Tintoretto's focus on poverty, a 'foregrounding' of the Eucharist and Baptism) that made one look again. I have to admit to being 'blown away' on the ground floor, by depictions of 'The Annunciation' and 'The Flight From Egypt'. By the time we reached the Great Upper Hall (that haunting depiction of The Baptism; the Crucifixion in the Albergo Hall) I was at one with Ruskin. Tintoretto 'took it so entirely out of me' that I did want to do nothing more than 'lie on a bench and laugh'. I was probably not alone in our group in feeling more than unusually lost that afternoon.

In the evening, the Colloquy took place back under the scrutiny of the figures of Tintoretto's Crucifixion. The warmth was felt in the words and new-forming bonds between the home team from the Scuola, and the representatives from the Guild. Coats were buttoned up, but hearts and minds were open. It requires time and space that I do

not have to give anything like an adequate account of what was said. However, the speakers, in turn, were: the Guardian Grando of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Franco Posocco, a distinguished architect; Professor Emma Sdegno, Clive Wilmer, John Iles and Louise Pullen; then Maria Laura Picchio Forlati, Emeritus Professor of International Law at the University of Padua, a Consorella of the Scuola. Clive talked about the history and purpose of the Guild, dispelling myths and, with his enviable light touch, opening door after door into the values and fine detail of Ruskin's life and legacy. John Iles, custodian of the eight hectares of Guild woodland in the Wyre Forest near Bewdley showed us Ruskin in action, the Ruskin who wants us to live in a better way in a better England. (This was an inspiring 'dirt under the finger nails' approach and we were thoroughly convinced that the study centre there is a living entity, practical and blooming.) Louise Pullen then talked with passion and well-judged economy and modesty about her gifted curation of the Ruskin Collection in Sheffield, convincing Franco Posocco, that





'made in Sheffield' could be applied to more things than knives and forks. Maria Forlati's final words were inspiringly honest and uplifting, as she roamed around the notions of how organisations could work and go forward together, in practical, but more importantly, spiritual, or 'ineffable' ways. I just came away thinking what a wonderful group of people was gathered together, and what potential forces for the good they represented.

This was the formal centrepiece of the visit, along with the meeting of the Board of Directors at the Istituto Canossiano the next day, but I must mention 'Wilmer's Ruskinian tour', as it was billed, on the Sunday. Following a trip down the Grand Canal the (by-now-tired-yet-ever-eager) group entered the Piazza San Marco just before eleven thirty on Palm Sunday. Clive started reading from Ruskin's Stones of Venice when bells from the Campanile tumbled out their sound. Undaunted, the Master continued and we strained to hear 'a continuous chain of language and of lifeangels and the signs of heaven, and the labours of men...' in the 'kind of awe' that Ruskin famously delineates. This will live in the memory.

The group dispersed late on Sunday afternoon, and the Master was guided towards some much-deserved rest thereafter. Returning to England was an enforced culture shock, as the ugly necessity of car-park areas around Gatwick and the M25 took over from the innumerable and significant moments of beauty that had been in their place. I am grateful to Clive for his unflagging patience and an understanding of Ruskin, the product of a life's work, that was so generously and easily handed on. Also, to

all the other members of the group, so welcoming and delightful. I will end with a detail from Clive's contribution to the Colloquy that seems apposite: In 1876 Ruskin noticed a beautifully carved inscription in Istrian marble set in the east external wall of Venice's oldest church, San Giacomo di Rialto, just below the gable. The inscription, which Ruskin dates from 'about the year 1090' (Works 21.268), consists of two sentences, the first carved on an asymmetrical cross, the second on a band beneath it. He tells what he saw as follows: The inscription on the cross is,-'Sit crux vera salus huic tua Christe loco' (Be Thy Cross, O Christ, the true safety of this place.) And on the band beneath,-'Hoc circa templum sit jus mercantibus aequum, Pondera nec vergant nec sit convention prava.' (Around this temple, let the merchants' law be just, Their weights true and their contracts fair.) (24:417)

Peter Carpenter

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RUSKIN ON THE RACK: Effie Gray and Mr. Turner

FILM REVIEW

For one of the intellectual giants of nineteenth-century culture, John Ruskin is getting a rather raw deal from twenty-first century film-makers. There is no more contentious issue in the life of John Ruskin than his marriage to Effie Gray. The manner of its dissolution became one of the great scandals of Victorian society. The marriage was annulled in 1854 after six years on the grounds of non-consummation and a church court declared that the cause was Ruskin's 'incurable impotency'. She went on to marry the painter John Everett Millais and to produce eight children. Two rival and diametrically opposed interpretations of this event are currently available in the form of

books: Suzanne Fagence Cooper's Effie, first published in 2010 and reissued to coincide with the release of the film Effie Gray, and Robert Brownell's Marriage of Inconvenience (Pallas Athene, 2013). Fagence Cooper's interpretation is a feminist one. Her Effie, a lively, feisty, intelligent young woman, is a classic victim of Victorian patriarchal tyranny as exercised both

by her husband and his parents. In an endorsement of the book, actress and screenwriter Emma Thompson wrote: 'Effie's story is emblematic of the struggle of Victorian women' and her film Effie Gray takes the same line. It has become the conventional wisdom of the post-Victorian world. Brownell in a nearly six hundred page book, dense with original documentation, proposes a radically revisionist view. He argues that Effie had no real interest in Ruskin or his work, but married him for his money, as her father was facing bankruptcy and her family ruin and disgrace, and the Ruskins were, in today's values, millionaires. Brownell further argues that Ruskin connived at the separation and divorce. He did not consummate the marriage as a way of securing its termination in one of the few ways available in the midnineteenth century. He endorses Ruskin's position that the couple mutually agreed to refrain from sex until Effie was twenty-five, so that the inevitable pregnancies would not interfere with his programme of travel, research and writing. But by the time she reached that age he was anxious to get out of the marriage as they had proved hopelessly incompatible.

The film *Effie Gray* has had a long and difficult gestation. It is the personal project of Emma Thompson who became intrigued by the subject after reading an account of the marriage in Phyllis Rose's *Parallel Lives* (1983). She wrote the script and then spent three years setting up the project. The film was finally shot in 2011. But its release was immediately halted by the initiation of two plagiarism suits, one by Eve Pomerance who had written her own screenplay on the subject and one by Gregory Murphy whose play *The Countess*, which dramatised the marriage breakup, ran for over six hundred

sympathetic Lady Eastlake, James Fox as her genial husband Sir Charles, Derek Jacobi as Effie's lawyer, Robbie Coltrane as a nononsense Scottish doctor and Claudia Cardinale as an Italian aristocrat who befriends the Ruskins. But David Suchet and Julie Walters as John James and Margaret Ruskin come across like a pair of villains in a Wilkie Collins Gothic novel: resenting Effie's presence, controlling all aspects of their son's life, keeping her a virtual prisoner in their dark, sinister mansion and finally resorting to doping her with laudanum. As Effie, the American actress Dakota Fanning, who deploys a very acceptable English accent (regardless of the fact that it should by rights



performance off Broadway after its opening in 1999 but managed only a month's run in London in 2005. Unlike the film, the play covered only the period from June 1853 to April 1854 and its London run may not have been helped by the miscasting of the actors playing Ruskin (Nick Moran) and Millais (Damian O'Hare). They would have been more convincing if they had switched roles. The law suit dragged on through the American courts until 2014 when judgement was finally made in favour of Emma Thompson on the grounds that history cannot be owned. This enabled the film to be released in the autumn of 2014 to almost universally dire reviews. There are two ways of looking at the film: historical and cinematic. Aesthetically the film is ravishingly beautiful and director Richard Laxton and cinematographer Andrew Dunn deserve the highest praise for the way in which they have captured the misty Scottish landscapes, the romantic Venetian locations and the colourful bustle of mid-Victorian London. There is a splendid supporting cast, mainly in cameo roles: Emma Thompson herself as a

have been a Perthshire accent), convincingly portrays the gradual decline of the innocent young girl as she sees her hopes of a happy and fulfilled marriage to a great man evaporate in the face of his growing indifference, his parents' hostility and her sexual frustration which manifests itself in a succession of psychosomatic illnesses. The film presents her as a Pre-Raphaelite victim, showing her dreaming of herself as Millais's drowned Ophelia, and reproducing a succession of paintings

of other ill-used Pre-Raphaelite women. A stylised introduction with Effie wandering through a beautiful garden sets up the context as one of a fairy tale gone badly wrong. What is missing from the depiction of Effie is the flirtatiousness which was a marked feature of her character. Greg Wise gives an entirely one-dimensional portrait of Ruskin. Apart from one scene in which he passionately defends the Pre-Raphaelites at a Royal Academy dinner, his attitude almost throughout is one of icy indifference and silent disapproval. There is no sign of his well attested charm and sense of humour. The infamous wedding-night episode where Effie removes her night dress and he walks out of the bedroom, 'disgusted', as she later tells Lady Eastlake, 'by her person' is put down to a generalised puritanical prudery. The film thus avoids becoming explicit about the controversy which still rages and in which pubic hair, menstruation and body odour have been individually advanced to explain the disgust. Brownell has an entirely different interpretation, arguing that 'person' here meant personality, not body, and what he objected to was her shallowness

and promiscuous flirtatiousness and this objection developed over the years. An inexplicably bearded Tom Sturridge as Millais, who was actually clean-shaven, has little to do but smoulder with desire and discontent as his physical contact with Effie is limited to a squeeze of the hand.

When it comes to the actual history, outraged Ruskinians have lined up to point out the errors of fact and omissions of significant events. One such critic has identified fifty errors. But to be fair to filmmakers, the demands of drama are different from the requirements of historians. There is a limit to the amount of history you can include in a one hundred minute film which is in this case covering a period of six years, from the marriage in 1848 to the separation in 1854. In all historical films, characters are eliminated or merged, events telescoped, chronology altered. So it is with Effie Gray but in this case to tilt the argument decisively against Ruskin and in her favour. The film depicts John and Effie as living permanently with his parents at Denmark Hill, whereas in fact they had their own marital homes, first at Park Street and later at Herne Hill. This underlines Effie's condition as effectively a prisoner of the Ruskins. More significantly, the two trips to Venice are merged, but much is missed that would have given a more rounded picture of Effie. It is not revealed that Venice was under Austrian occupation and that Effie had a high old time flirting with the young Austrian officers, whom she described lipsmackingly as 'the finest-looking men I ever saw in their white coats and tight blue Italy trowzers' (sic). She described herself in a letter as 'the Belle of All the Balls'. Two officers fought a duel over her and she developed an intense romantic relationship with a dashing Austrian lieutenant, Charles Paulizza. The theft of her jewels during her stay also caused a sensation and a scandal. None of this is covered by the film and instead a fictional episode is substituted where she is pursued by the amorous son of her Italian chaperone and flees in terror from him. The result is an unbalanced, unfair portrayal of both John and Effie and one which gives absolutely no indication of why he was regarded with such reverence as sage, critic and prophet.

Joshua McGuire as Ruskin in Mike Leigh's Mr. Turner.



Mike Leigh's Mr. Turner, released at the same time as *Effie Gray*, also had a long period of gestation. In Leigh's case, it was fifteen years since he first began to think about making a film on the life of one of Britain's greatest painters. He wrote a script and like Emma Thompson, eventually put together a consortium of backers which in his case included the British Film Institute, Channel Four Films and a variety of French and German companies. The film cost the relatively modest sum of £8.4 million to make, despite a running time of two and a half hours and a dramatic span embracing the last twenty five years of Turner's life (1826 -1851). When the film came out, the critical reaction was the exact opposite to the reception for Effie Gray. It was almost universally hailed as a masterpiece with Timothy Spall acclaimed for his mesmerising performance as Turner, played as eccentric, curmudgeon and genius with a unique and remarkable repertoire of growls and grunts. The film is essentially a study in obsession as all the notable films about artists are, charting the total domination of a life by the desire to paint at the expense of all else, including crucially human relationships. Turner's only genuine feelings seem to be for his devoted father (beautifully played by Paul Jesson). Turner's anguish at his death is one of the film's emotional high points. On the other hand, he selfishly exploits women for sexual gratification, including the put-upon housekeeper Hannah Danby (a lovely performance by Dorothy Atkinson), though there is no actual evidence of a sexual relationship between them. As in Alexander Korda's Rembrandt (1936) with Charles Laughton, John Huston's Moulin Rouge (1952) with José Ferrer as Toulouse-

Lautrec, and Vincente Minnelli's Lust for Life (1956) with Kirk Douglas as Van Gogh, Mike Leigh with his cinematographer Dick Pope has chosen to shoot the film in the style of his subject and the film is ravishingly beautiful to look at it, with specific recreations of such masterpieces as Rain, Steam and Speed and The Fighting *Temeraire* as well as the overall use of Turnerian composition and lighting. Mike Leigh's dialogue has an engaging Dickensian richness, and there are welcome glimpses of a galaxy of Victorian artistic notables such as Benjamin Robert Haydon, Clarkson Stanfield, David Roberts and John Constable and a reminder



Greg Wise (far right) as Ruskin, with his parents, played by Julie Walters and David Suchet in Effie Gray. Photo (and below right): Sovereign Films.

of the squabbles and rivalries between them. For Ruskinians, the sole flaw in an otherwise memorable and absorbing work is the depiction of Ruskin (Joshua McGuire) as a pretentious, lisping popinjay. In an interview about the film, Leigh explained why he decided to depict Ruskin as a comic character: 'It seemed very natural that he's this priggish, opinionated, precious overgrown schoolboy...We see Ruskin's parents and that they indulged him. When he went to Oxford University, his mother went with him-he was very stunted in many ways. But he was a great commentator and a great defender of Turner, although he was also critical. And Turner did apparently take the piss out of him to some degree. So it was all very organic. But apart from anything else, we thought that the wheeze of having a comic version of Ruskin was too good to resist'. It is a pity that the temptation was not resisted for there is scant recognition of the courageous and determined championship of Turner that was such a feature of Ruskin's work. We still await a film that will give a fair and balanced account of one of the great intellects of Victorian Britain.

Jeffrey Richards



Ruskin and Effie (Dakota Fanning) in Effie Gray.

ON BECOMING A COMPANION

Now, when I consider the influence of Ruskin in the life I have led, it becomes increasingly clear to me that, although his inspirational and motivational qualities were mostly not spoken about in the family, my formative years were very much an example of what Ruskin had envisaged the life of a craftsman should be. A craftsman-or craftswoman-that is, working in a small unit, producing works of art by means of traditional processes, with very little mechanical aid, to produce designs at their heart simple, useful and beautiful. It might have been a rather hand-to-mouth existence, but it was incalculably rich in everything of real worth, and enhanced by the pleasures of a calling whose main reward was to surround us with things of beauty and good design. We were part of a community life of craftspeople of like-mind, who shared with us very similar values. Work was a joy and a pleasure that, so importantly, taught skills and shared ideals that were a central and sustaining part of our lives. Ruskin had awakened in the heart of my great grandfather, Benjamin Creswick, a desire to live the ideal life of the craftsman. In turn, he had passed this invaluable legacy to his son, Charles, my grandfather. So that was what, in practical terms, I came to inherit, and what shaped my formative years.

FEATUR

Researching Benjamin Creswick's life had been an occasional occupation for some ten years. The impetus to formalise my studies and bring some order to the randomness of my research, came when I joined the Searchers group in Oxford. Run by an



Mono print of dried grasses (2014) by Annie Creswick Dawson.

inspired former tutor of Ruskin College, Katherine Hughes, it proved to be the motivation I needed to pursue my work. Having since become a Companion of the Guild, ever more treasuries have opened to me, in terms of my pursuit of a better understanding of Ruskin's complexities-his influence, and in particular his relationship with Benjamin Creswick. The wealth of knowledge within the Guild, and the generosity of scholars in sharing their expertise, has been an enormous help to me. The support and mentoring of the Master has formed a key part of it. With further research, and the new works of interest and new contacts yielded by my website http:// benjamincreswick.org.uk/>, I have made great progress in recent months. That arrangements are now in place for the Guild to accept a bequest of my research papers is a reassurance that these materials will remain accessible in the future, something for which I am most grateful.

As for my own art work, I have been an amateur artist for most of my adult life, exploring art and craft. Owing to parental opposition, I was not encouraged to consider Art or Craft as an option for employment, and the work I pursued was haphazard, but interesting, and continued until a fairly early marriage. I inherited two step-daughters and continued with artistic pursuits, in a random way, developing my painting, which was mainly in watercolour or gouache, and Chinese brush painting. I also became interested in textiles as a medium for collage, and multi-media work with embroidery, and I have developed a growing interest in the use of natural materials in a variety of ways.

I became interested in running art groups which were mainly aimed at those people of whom I had become increasingly aware, whose ability and interest had been stifled by bad teaching or lack of opportunity—those who had been denied the joy of an interest in art. This had led to some successful work, and brought me the joy of having a quiet student approach me, rightly proud of what she had achieved, saying, 'I never thought I could produce something like this!' I have found this to be one of the most profound joys of my life. To have been given the privilege of running such an art course at Brantwood in 2014 ... ! Such a wonderful opportunity. Having run it in conjunction with a friend whose



work complements my own, and who believes in both the Ruskinian doctrine of *truth to nature* and shares his sense of the importance of *seeing clearly* as a basis for one's work. We had decided to explore a modernised technique of mono printing and, finding it enormously rewarding and hugely successful with our students, we are developing the experience later this year. Much to our delight, quite a few students are returning with us to Brantwood, too.

Our course was called *Inspired By Nature* and Brantwood, of course, is the most idyllic



Decorative paper with pressed flowers (2014) by Annie Creswick Dawson.



Steamed Leaves (2014) by Lin Russell, Annie Creswick Dawson and students at Brantwood. of settings for such studies, with its wealth of plant life. It has helped in the personal development of my work, which now focuses more on plant material and cell structures. Reading the work of Companion Howard Hull, I have become conscious of the deeper and broader interpretations of cell structures and their relation to all the impermeable and everchanging boundaries in nature. The fact that phenomena as diverse as plants and rocks, which appear so different, are in fact both constantly changing, yet at vastly different rates, is evidence of the natural rhythm that flows in nature. Companion David Walker Barker's insightful references to the 'seed' of crystals forming and growing, has helped me link the 'seed' of plant-life to the growth of cells, and the flow of water between plant, earth, lake and sky. The sight of clouds being absorbed and reabsorbed, endlessly forming and reforming, is to watch the mysterious flow of life, including human life itself. The work I am now preparing includes the forms of cell structures and their boundaries, the shells and eggs, seeds in all forms-from the windblown thistledown to the seemingly hard eggshell that the soft birdnestlings break through from their egg-sac to give life new form: there is movement and flow everywhere. As Howard Hull has neatly put it, 'the only certainty is that of constant change.' Again, I am so grateful for this development of my understanding.

My life, incomparably enriched by Ruskin's legacy, continues to expand, assisted, supported, and developed by the Companions' work and generosity of spirit. The diversity of that Companionship is nurtured by an understanding Master. Through collaborative ventures, the Guild's potential to thrive is developed in so many fields of art, education and social change. This is typified in the diverse nature of the *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* project, which I have been involved in,

giving me the opportunity to assist in advancing the recognition of the apparently unique nature of Benjamin Creswick's life as a working man whose talent was recognised by Ruskin and whose development was fostered by the curator and curatress of the Walkley Museum. As a result of Ruskin's mentorship, he became a living, working example of Ruskin's vision of the craftsman.

The Launch of the SHEFFIELD project in the Ruskin Hall Community Centre was a prime example of the Guild at work, fully engaged with the residents of Walkley and wider afield. For me, it was such a privilege to bring records and images of Benjamin Creswick's life and work to modern Walkley, so near to where the Swans first nurtured it. It was one of the most rewarding moments of my life and work. Director Janet Barnes, herself once curator of the Ruskin Gallery at Norfolk Street, warmed my heart by kindly highlighting Benjamin, and the connection to him, in her welcome speech. That Ruth Nutter and her dedicated team had put such hard work into the preparations for this launch was immediately apparent on entering the crowded Hall. I was quickly surrounded by people whose interest in Benjamin and the image of the Cutlers Hall frieze in London was so informed and genuine. So many of them read the full and detailed list of the activities Creswick depicts in his work; the many questions I was answering underlined for me how deep and genuine their interest was. What was true for me applied to every other project in the Hall. The wish among visitors to be an active part of the project became more obvious as the evening progressed. One was watching a community hungry to rediscover a sense of their neighbourhood and the sense of social cohesion in the city at large (see back cover).

That the Guild of St George was so ably fostering this, and with such genuine warmth and sensitivity, was evident. I personally had a strong feeling of the presence of John Ruskin, Ben Creswick and his son Charles, in the hall. I felt that they could not but be pleased that their words, work and inspiration were enduring and relevant, in the best way possible, and after the passage of so many years, were carried in the hands of such worthy stewards, working for good—to inform, engage and bring joy. **Annie Creswick Dawson**



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AMERICAN NOTES

Jim Spates (spates@hws.edu) and Sara Atwood (sara.atwood@icloud.com)

True justice consists, mainly, in the granting to every human being due aid in the development of such faculties as it possesses for action and enjoyment, primarily for useful action, because all enjoyment worth having in some way arises out of such action. --Fors Clavigera, Letter 9 (Works 27.147-8)

The saying is that 'life is short but art is long.' It is, of course, so, as anyone who has ever studied art seriously can attest. Something similar might be said about true justice: bringing it into being is a long process, especially when that birth must be accomplished over the course of short lives: ours. Perhaps the best thing that can be said about the relatively new North American wing of the Guild is that the energy needed for making substantial contributions toward the creation of what Ruskin, in the brief passage above from Fors Clavigera's ninth letter, calls 'true justice', is hardly in short supply on this Western side of the Atlantic. Here are some of the things that have been going on. [Note: What you will read are brief descriptions of what we, the editors of this column, know is going on with our Companions in North America. However, it is our wish to include news about anyone who would like to share such with us. So if you have something to share, please do so and we shall duly and happily note it in the next Companion. If we have inadvertently left anyone out this time, please accept our apologies.]

<u>On the East Coast</u>

The Annual Roycroft Conference: As readers will find described in detail elsewhere (see pp. 36-37)-in October, a major event, Ruskin, Morris, & Hubbard: The Arts and Crafts of the World, was held at the Roycroft Campus in East Aurora, New York. The principal speakers, all Companions, included Paul Dawson, Joe Weber, Rachel Dickinson, Jim Spates, with the Keynote Address being given by Howard Hull. The event was applauded as one of the most important Roycroft Conferences in memory. It provided a chance for the speakers, three of whom had travelled from England, to solidify connections with the current members of the Roycroft Community, direct intellectual descendants of the community's founder, Elbert Hubbard, himself a direct intellectual descendant of William Morris and Ruskin.

Joe Weber is Roycroft's print master. For years it has been his desire to revive Hubbard's original 'hands-on' approach to printing. To this end, he has successfully purchased presses from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, had them installed at Roycroft, and is currently working to publish three books in the elegant style Hubbard made popular: *Elbert Hubbard and the Arts and Crafts Movement,* quarto, illuminated throughout, medievalstyle binding; Dickens' *A Christmas Carol,* in full leather case binding; and *Edythe Kitty Turgeon, Hidden in Plain Sight,* suede casing, illuminated throughout. (Kitty died late last year, shortly after the annual conference. She quite literally saved Roycroft during the 1970s, a time when a financial crisis threatened to close its doors forever.) In the next year, Joe also proposes to publish a North American journal dedicated to Ruskin and his thought.

R. Dyke Benjamin, for many decades a devoted collector of Ruskiniana and a graduate of the Harvard Business School, presented, in January, some of the most important pieces in his collection at Harvard's Houghton Library. The opening of the show was coupled with an evening event at Houghton: Ruskin and Norton on Turner's Liber Studiorum. (For more on this event, see Dyke's article on p. 36). In addition, Dyke sponsors a regular seminar on 'Ethics and Business' at his firm, Axiom Capital Management, in Manhattan. At a number of these gatherings, Jim Spates has been asked to summarise the main arguments in Ruskin's great work of social and economic criticism, Unto this Last.

Van Akin Burd, our 'Greatest Living Ruskinian', celebrated his 101st birthday in April. He continues to live at his home in Upstate New York, near the university where he taught for decades. He reads Ruskin regularly, and sends his fondest regards to all readers of this publication. He delights in hearing from anyone interested in Ruskin. If you would like to be in touch, you can write to him at: 22 Forrest Avenue, Cortland, New York 13045.

Jim Spates continues to post regularly

on his Why Ruskin? blog, his intent being to inform readers of Ruskin's genius, using quotes from Ruskin's works and images of his art: <www.whyruskin.wordpress.com>. Last December, he travelled to the UK to give three talks: one on Ruskin's Seven Lamps of Architecture at the Ruskin Museum, Coniston; the second at Cardiff University announcing the bequest of Janet Gnosspelius' extensive collection of the artifacts, letters, and art of W.G. **Collingwood** (first Ruskin's student, later his secretary, always his friend). The third talk, a Keynote Address, explored the new understanding of the relationship between Ruskin and Collingwood made possible by studying the Gnosspelius collection; it was given at Gregynog Conference Centre, Wales, to the British Idealism section of the Political Studies Association of the UK. His book, Why Ruskin?, Spates' answer to the question he always gets once people learn of his love of Ruskin, will be published soon by London's Pallas Athene Press.

On the West Coast

An abridged version of Sara Atwood's Brantwood lecture, "The Earth-Veil": Ruskin and Environment' has been published in the March issue of Earthlines, a UK-based magazine that explores our complex relationship with the natural world. The article appeared under the title 'The Earth-Veil: Ruskin and Nature.' An extended version appeared in the Spring, 2015 number of The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies. The lecture is available as a Guild of St George booklet. In May, Sara returned to the UK to deliver the second annual Whitelands Ruskin Lecture just before the Whitelands College May Day Festival, which she attended for the first time. During her visit she also spoke on the importance of hand work in education, at the Ruskin Mill

Trust, during a day devoted to the themes





Companions gathered in California to discuss the Guild in North America.

of Ruskin's views on the environment, handicraft, and education. Working locally in Arizona, Sara has broached the possibility, with a farm, of starting a training programme for educators interested in establishing school gardens.

Gray Brechin delivered *The Ruskin Lecture* in Sheffield last November on Ruskin and the New Deal (*see p. 27*). The lecture is available as a Guild booklet. Recently, Gray was honoured for his lifetime contributions to Western (US) history by **The Book Club of California,** receiving their prestigious Oscar Lewis Award. For more on Gray's on-going work, see his website, <u>http://</u><u>gravbrechin.net</u>.

Tim Holton continues his work as a frame-maker in the Arts and Crafts style championed by Ruskin and Morris. His studio (see: <www.holtonframes.com>) near Berkeley specialises in merging pictures and their frames into a single, beautiful unit. As Tim puts it: 'The frame is the picture's accompanist. It has to be selfeffacing and subordinate to the picture, and yet positively enhance and contribute to its beauty. Accompaniment is an art in itself.'

Working in Vancouver, **Bob Steele** continues his work in the Ruskin tradition by teaching children, early and deeply, about art. Bob, rightly we think,

believes that children's

aesthetic sense is increasingly stifled by modern educational practice. He regularly posts e-mails explaining how to rectify the situation. Contact him at drawnet@shaw.ca.

Other Events On 17th April, The Lotos Club in Manhattan hosted the North American launch of Ken and Jenny Jacobson's *Carrying Off the Palaces: John Ruskin's Lost Daguerreotypes.* The book records and provides images from the Jacobsons' remarkable discovery, in 2006, of a lost trove of pictures taken by or belonging to Ruskin. The find has doubled the number of known Ruskin daguerreotypes, and revises the myth that he disliked photographic images.

Early in September, **The Ruskin Art Club**, based in Los Angeles, will host a talk by Master of the Guild, **Clive Wilmer**. It is hoped that the event will, like last year's Berkeley Symposium on Ruskin and Morris (see *The Companion*, 2014) and the Roycroft Conference described above, generate much interest and more contacts for future Ruskin events. Clive's series of talks in California will be reported in the next issue. For details, including exact dates, times, and titles for the talks, consult the Guild website. All are invited!

All the above, we submit, being examples of 'useful action and enjoyment'.



Clive Wilmer, Gray Brechin and Tim Holton.



The Hillside Club at Berkeley, CA, has become a regular host for discussions about Ruskin.

RUSKIN IS EVERYWHERE ...



THE ANNUAL ARTS & CRAFTS CONFERENCE (OCTOBER 3rd-5th 2014) RUSKIN, MORRIS, AND HUBBARD: A CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS & CRAFTS ROYCROFT CAMPUS, EAST AURORA, NEW YORK

A major conference celebrating the pivotal roles of Ruskin, William Morris, and Elbert Hubbard was held this past October (2014) on the Roycroft Campus in East Aurora, New York. The Roycroft Community was founded by Hubbard in the mid-1890s as a living experiment based on the ideas of Ruskin and Morris (both of whom Hubbard had visited in England) which would demonstrate the truth of their arguments that, if human life was ever to be healthy and happy, the practice of what we now call the arts and crafts would be essential to the creation of such greatly desired ends. Though much has changed in the interim, after more than a century's passing, Roycroft still thrives

In addition to featuring workshops on various arts and crafts for those who attended, the Conference featured lectures by a number of speakers with a special interest in how the work of these three *eminents* contributed to what is now a worldwide and growing interest in the arts and crafts and how its theory and practice contributes to our personal and collective well-being. Knowing that readers of this magazine will be interested in the subjects of these talks, a brief description of each follows. All of the speakers are Companions of the Guild of St. George.

Paul Dawson (Editor, *The Friends of Ruskin's Brantwood Newsletter*) gave us an overview, based on his extensive knowledge of the life and work of his subject, namely,

'George Allen: From Pupil to Publisher-A Lifetime of Loyalty.' As most people reading these pages are aware, Allen, at Ruskin's suggestion, became his exclusive publisher in the 1870s after a dispute between the great writer and his long-time publishers-Smith, Elder-failed to heal. The relationship between the two men (sometimes fraught with difficulties resulting from Ruskin's deteriorating mental health during his later working years) turned out to be one of the most important of the Victorian age, establishing Allen as one of the foremost publishers of his time: the producer of magnificent books-The Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin (39 volumes, still holding up marvellously in its 12th decade!)-and, because of his printing relationship with William Morris, one of the principal models for the Arts and Crafts Movement on both sides of the Atlantic. The highlight of Paul's talk was a cornucopia of new insights about Allen and his work which his research has made possible. Currently, he is working on a biography of Allen and his relationship with Ruskin, a volume not only much needed but highly anticipated given the new insights just noted.

Joe Weber (Member, The Roycroft Campus Corporation) provided a perfectly apt follow-up to Paul's lecture because of his status as Roycroft's principal printer. Joe's beautiful books, usually illuminated, and all inspired by the ideas of Ruskin and

Morris and the publishing example of Allen, focused on 'Elbert Hubbard and the American Arts and Crafts Movement.' In his illustrated talk, Joe related much of the history of printing at Roycroft, told us of Hubbard's emergence as one of the major American publishers as a result of writing and producing more than 200 books at Roycroft, told us too of Hubbard's creation, in the service of these volumes, of the largest printing operation in Western New York, and of the Roycroft founder's unfaltering commitment not only to making his books beautiful but also affordable. As 2015 began, Joe was engaged in recreating Hubbard's print shop at Roycroft. This includes the acquisition and retooling of the original presses from Hubbard's time and using them (unrivalled in their ability to create books of exquisite quality), to publish more examples which make palpable how 'hand work'-the idea lying at the core of the thinking of Ruskin, Morris, and Hubbard about the good effects which accrue from working in any of the arts and crafts-generates, by its very nature, an aesthetic experience capable of transforming both the creators of such books and those who read them.

Rachel Dickinson (Principal Lecturer and Programme Leader, Interdisciplinary Studies Department, Cheshire Campus, Manchester Metropolitan University) took us in another direction, as reflected by the title of her profusely illustrated talk, 'Refined in Feature and Beautiful in Dress:



(From left) Companions Joe Weber, Rachel Dickinson, Paul Dawson, Jim Spates and Howard Hull at the Roycroft Conference.
Ruskin and Cloth.' In many writings emphasising the importance of the arts and crafts in creating a well-lived life and a healthy society, Ruskin noted the key role of textiles in our lives. He argued that what we wear should be simple, modest, and aesthetically pleasing; that production of our clothing should be sustainable, environmentally friendly, and community focused. As her talk progressed, Rachel related a story now all but forgotten-how Ruskin's ideals regarding cloth work were put into practice in various locales in the UK in the later decades of the Victorian period. Then, using her own students as examples, she concluded by showing us how, even in this age when machines produce almost everything we wear, young people continue to be amazed and delighted by the power which inheres in the creation of cloths of their own making. Rachel is writing a journal article on Ruskin and cloth that will include some of what she covered at Roycroft, and is giving other talks and workshops on Ruskin and textiles.

was the birth of 'the modern'new style of building which, contrary to popular sentiment then and now, impoverished our architecture and all who worked on it, used it, or just saw it. Jim is currently working on a book on Ruskin's social thought: summarising for contemporary



readers his core arguments about how it is possible to have an honest economy and a humane society as these are set forth in Ruskin's two classics, Unto this Last and Munera Pulveris.

Howard Hull (Director of the Ruskin



Foundation and Brantwood) was the Keynote Speaker. His talk, 'A Perfectly Possible Dream: Recapturing the Vision of Ruskin, Morris, and Hubbard,' was, in its essence, a 'call to action.' Howard argued that all three of the visionaries who were the subjects of this

conference, believed in the beauty of work and in works of beauty, and believed further that, when these two elements were conjoined, we-and society

generallythrived, and when they did not, we faltered. Reassessing the history of the Arts and Crafts Movement in both the UK and North America, Howard went on to suggest that this dual insight was a view of life that, over the



and crafts. He concluded by suggesting that this 'perfectly possible dream' was still realizable on a broad scale and that it was the task of all of us who had assembled to honour the names and work of these three great thinkers to find ways to make this 'life more abundant' come into being. Jim Spates

course of a hundred and fifty and more

of life deeply imbued with truth, a truth

years, has refused to die because it is a view

intuitively sensed by all and easily testable by

anyone working in print, working in cloth, working in architecture, or any of the arts



Arts and crafts workshops at Roycroft



Jim Spates (Professor of Sociology Emeritus, Hobart and William Smith Colleges) designed his talk to remind us of the great work in which Ruskin explained for the first time why participation in hand work is so important in our lives. His illustrated talk, "This Paradise of Cities": Ruskin, The Stones of Venice, and the Birth of the Arts and Crafts Movement,' placed special emphasis on the author's argument that the most beautiful and delightful architecture in Venice-St. Mark's Basilica, the Ducal Palace are instances-was built during the Middle Ages, a time when workers were encouraged to add to the vitality of the buildings on which they worked by exercising their own imagination and unique skill. Jim also stressed Ruskin's parallel argument that this abiding respect for the worker, his intelligence, and creative ability began to wane as the Renaissance was born and the master architect became king.

The consequence of this shift, Ruskin saw,

RUSKIN, NORTON, AND TURNER The Houghton Rare Book Library and Harvard's Art Teaching Museums

R. Dyke Benjamin's Speech at the Opening of the Exhibition

The specific theme of today's experience encompasses the friendship and collaboration of Oxford's first Slade Professor of Art (1870) and Harvard's legendary Fine Arts Professor (1874) at the time of this month's reopening of the Harvard's Art/Teaching Museums. The Houghton Library exhibit is designed to be complementary to the Harvard Art Museums' re-openings.

Also, we are examining the importance of the collaboration of the institutional and the individual collector. The Houghton Library exhibit is accompanied by a QR code link to the digitized exhibition catalog which Peter Accardo and I authored as we co-curated at Harvard and the Grolier Club in New York in the year 2000, the centennial recognition of the year of Ruskin's death. Through such collaborations in the digital era, research possibilities are multiplying.

Tom Hyry, Peter Accardo and I welcome you to this occasion of double collaboration:

1) The collaboration and friendship of Oxford's John Ruskin and Harvard's Charles Eliot Norton within the context of J.M.W. Turner's legacy.

2) The collaboration of an institutional and an individual collector.

If J.M.W. Turner were John Ruskin's 'first earthly master', and Thomas Carlyle were Ruskin's 'second earthly master', Charles Eliot Norton, along with 'Ned'

> The Librarian of Houghton Library invites you to a reception for the exhibition

Ruskin and Norton on Turner's *Liber Stu∂iorum*

R. Dyke Benjamin and Peter X. Accardo, co-curators

Thursday, January 8th, 2015, at 4:00 PM Amy Lowell Room, Houghton Library

The reception, honoring John Ruskin and Charles Eliot Norton, colleagues and professors of art at Oxford and Harvard, will be preceded by a visit at 3:00 PM to the newly reopened Harvard Art Museums. Guests will gather in the lobby at Houghton Library between 2:45 and 3:00 PM.

> For further information contact Peter X. Accardo: accardo@fas.harvard.edu or (617) 496-4027

Houghton Library is located in Harvard Yard near the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Quincy Street; the Harvard Art Museums are located at 32 Quincy Street.

Burne- Jones, was Ruskin's spiritual brother.

In 1869, at the Ruskin family home on Denmark Hill in suburban London, Charles Eliot Norton visited the estate's Turnerlined rooms and recorded his psychological analysis of Ruskin's thought processes in

these words: 'John Ruskin suffers from his solitariness, and, in thinking of him, I am often reminded of the last pages in Modern Painters in which he speaks of the treatment Turner received from the public, of his loneliness, and of its evil effect upon his work and character.' Charles Eliot Norton followed this intelligent observation in a sensitive letter to Ruskin: 'How strange, how fortunate for that unconscious sympathy that brought us together 13 years ago to reopen into the conscious sympathy which makes up so large a part of the interests of my life at least!'

Charles Eliot Norton's daughter edited and annotated *The Letters of*

> *Charles Eliot Norton* in 1913. Sarah described the Nortons' 1869 Italian travels and Ruskin's visits: 'In Florence first and then in Siena establishing themselves in villas... and later in Venice and in Rome they passed two delightful years.... the student of art and life possessing himself of insights which for more than thirty years after his return to America he gave to successive generations at Harvard.'

Like Ruskin, his Oxford collaborator, Norton—the future Harvard Fine Arts Professor enjoyed 'A love of perfection in the details and the methods of every art, which gave to some of his interests in the applied arts printing in especial—almost the craftsman's own enjoyment and understanding.' This was Sarah Norton's observation.

For the 200th anniversary of John Ruskin's 1819 birth, early

plans are now being formed for a virtual digital 2019 global exhibition reaching from the UK to North America and

Japan. Through this enterprise, institutions and collectors hope to provide a robust case study for many other institutional/individual collaborations.



A Ruskin self-portrait? Presented by Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton in 1874, Norton's first year as Professor at Harvard. From R. Dyke Benjamin's Collection.

Finally, today's event illustrates that the terms 'institution' and 'collector' do not always reveal the underlying intellectual and personal friendships that evolve within these entities, today so beautifully exemplified by Ruskin's and Norton's friendship. In fact, Charles Eliot Norton became John Ruskin's literary executor. Even in today's gathering, old friends and new in the realms of books and art might open new chapters in our own interconnected biographies. Already amongst you, are some of my closest friends.

Thank you, Bob Darton, Bill Stoneman, Roger Stoddard, Martin Antonetti, Eric Holzenberg and especially Peter Accardo for years of empathetic collaboration with this individual collector. Thank you, Tom Hyry, for being so agreeable during the opening of this additional chapter in institutional and individual collaboration on a subject so significant to Harvard's and Oxford's intellectual history and future scholarship.

R. Dyke Benjamin

SOME DECORATIVE FLORENTINE BINDINGS



The front cover of the American edition of Mornings in Florence and its decorated end paper.

Florence, in the nineteenth century, had a considerable English community and was also much visited by English travellers. Many of these visitors and residents liked to buy visitors' books, photograph albums and other useful items well-bound in decorated vellum. Consequently, a number of businesses developed in Florence to cater for this demand.

In the Whitehouse Collection, in the Ruskin Library at Lancaster University, are two volumes of books by Ruskin, bound for this market. Appropriately, both books are copies of Ruskin's *Mornings in Florence* in English.

The earlier of the two examples was published in New York in 1902. It is in a full limp vellum binding with two wash-leather ties and with a double line of wash-leather stitches at the spine-side of the covers. The top cover is decorated with a formalised flower and leaf border at the top and right side, with the Florentine lily in the top right angle of the decoration.

The title of the book—Ruskin—Mornings in Florence—is written on the spine with the capitals R, M and F in red and the remainder of the words in lower case and black ink. The end papers are decorated with a repeating grey wave pattern interspersed with clusters of red dots. There is a binder's or bookseller's label on the last page— Alfonso Dori / Borgo S.S.Apostoli 14 / Presso Piazza S.Trinita / Florence. This volume once belonged to Ruskin's god-daughter, Constance Oldham, and was presented to the Whitehouse Collection with a number of other volumes by Ruskin which formerly belonged to her.

The second example is of unknown

provenance. It was already in the collection when I became responsible for its care in 1957. This is a copy of George Allen's 'Pocket Edition', the edition usually found bound in limp red leather with Ruskin's monogram in gold on the top cover. The leather of these bindings does not wear well, and volumes in this edition are often found with very dilapidated bindings. *Mornings in Florence* first appeared in this series in 1904. The present example is the 26th edition of 1911.

Like the earlier example, it is bound in limp vellum with two wash-leather ties. The flower and leaf decoration in blue, green and pink, occupies the left side and

head of the front board, and incorporates the decorative M of the title in pink on a brushed gold ground. The F or Florence is in red, also on a brushed gold ground. The title on the spine is written in black lower case letters, with red capitals M and F. There are two black lines at the head and tail of the spine. The end papers have an alternating repeating floral pattern in red and blue. The printed decorative border on the title page has been 'enhanced' in red, blue and green and the capital M and F have been given red and blue backgrounds, but this page could have been decorated by the book's owner. On the rear end paper is an indistince stamp reading 'Miniatures / Parchment Leather [?] Factory / 14 Piazza Pitti / and at / Gadda / Firenze / 30 via Gucciardini'.

Knowing these two bindings in the collection of which I was the Curator, I was intrigued to see, many years ago, in the window of a bookshop in Selborne, a volume in a similarly decorated binding. I was unable to resist the temptation to add it to my own collection—which I could do with a clear conscience because it was not a book by Ruskin!

The book which I bought, again of Florentine association, is a copy of *The Vita Nuova* or *The New Life of Dante Alighieri*, translated from the Italian by Frances de Mey. It was published by George Bell & Sons. The first edition was printed at the Chiswick Press in September 1902; my copy was printed in December 1902.

Roughly the same height as the Allen edition of *Mornings in Florence*, *The Vita Nuova* is rather wider; but the decoration is quite similar in style. The large T is in blue and brushed gold with a trailing decoration of leaves and flowers in red, blue and green.



The George Allen edition of Mornings in Florence and its decorated end paper.

The title, other than the opening initial, is written in black with black pen-drawn decoration. As with the American edition of *Mornings in Florence*, the red Florentine lily forms a central part of the decoration. The rather damp-stained, limp vellum binding has single wash-leather ties.



Giulio Giannini standing in the doorway of his shop in Piazza Pitti.

The title: *Dante / // New / Life /*, is written on the spine in black ink with red initials and a short red rule. The end papers are decorated overall in a red and yellow four-tier repeating pattern really rather nasty!

On the reverse of the free front end paper is the small label—*Giulio Giannini, Parchment Works, 19-20 Piazza Pitti, Florence.* Signor Giannini was a near neighbour of the binder of the Allen *Mornings*.

This business was established in 1856 by Pietro Giannini (1811-1882). Although essentially a stationers, the firm received commissions for high-quality book bindings. Pietro's son, Guido (1853-1931), transformed the business by concentrating on artistic bookbinding. The business has

prospered, It is still at the same address in Florence's Piaza Pitti where the fifth and sixth generations continue the bookbinding business and have developed the production of marbled papers.



The front cover of The New Life of Dante Alighieri

I am grateful to Rebecca Patterson of the Ruskin Library for her help in the preparation of this short article.

James S. Dearden



Old Glasgow Southern General Hospital (to be replaced by New South Glasgow Hospital—NSGH). A Quiet Room

FEATURE

In his 1849 essay, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Ruskin presents the idea that buildings and architecture are two separate things; one is purely functional and the other has meaning: 'All architecture proposes an effect on the human mind, not merely a service to the human frame.'

Modern hospitals often have rooms without windows or views onto concrete façades—they are often located on sites with limited connections to nature, such as parks or green areas. With strong clinical evidence to suggest the need for a different approach to hospital design, how did we arrive at this position?

A leading health practitioner, Dr Donnie Ross (former Medical Director of a large acute hospital in North East Scotland and ex-Chairman of Grampian Hospital Arts Trust) offers us some insights: '[T]he NHS is about healing but the elements of wholeness, compassion and creativity have been squeezed out by technology, rationality and hard economics' (Seminar, *Art and the*

HOSPITAL ARCHITECTURE: PLACING ARCHITECTS, ARTISTS AND DESIGNERS AT THE HEART OF THE COMMISSIONING PROCESS

Healing Environment, 2014). It is recognised that all building commissions should proceed on a sound economic basis but, as Dr Ross implies, there should be a more balanced and creative approach, with art and design integrated into the fabric of the building, and the buildings located in a garden-style

setting. In a talk I gave to Macmillan Charity, *Art* and the Hading Environment (August 2014)

and the Healing Environment (August 2014), I asked the audience to close their eyes and imagine a place of tranquillity, safety and peace. It might be a woodland glade, a walled garden, a stream or a meadow. As they held that image in their minds, I then presented a slide of a modern hospital Quiet Room, a place where conversations are held between clinical staff, patients and families. These spaces often have no windows, flat ceilings with harsh lighting and hard wall and floor surfaces that amplify the vibrations of sounds. This, I explained, is the task for designers and artists: to find ways to humanise clinical spaces-rooms, waiting areas and corridors-to foster dignity and enable conversations to take place.

In my own practice as an artist, I recognise the faults in the health building and commissioning system, but enjoy

the challenge of attempting to grapple with a process that places engagement between people and nature first: it's a process called *biophilic Design*.

Biophilic Design is a model of balance between nature and use of space. Edward O. Wilson, American biologist and zoologist, defined the term 'biophilia' as a bond between human beings and other species. We are inclined subconsciously to seek connections with nature, to find balance and inner harmony. One of the key biophilic directions in architecture is the use of organic and naturalistic forms that offer an immediate way of allowing individuals to connect to spaces and nature.

Roger Ulrich's classic study (1984) showed that patients recovering from surgery had better outcomes when nursed in rooms overlooking a small stand of trees rather than a brick wall. They required



Completed Quiet Room—New South Glasgow Hospital (NSGH) 2015. Photo courtesy of NSGH.



Staff & volunteers, Hidden Gardens Glasgow, 2013.







Application of fabric designs to furniture selected for Quiet Rooms in the New South Glasgow Hospital, 2015.

fewer analgesic pharmaceuticals, made fewer demands on nurses and needed shorter lengths of stay.

In the interior design of the New South Glasgow Hospital (NSGH), a number of the Quiet Rooms set aside for families were designed with no window or with windows that look over building façades. In fact, the interior architecture of the rooms are very similar to the rooms in the hospitals which are being replaced. New hospitals may have new shells, but often the interior architecture (design of rooms) remains very similar to what went before.

What, crucially, are missing, are designed interior spaces that provide a deeper way of connecting to people; designs that create a sense of the familiar, providing spaces that offer warmth and comfort, with views out onto the natural world.

The artist/designer can fulfil the crucial role of finding how to reconnect spaces to people, and offer some creative quality to the room. It would have been sensible if that process had started at the beginning of the building design process, but as with most commissions, the artist/designer is brought in at the end; to offer a service to the contractor—and not to be a full creative partner.

The commission for Lead Artist NSGH Quiet Rooms offered the opportunity to unite my practice as an artist with my interest in biophilic design. To drive this biophilic thinking I used a popular garden space in Glasgow that had been developed from a barren urban setting, Hidden Gardens, close to the Tramway Centre for Visual Arts. This space became my working laboratory. It also underpinned my idea of using a Walled Garden as a metaphor for a controlled or clinical space/room within the hospital.

There were two strands to the engagement process:

1. Workshops held in a garden space with volunteers drawn from both The Hidden Gardens' own programme and also from the NSGH Community Engagement Team's volunteers.

2. Clinical conversations: meetings with key clinical staff that will be responsible for the clinical functions in the new hospital.

Ideally, both strands would have included creative activity, but the clinical conversations took a more pragmatic form, focussing on the practical aspects of the uses of the Quiet Rooms.

A typical workshop began with the participants walking around the garden. This set the stage for the workshop, where the garden became 'a laboratory' for the day; a place to listen to nature, to discuss ideas on dignity within clinical spaces and to make an image from nature. The garden was also a place to rebalance each participant's engagement; the presence of nature would help to guide their responses. The morning session was devoted to consideration of the design elements within the clinical rooms: the furniture, lighting, wall colours, etc. I encouraged them to express preferences, based on their own experiences of working in, or receiving support from, the Health Service. Images of clinical chairs, or light units, as well as examples of art, were presented and people discussed whether they preferred abstract or realistic art, natural scenes, painting or photography.

We discussed the characteristics of the institutional environment, including the



Cyanotypes from Hidden Garden workshops, 2013.

conservative and utilitarian character of furniture, as well as the character of lighting: strip-lights were unanimously judged to be too harsh, and people felt that wall lights should be used instead. Natural light was seen as essential, and where that wasn't available, the idea of light boxes with nature-based imagery was supported. Participants commented that rooms should have a sofa as well as chairs. A sofa allows people to sit together in comfort, to comfort and to be comforted. It was also observed that in a potentially difficult relationship it is important that everyone is at an equal garden and freely chose the leaf types and flower petals that spoke to them. The participants had the freedom to choose how the various leaf types and petals should be arranged on a sheet of paper. The only guidance was to 'let nature speak'. Some participants found the request difficult; one commented, 'I am not an artist, I can't make art.' The reassurance that they were not required to be fully-fledged artists only to enjoy connecting to nature helped free up their creative responses.

Individuals chose plants for a range of reasons. One individual chose the fern as

images and placing them under glass. The pressed plant forms were then exposed to sunlight. In the garden shed/studio, within the grounds of The Hidden Gardens, a temporary photographic studio had been set up and the cyanotypes, or 'sun pictures', were then developed and hung to dry. At each stage, the workshop participants saw the process unfolding: from the selection of leaves, to making a picture, to creating a photogram and finally to seeing the result. See the website for video clips of this process: <www.designingfordignity.co.uk> At the end of the workshop all the

> cyanotypes were viewed by participants and further discussion was held on how the images would be used in the furniture and wallpaper designs. My aim was for the cyanotypes to drive the design process and to be used to bring nature back into the clinical environment. The platform for these images would be fabric used on the furniture and wallpapers within the clinical rooms.

The images accompanying this article best articulate the development of the designs from artwork to furniture fabric and wallpapers.

I feel that the creative engagement process has resulted in an understanding

of the practical requirements of users of Quiet Rooms in acute settings in hospitals. There is agreement on the importance to Quite Room design of comfort, privacy, peace, and safety achieved with natural light and views out on to nature. But dignity emerged as one of the central concerns of participants; in particular, the fundamental need—and the right—of each user to feel that they can be recognised as an individual

> within a large institutional space. Only by meeting the challenge of evolving a commissioning process which is not contractor-led—but which instead involves artists and designers working with architects to embed this thinking within the hospital design process itself—will we create the best hospitals for the future.

Alexander Hamilton <www.designingfordignity.co.uk>





height, so that everyone is included. Furthermore, seating has to accommodate the needs of different users with different levels of mobility. The tactile qualities of furniture were also felt to be important.

The afternoon session was devoted to a direct engagement with nature. In some workshops a creative writer or a plant specialist was involved. Finally, the workshop participants walked around the he said it reminded him of Christmas with his family. It also spoke to him because he saw it as ancient and powerful, growing on the planet whilst dinosaurs walked the earth. Another chose wild garlic. She was a passionate cook and was interested in both the healing and gastronomic properties of herbs and plants. The participants then transferred the plant leaves and petals to paper prepared for making cyanotype



Fabric designs developed from cyanotype imagery, 2014.

Unless stated otherwise, all photos: Alex Hamilton.

'Derbyshire is a lovely child's alphabet': **RUSKIN, RAILWAYS, ST GEORGE'S FARM** AND TOTLEY'S HERITAGE

There seem to be two important dates in Totley's history which are relevant to this article. The first is May 1842, when the Totley Enclosure Act was passed, giving away Totley's common land to a few wealthy and distinguished landowners. The landowners' rights became 'almost absolute' and 'people's rights [were] effectively, nonexistent'.¹ The second date is 1935, when Totley, Dore and Greenhill were taken in by the City of Sheffield, away from the county of Derbyshire. The long development of the railways took place between these two dates, specifically the outward growth of the railway from Sheffield to Totley in the early to mid-1870s, and then into Derbyshire and beyond to Manchester in the 1880s and 1890s. This was a period when many rural communities were joined to towns and cities. Sheffield expanded to Totley. Links between towns, cities, villages and counties all over the country would change forever.

The Saxon origin of the name Totley indicates the settlement of 'Tot' or 'Toft' on the hill amidst the open clearings. As a 'look -out' it provides glorious views extending for miles. ² Totley includes land situated from about 400 feet below Totley Rise, climbing to 1300 feet at Flask Edge on its far south-western border. It grew to cover an area of some three and a half miles by two miles, by the nineteenth century. It is an area of fast-flowing streams, abundant in wood—and with the local gritstone, Totley had all the raw materials necessary for the grinding-wheels in the watermills were dotted along the local streams and tributaries that ran into the River Sheaf at Totley Brook, and on to Sheaf-field, or Sheffield, some six miles away. From medieval times, lead smelting and rolling, paper-making, corn-grinding and scythemaking were prominent at various stages, although much of the workforce remained engaged in agriculture.

Over the centuries, Totley had consisted largely of a succession of farms and farming communities. In the medieval period, Totley's land was close to Beauchief Abbey in the parish of Ecclesall—an abbey in a dale. The Abbey was founded by Robert FitzRanulf in 1183 and had mills on the River Sheaf. The monks residing there farmed sheep, for fleece and mutton. By the 12th century they had a sheep grange at Streberry-ley (Strawberry Lee) in Totley Bents. Whilst the Abbey is still partially standing, and the old ponds which supplied the monks with their carp remain,³ the original pasture of their sheep grange can only be traced through old documents.



BRUNSEELINPERS 1945

Brian Edwards traced out a route through Totley by which the monks would have taken their flocks of sheep over the course of the year, a journey made for almost three hundred years until the Dissolution of the Monasteries. This rich medieval history would have been looked on approvingly by Ruskin, and he might have felt that 'in the main temper of its inhabitants, old English, and capable, therefore, yet of ideas of honesty and piety by which Old England lived.'4

Ruskin outlined a bucolic vision in the first number of Fors in 1871 that suited rural Totley well:

We will try to take some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful and fruitful. We will have no steam trains upon it and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthoughtful creatures upon it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle, but the dead ...⁵

This is the spirit in which Ruskin approached the creation of St. George's Farm in Totley where:

A few of the Sheffield working men who admit the possibility of the St George's notions being just, have asked me to let them rent some ground from the Company, whereupon to spend the spare hours they have, of morning or evening, in some useful labour.⁶

The communal farm at Totley was started by a group of men shortlisted by Henry Swan, the Curator of the Guild of St.

George Museum in Walkley, Sheffield. Edward Carpenter, socialist, poet, philosopher, and early gay activist, was influenced by and wrote to Ruskin, describing them:

A small body-about a dozen--of men calling themselves Communists, mostly great talkers, had joined together with the idea of establishing themselves on land somewhere; and it was at their insistence that John Ruskin bought a small farm (of thirteen acres or so) at Totley near Sheffield, which he afterwards made over to St. George's Guild.

Carpenter followed the fortunes of St. George's Farm and lived close by in Bradway, and on inheriting money from his father, he established himself at Millthorpe, near Barlow, Derbyshire for a simpler life closer to nature, a life of market gardening and rural craft. The period from 1877 onwards marks a chequered history for St George's Farm, as so well outlined in Frost's new book, The Lost Companions.7 When John Ruskin visited his new venture some two years later, on 17th October 1879, all seemed-at least on the surface-to be going well. Ruskin cheerfully described his 'faithful old Gardener' David Downs, as resident 'for a while at least, at Abbeydale'8 to look after the communal agricultural project with Riley 'in feathers' and 'especially proud of some rows of cabbages'. Ruskin tells us that he 'had tea in state at Totley and looked at all the crops.'9 Yet, as Frost points out, 'relations remained





VIEW OVER TOTLEY FRAM NEXT MUCKLEY LANE BRIAN EDUARDS 1996.

cordially guarded.'¹⁰ In fact, after his visit, Ruskin decided to remove Riley from St George's Farm and leave the management to Downs. This marked a phase where the Totley 'experiment' went through a difficult period.

Yet, on that day's visit, Ruskin must have seen around him the beautiful Derbyshire countryside, which is reflected in a line in a letter he wrote to the *Manchester City News* in 1884: 'Derbyshire is a lovely child's alphabet; an alluring first lesson in all that's admirable and powerful, chiefly in the way it engages and fixes the attention.'¹¹

William Harrison Riley had come to Sheffield in 1877. He edited *The Socialist* from June to December of that year, sending a copy to Ruskin, who, with some guarded comment and criticism, thought there was a great deal of good in it. Riley took centrestage in the St George's Farm community for a period in 1878. Like Carpenter, he was an admirer of the American poet Walt Whitman, and looked for a communal agrarian life. It was a project nourished 'by a vague but persisting recollection of a past Golden Age ... a Garden of Eden separated in time and space from the realities of common life.'¹² Totley fitted this

description, in that it had been long protected by the green band of Whirlow, Ecclesall Woods, Ladyspring Wood and Beauchief Hall—hidden and remote from Sheffield's industrial sprawl.

Yet in the late 19th century, change was accelerating everywhere and one of the main agents in this, as I started out by saying, was the growth of the railways. Prior to the Sheffield railway line reaching Dore and its immediate neighbour, Totley, there was just one horse-drawn bus per day which travelled out from Sheffield covering the six or so miles to this area. This must have entailed a long and often difficult journey; especially in the autumn and winter. With the opening of the railway station in 1872, there were trains carrying far more people out to Dore and Totley and with greater frequency, at speed and with protection from the weather. Land prices rose as a result, and even before the arrival of the railway, plans for suburban villas were being drawn. Sheffield men were coming to the rural village of Totley. Symbolically, with the building of Dore and Totley station, the site of the medieval Walk Mill-which the monks of Beauchief Abbey had worked, fulling (cleansing) their cloth-was demolished, and the dam that powered the mill was filled in. A few years later, Ruskin, apparently looking back to the monks at Beauchief Abbey, described his St George Farm workers as 'in the spirit of monks gathered for missionary service.'13 He always preferred to call the

Totley farm 'Abbeydale' providing a link back to the Abbey at Beauchief.

Already in the summer of 1873, the Totley Brook Estate Company, made up of a brush manufacturer, a County Court Clerk, a timber merchant and two building contractors—Sheffielders all—was planning new housing. As Brian Edwards rightly points out, 'The railway was the turning point in the development of the [Totley] district.'¹⁴ The railway ushered in an era of building that gained momentum in the decades that followed.

St George's Farm, led first by Edwin Priest and later by Riley, hosted fellow travellers during 1878, who were dropping in to lend a hand, discuss politics and poetry and crack intellectual jokes.

Many visitors went to the farm, and newspaper correspondents had things to say about us, wise and otherwise. Now our expenses were increased and we had to meet them, so we had parties to visit during the summer taking tea, for which they were charged. ... Every Wednesday, we went to Dore and Totley [station] from Sheffield, bringing back fruit, eggs, and vegetables to

The coming of the railway transformed the Derbyshire village of Totley into the modern suburb of a commercial city in South Yorkshire.



the meetings which the members purchased. $^{15}\,$

The Totley Brook villa estate started in 1873, later failed as the land and its planned housing was bisected by the incoming railway as it reached Totley. Another very grand enterprise, though short-lived, took shape in the mid-1880s, initially rooted entirely in land speculation. Alderman Joseph Mountain, one of Sheffield's building magnates, planned a pleasure garden that would rival the Belle Vue Gardens in Manchester. Many used the railway to go to the opening of Victoria Gardens which lay on a piece of land bordered by Baslow Road, Mickley Lane and Totley Brook. Opened on Whit Monday, 1883, the ceremony attracted 10,000 people who enjoyed a variety of theatrical entertainments; there was a ballroom, and refreshments were served (the restaurant roof and walls were mostly made of glass) and there was a 400yard promenade with extensive views over the Derbyshire Moors. The grounds were later laid out for cricket, tennis, bowls and archery, and later still for cycle racing.¹⁶ Local landowners were not happy with this large development. A drinks licence was refused, and in 1886, Mountain was summoned on grounds of a breach of the Public Health Act, for permitting raw sewage from one of his Totley Rise properties to drain into a local landowner's lake. By 1887, the venture was failing. When Joseph Mountain died in 1893, the Victoria Gardens were offered for sale.

Meanwhile, David Downs, Ruskin's gardener, continued looking after St George's Farm, which was operating at a financial loss, and when he died in 1888, the land was let to John Furniss, George Pearson and others. Furniss was a considerable figure among the Sheffield Socialists, an old-style preacher and an impressive speaker who used Totley as a base for his political activity.¹⁷

In the autumn of the following year, St George's Farm was visited by G. L. Dickinson and C. R. Ashbee, two young Cambridge idealists staying at Millthorpe with Edward Carpenter. Ashbee recorded his impressions of the new commune:

There we have а community of early Christians pure and simple—some ten men and three women ... and no private property except in wives ... there was a brightness and clearness in the faces of most of them which bespoke

enthusiasm for humanity.¹⁸ By the end of the 1880s, the Guild of St eorge offered George Pearson the farm

George offered George Pearson the farm rent-free for a couple of years, until he could afford to pay. Ironically, it was largely the building of the Totley railway tunnel to Grindleford, linking it up with the line to Manchester, that put Pearson in profit. He found a regular market among the railway navvies, and despite the smallpox outbreak in Totley at the start of the 1890s, he continued to do well, even when other tradesmen were less fortunate. So it was largely the railway that revived the fortunes of the Guild's farm, and put Pearson on the path to success. By 1935, he had seven greenhouses and a packing shed, he grew bedding plants, tomatoes and cucumbers, and had by then bought neighbouring land; the owner of 43 acres. By the time Totley became part of Sheffield and the utopian dream had faded, and before the farm had become a flourishing commercial concern, the Guild had sold the farm to him outright.

Yet for a while, at least, Ruskin's scheme had given some land back to a community

of people, and had looked back to an age of Common Land which had been undermined by the Enclosure Acts. It had given a small group of Sheffield men, who had dreamed of a communal enterprise away from the town, the opportunity to experiment. These people had political ideas that were new, though, in part, rooted in the Chartist movement. The Totley Farm shows how fraught with difficulties such a communal project was. Ruskin-in choosing the rural and remote Derbyshire village of Totley, at a time when the railway he abhorred was rapidly opening the area up to speculation, change and enterprise—became an important part of the local history before Totley left Derbyshire and became a suburb of an industrial city in South Yorkshire.

This article was written in tribute to Brian Edwards, who died in February of this year on his 78th birthday. Illustrations from his publications, Brian Edwards' Drawings of Historic Totley (1979), Totley and the Tunnel (1985) and Dore, Totley and Beyond (1993) have been reproduced with the kind permission of his widow, Pamela Edwards.

Brian was a creative and intuitive researcher, and an accomplished artist and designer. He lived in Totley for many years, recording its history, buildings and natural features at a time when the area was beginning to change rapidly. His rich archive of notes and drawings is available for viewing. It is housed at 79, Baslow Road, Totley and can be seen by appointment. Please contact the Totley History group at enquiries@totleyhistorygroup.org.uk for further details.

Andrew Russell



NOTES

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(Above) The yard at St George's Farm. With thanks to Totley History Group. (Left) The Pearson family. They made a commercial success of running the farm at Totley. With thanks to Totley History Group.



Why not watch Sally Goldsmith's perambulatory play, *Boots, Fresh Air and Ginger Beer*, set and performed in Totley? It is available online with other *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* content at <www.youtube.com/watch? v=XyTOWZtHnN8>.

^{6.} Works 29.98.

ON TRANSLATING RUSKIN'S ACADEMY GUIDE¹

The Guide to the Principal Pictures in the Academy of Fine Arts at Venice (1877) was one of the first of Ruskin's works to be translated into Italian, preceded only by G. Pasolini Zanelli's edition of 'The Shrine of the Slaves', the First Supplement to St Mark's Rest, published by George Allen in 1885.² The Guide came sixteen years later, when Maria Pezzè Pascolato selected it for her anthology volume, Venezia (1901), which also included translations of St Mark's Rest and other Ruskin writings on Venetian art.3 Pascolato's translation is an important work of cultural mediation, and remains valuable for its historical reconstruction of Venice as it was in the early years of the twentieth century, in particular for the arrangement of paintings in the Accademia galleries. (Cook and Wedderburn made ample use of the volume in this respect.)

Since Venezia, last re-issued in 1925, no further translation of the *Guide* has appeared; its fate has essentially been no different from that of its English original. The focus of much attention and debate at the time of publication, it has been over-shadowed, over the years, by the 'greater' works of Ruskin's early and middle periods. The various Italian translations of The Seven Lamps of Architecture, The Stones of Venice and Modern Painters, which have succeeded one another since the early twentieth century, have helped Italian readers to consolidate their knowledge of Ruskin's writings on Venetian art up to 1860. Those readers may well be surprised by this Guide, and may find it an unsettling, even disturbing work-not just by reason of its content but also because of the terms in which that content is expressed. In his scholarly introduction to this new translation of the Guide (Guida ai principali dipinti dell' Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia, published by Electa, 2014), Paul Tucker shows in detail that the Ruskin of the Guide and St Mark's Rest re-thinks the ideological, cultural and religious premises in which The Stones of Venice and other early works had been grounded. A no less deeply critical reappraisal of those writings imbues the language in which they are expressed, radically transforming their syntactic and lexical superstructure. Rigorously and methodically, Ruskin rejects the persuasive elaboration of his early rhetoric for a more immediate and essential rendering of the 'truth' of the object. While the syntax of Modern Painters and The Stones of Venice was broadly *hypotactic* (i.e. made up of long sentences involving many subordinate clauses) that of the Guide, with its short sentences, participle and gerund verb-forms and the habit of making lists, is noticeably more *paratactic*, which is to say, based on straightforward syntax and basic sentence forms. Punctuation is frequently and

markedly used with 'cutting' and 'linking' functions, with the full stop, the colon and the dash, so ubiquitous in Ruskin's diaries and private correspondence, signalling pauses, accelerations, changes of direction and resumptions. If the early Ruskin's vocabulary had been copious and tended to *variatio*, that of this later Ruskin is generally spare and essential, with a tendency to *repetitio*. And the marked use of adjectives in threes in the early books gives way to a much reduced use of attributes in general and to the insistent repetition of a handful of plain terms, most of them seemingly neutral or, at any rate, barely connotative.

As the argument of the *Guide* develops and its aesthetic perspective gradually emerges, these terms begin to perform a crucial role in the argument—semantic and emotional refrains which guide the reader through it. Quite ordinary adjectives such as *quiet* and *bright*, verbs such as *amuse* and *enjoy*, and their respective derivations, are woven together to form a fine web of fixed, recurrent meanings and functions.

The present translation, made in close collaboration with Paul Tucker, aims at the highest possible adherence, both formal and semantic, to the original, whose figures of repetition and brevity are marked features, and could neither be reduced in number nor modified. *Variatio*—variation of vocabulary by means of synonyms—is generally encouraged in Italian, but in this case, it was avoided in deference to the *Guide*'s deliberate grounding in these and only these stylistic characteristics.

And what about the presence of the reader: that *you* who is so insistently rebuked, reprimanded, exhorted and scolded in the Guide? How was Italian with its three pronouns for the English one-the familiar tu, the polite Lei and the plural voi-to register that person in its text? An older generation would have settled for voi, rather as a French writer would use *vous*; that is what Pascolato, for instance, uses as do all other translators without exception, but it is a usage which skates over the issue of who is being addressed and exploits the ambivalence of the English second person (both singular and plural). It is a form which, though widely used in Italian until a few decades ago, is hopelessly outdated today. Instead, we opted for tu and, in doing so, were guided by precise clues in the text. There are passages in Part II where Ruskin explicitly addresses the British traveller and the modern British man of business, but at such points one might suppose that he was picking out selected figures from among his readership. The singular reference of the pronoun is unequivocally manifested, however, in the use of yourself in one particular passage-at

once intimately paternalistic and complicit—in which Ruskin surprises his reader-visitor by removing him temporarily from the Galleries: *So (always supposing the day fine,) go down to your boat, and order* yourself *to be taken to the church of the Frari*. It is clear from this that the *Guide* founds its whole mode of communication on a familiar, one-to-one relationship, teacher to pupil, master to disciple, intimate to the point of being at times, almost brutally intrusive.

And here we find confirmation of the textual coherence of a work which is stylistically and rhetorically so much tighter and sparer than Ruskin's previous writings, moving in radically and provocatively new directions. Himself a guide sui generis, at once both aesthetic and spiritual, Ruskin leads his visitor through the galleries of the Academy and the 'sacred' sites of Venetian art addressing at once the mind, the eyes and the 'heart' of his reader. The same singular mode of address underpins St Mark's Rest, from which this volume offers an extract (the 'Shrine of the Slaves'), together with a fragment (not used at the time) from 'Carpaccio's Ape'. Such examples confirm the stylistic continuity that links these texts, written during the same period and arising out of the unified vision discussed in detail in Tucker's Introduction. The singular status of the Guide's addressee—and the same is true of St Mark's Rest-appears all the more marked when we contrast it with passages (included here among the Supplementary Texts) taken from numbers of Fors Clavigera which date from the same period but explicitly address more than one singular reader: 'the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain'.

Lastly, among the challenges the Guide poses for an Italian translator are the complexities of those inter-linguistic passages for which the sources are Italian. In his attempt to recover the vestiges of Venice's historical and cultural past, Ruskin turned for the Story of St Ursula told in Fors Clavigera (and given here in the Supplementary Texts) to the English version by his pupil James Reddie Anderson, which was based on Francesco Zambrini's 1855 collection of legends of saints' lives,⁴ while for Veronese's famous interrogation before the Inquisitors he used his friend Edward Cheney's translation from the Venetianlanguage original held in the Venice Archives.⁵ Often presenting himself as sponsor of these researches, Ruskin does not summarise these texts but reprints them in full, thus expressing his deliberate intention to adhere to their sources by offering translations which bear linguistic traces of their originals. If Ruskin, therefore, presents us with translations from Italian to English that are as faithful as possible to their

sources, though in modernised versions, it seemed appropriate to reproduce as far as possible the original Italian versions but without obsolete, archaic or dialect forms and features. In so doing I hoped to give the Italian reader a taste of how the Ruskin of the 1870s thought of a good translation: one which 'aims straight, and with almost fiercely fixed purpose, at getting into the heart and truth of the thing it has got to say; and unmistakably, at any cost of its own dignity, explaining that to the hearer, shrinking from no familiarity, and restricting itself from no expansion in terms, that will make the thing meant clearer' (Works 31.116).

Emma Sdegno

NOTES

1. This article is based on my Translator's Note to the *Guida ai principali dipinti dell'Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia*. I wish to thank Jeanne Clegg, Stuart Eagles and Clive Wilmer for their precious help in making the English version up to 'what Ruskin and the *Guide* deserve'.

2. For a list of Italian translations of Ruskin's works, see my *Saggi su Ruskin: Stile Retorica Traduzione*, Venezia, 2004, pp. 149-53; also in D. Lamberini (ed.), *L'eredità di John Ruskin nella cultura italiana del Novecento*, Firenze, 2006, pp. 241-246.

3. Maria Pezzè Pascolato (1869-1933) came from a family very active in Venetian political and social life. After taking a degree in letters and philosophy at the University of Padua and spending some years in Tuscany, she returned to Venice in 1896, where she became deeply involved in promoting children's and women's education. The founder of the first children's library in Italy, and first translator of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, she wrote several novels for children and poems in the Venetian vernacular. She also translated extensively from the English—Carlyle and Thoreau as well as Ruskin.

4. Francesco Zambrini, Collezioni di leggende inedite scritte nel buon secolo della lingua italiana, Bologna, 1855.

5. A transcript is now available in Terisio Pignatti, *Paolo Veronese. Convito in casa Levi*, Venezia, 1986; and Maria Elena Massimi, *La cena in casa di Levi. Il Processo riaperto*, Venezia, 2011.

John Ruskin. *Guida ai principali dipinti nell'Accademia di Belli Arti di Venezia*. Edited by Paul Tucker. Translated into Italian by Emma Sdegno. Electa, 2014. 224 pp. 25 Euros.

Ruskin's Guide to the Principal Pictures in the Academy of Fine Arts at Venice, published in two parts in 1877, has never been much noticed. It was one of the books which Ruskin wrote to educate the ordinary English tourist and, as such, belongs with Mornings in Florence and St Mark's Rest. Indeed, according to Companion Paul Tucker, the editor of this new Italian translation, it may originally have been intended as part of St Mark's Rest, and much of what Ruskin wrote—for instance, about Carpaccio's St Ursula cycle-seems to have been almost randomly divided between that book and the Guide. It is certainly the case that, at this stage in his life, Ruskin was manically writing more books than he would ever have been able to finish and all of them are effectively incomplete. Several, moreover, are touched from time to time with that note of near hysteria that, in the course of this same year, 1877, betrayed Ruskin into his conflict with Whistler. In February 1878 his mind broke down altogether and it does not seem to me mistaken to suggest that the extremes of emotional response that damage, for instance, Mornings in Florence, are the rumblings of an approaching avalanche, though Tucker is surely right to insist that, when Ruskin wrote the Guide, he had not yet lost his grip on reality.

As it happens, however, despite one or two extreme judgements, the *Guide to the Academy* is a balanced book: witty, valuably reflective and felicitous in its conversational style. A dozen years ago, I photocopied the Library Edition text, which is little more than forty pages long, stapled the pages together and took them round the Accademia Gallery, reading as I went. There is no better way of reading Ruskin on art. There were one or two problems of identification: many pictures have been moved, transferred to the reserve collection or sent back to their original homes, and the system of numbering has more than once been changed. But Paul Tucker has worked it all out and gives the reader the correct modern references, so the first value of this Italian edition is that it can easily be *used*: which is also the first of many reasons why I think the publishers have made a mistake in declining to publish an English-language edition.

Despite those problems of identification, my experiment proved to me for the umpteenth time how closely, accurately and intelligently Ruskin sees. The judgements were, of course, eccentric if measured against the hierarchies accepted in Ruskin's day, and many of them will still seem strange now. But if you are willing to consider the possibility that the fourteenth century ('the Age of the Masters') produced greater art than the age of Michelangelo, and that Vittore Carpaccio is a greater artist than Titian, Veronese or even, by this stage, the revered Tintoretto, you can surrender yourself to a civilised engagement with Ruskin. By the standards of his later work, there is not much rant or hyperbole. One reason why the book is neglected, as Tucker points out, is that Ruskin simply refuses to do what guidebooks normally do. He declines to cover the ground with a supposedly neutral perspective and ignores the accumulated judgements of the centuries. Carpaccio's Presentation of Christ in the Temple is 'the best picture' in the whole Gallery; Titian's Presentation of the Virgin is 'To me, simply the most stupid and uninteresting picture ever painted by him.' The latter remark is something of an exception; when Ruskin dislikes a picture, he doesn't on the whole



bother to mention it, unless there is something valuable to be learnt from it. It isn't clear to me, for example, that he even knew who Tiepolo was: the most spectacular artist of the era he most disliked is simply disregarded.

The virtues of this approach, such as they are, and the part played by this remarkable book in the context of Ruskin's criticism, are well laid out in Tucker's introduction, which, meticulously scholarly, is followed by nineteen double-columned pages of even more scholarly endnotes. The plates are excellent and they, too, are thoroughly annotated. It is very strange that the publishers in this era of mass tourism have refused to publish an English text—a normal thing to do even with books not originally written in English and not by classic authors. For the English Ruskinian—and for the



The launch of the Guide at the Accademia, Venice, 4th February 2015. (L-R) Angeli Janhsen, Emma Sdegno and Paul Tucker. Photo: Michela Vanon. Alliata

foreign tourist with no Italian—this is something of a wasted opportunity. The value of Ruskin's book has been put into high relief by Tucker's work, as well as by the translator Emma Sdegno's. There can be no doubt that theirs is the most important work of scholarship ever to have been published on the *Guide* and an important commentary on Ruskin's account of Venetian painting as spread throughout his work. This is a book that Ruskin scholars need to be familiar with.

The translation seems to me exceptionally intelligent and readable. But (you may well want to ask) has it any value for readers of The Companion? It would obviously be foolish to suggest that an Italian version mattered more than the original, but a good translation is also a form of criticism, and Sdegno, who worked closely with Tucker from start to finish, is one of the most original of contemporary Ruskinians. She has an expertise, moreover, that is uncommon these days among Anglophone scholars: a firm grounding, and serious scholarly interest, in classical rhetoric. (See her Saggi su Ruskin: Stile Retorica Traduzione [Venice: Cafoscarina, 2004].) The translation of

rhetorical figures is notoriously challenging and, as it is easy to guess, the spontaneous manner of Ruskin's later writing presents peculiar challenges. What is one to do, for instance, with Ruskin's forms of address, in particular his use of personal pronouns. When he addresses his audience—in this case the English traveller in Italy, though much the same issue is raised by his public lectures—he uses that notoriously slippery English

pronoun, 'you'. Is it meant to be understood as singular or as plural, as familiar or polite, as personal or impersonal? You can get away with the ambiguity in English—that is part of its value for Ruskin—but you can't in Italian, where each of these distinctions entails the use of different words. Sdegno raises such problems in her 'Translator's Note': a brief essay but an important one, which seems likely to initiate a too-long-neglected study of Ruskin's style. That being the case, I have asked her permission to print an English paraphrase of it here. (*See pp. 48-49*.)

At the time of writing, I am resident in Venice and have had the chance to take the *Guide* to the Accademia again and check it against the pictures. It is as fresh as ever. If readers of this article know it at all, I suspect it will be mainly for the writing on Carpaccio—something on which Tucker is especially knowledgeable—and less obviously that on Bellini, Tintoretto and Veronese. Ruskin is very good on all those artists, but what about the lesser-known or anonymous painters and sculptors? The *Coronation of the Virgin* by the fourteenthcentury 'vicar' Stefano 'Plebanus' di Sant'Agnese, for example, is 'Symmetrical, orderly, gay, and in the heart of it nobly grave ... [It] has much in it of the future methods of Venetian composition.' Or take the anonymous relief sculpture on the façade of the Scuola della Carità, the medieval building that has housed the Accademia since the early nineteenth century:

You see the infant sprawls on [the Virgin's] knee in an ungainly manner: she herself sits with quiet maiden dignity, but in no manner of sentimental adoration.

That is Venetian naturalism; showing their henceforward steady desire to represent things as they really (according to the workman's notions) might have existed. It begins first in this [the fourteenth] century, separating itself from Byzantine formalism...

And so on. It is hard to resist the implied invitation to search the Gallery for babies rendered naturalistically. One would certainly find them: in Bellini, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Titian and lesser artists as well. In his subtle accounts of such minor works we see in little the sparkle and independence of the critic who rescued Tintoretto from the near oblivion his name had fallen into.

It is not often one wants to recommend given the beauty of Ruskin's prose—the translation of one of his books, but if, under the auspices of two such important scholars as Sdegno and Tucker, this Italian *Guida* draws attention to the neglected English *Guide*, it will have done something almost as valuable as, through Ruskin's eyes, showing Italy to the Italians.

Clive Wilmer



argues that Carpaccio's reputation had languished for centuries after his death, but 'it was to be revived largely by the paradoxical influence of John Ruskin'. Ruskin is seen as 'The improbable champion' whose enthusiasm for the painter 'entered an infatuation far more fateful than mine', she says.

However, Ruskin was initially slow to appreciate the work of Carpaccio but was later to describe him as 'faultless' and 'consummate' in *Verona and its Rivers* (1870). His fullest engagement with the artist's work appeared in 1877 in his *Guide to the Academy at Venice* and also in *St Mark's Rest* along with

Jan Marsh, Ciao, Carpaccio! An infatuation. Pallas Athene, 2014. 192 pp. £12.95.

several other publications. It appears that he had followed a tip-off from Edward Burne-Jones on a visit to Venice in 1869 and was soon captivated. He wrote back, 'My DEAREST Ned,—There's nothing here like Carpaccio! ... I've only seen the Academy ones yet, and am going this morning (cloudless light) to your St George of the Schiavoni and I must send this word first to catch post.- Ever your loving, JR' (*Works* 4.356).

Ruskin's encounter with Carpaccio's painting *St George and the Dragon* in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni (Scuola meaning association or Guild) in Venice, with its portrayal of immortal chivalry was to play a part in the conceptualisation of the Guild of St George. This, in order to rescue the country, Morris tells us, 'from the various evils that beset it;' in other words, to 'confront England's dragons'.

Ruskin came to see Carpaccio as being 'in the most vital and conclusive sense, a man of genius' and in the *Guide to the Academy at Venice* he explains:

For the rest, I am not going to praise Carpaccio's work. Give time to it; and if you don't delight in it, the essential faculty of enjoying art is wanting in you, and I can't give it you by ten minutes' talk; but if you begin really to feel the picture, observe that its supreme merit is in the exactly just balance of all virtue;-detail perfect, yet inconspicuous; composition intricate and severe, but concealed under apparent simplicity; and painter's faculty of the supremest, used nevertheless with entire subjection of it to intellectual purpose. Titian compared to Carpaccio, paints

David Ingram, *The Gardens at Brantwood: Evolution of John Ruskin's Lakeland Paradise*. Pallas Athene and the Ruskin Foundation, 2014. 120 pp, illustrated. £12.99

When the Director of the Ruskin Library at Lancaster University, Stephen Wildman, asked David Ingram to take a look at the Library's holdings of Ruskin's botanical studies, both literary and visual, he could not have asked a better person. Professor Ingram is a former Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, a botanist, plant scientist and horticulturalist. He is also clearly a man of sympathy and imagination.

Though botany played a key role in Ruskin's world view, it is fair to say that his poetic approach is a challenge to most readers, and his attempt in that late partwork, *Proserpina* (1875-86) to establish a quasi-etymological botanical system of his own was, in Ingram's own words, 'audaciously unconventional'. But Ingram's expertise is such that he has been able to open what would otherwise be a closed book to the lay reader. Not only has he been able to make sense of the botanical archive at the Ruskin Library, in this delightful book he has explored one of the living sources of Ruskin's inspiration, his Lakeland home.

The Gardens of Brantwood is much more than the excellent guide book that it is: it is a many layered history, a scientific description and a celebration of the continuing work to sustain this 'living laboratory' for the study of the right relationship between people and landscape. It is at once engaging and profoundly stimulating, whether you are a visitor who simply wants to make the most of your time at Brantwood, a gardener who wants to know about plant types, or someone who is interested in the deeper

as a circus-rider rides,—there is nothing to be thought of in him but his riding. But Carpaccio paints as a good knight rides; his riding is the least of him, and to himself unconscious in its ease. (*Works* 24.160)

Although Morris has enormous respect and admiration for Carpaccio she is not quite able to place him in what she calls the 'supreme pantheon'-stating that 'Devoted (if ignorant) advocate though I am, I would not promote him there myself'. This, however, does not in any way dampen her passionate enthusiasm for his paintings which has been fed through a long engagement in close looking at the artist's work in galleries around the world, and in the contemplation of her own collection of art books. She claims to have been under Carpaccio's spell for a long time and has written her book out of 'self-indulgent caprice'. Morris states that she is 'no connoisseur, cultural scholar, or art historian', that she knows 'nothing about

implications of a Ruskinian form of environmentalism.

Ingram explains the sensitive inter-relation of three generations of gardeners at Brantwood. First there was Ruskin, who created no fewer than six distinct gardens within the woodland estate that he acquired in 1871: some were practical, like the Professor's Garden with its beehives, some poetic, like the Zig-zaggy, with its suggestion of Dante's path to paradise, and one, the Moorland Garden was never completed, though it gave Ruskin the ability to turn on his own waterfall. The second was Ruskin's cousin-and eventual carer-Joan Severn. As Ruskin fell into silence in the 1890s, she allowed his creations to fall into desuetude, but made her own Victorian vistas that added colour to the hillside.

Her creations, too, would have been overgrown and lost, were it not for Sally Beamish, who arrived at Brantwood in 1987 as a volunteer, at a time when the house was beginning to attract fresh interest and investment. The following year she was appointed Head Gardener, and since then she and a dedicated team, who are rightly celebrated at the start of the book, have not only recovered so much that was in danger of being lost, but have added to the Ruskinian legacy with boldness and imagination.

Thus we learn about Brantwood's experiments in 'biodynamic cultivation', a

painterly techniques, chromatic gradations or artistic affinities' believing that her infatuation with him 'is largely affectionate fancy'. All this, of course, does not really mean that we have an innocent eye at work. She published her book on Venice (as James Morris) in 1960 and that excellent volume contained many references to Carpaccio. The special nature of her writing relates to the highly personal way in which she takes us into close engagement with and observation of pictorial content, through the description of the mass of imagery which makes up most of the works by this artist. It is a highly inquisitive approach, driven by curiosity; such reading and looking permit deeper and deeper explorations of the internal themes of the paintings. However, these observations and descriptions are also supported by a lifetime's experience and a considerable amount of research-the research is worn very lightly. Chapters cover 'first acquaintances', 'Looking for meaning', 'Pomp and Circumstance', 'A Gentler Side', and many other things, including humorous aspects in Carpaccio's work, and ending with



kind of homeopathy for plants that has links to the estate management of the Rudolf Steiner-inspired Ruskin Mill Trust. There is the Fern Garden, a response to the work of an earlier owner of Brantwood, the radical W.J. Linton, who wrote and illustrated Ferns of the English Lake Country, published in 1865. There is the restoration of the wildflower meadow in front of the house, there is an orchard designed, in Ruskinian manner, for the flowers not the fruit, and there are Sally Beamish's own contributions to the horticultural expressions of Ruskin's ideas. Rightly, this book is as much a celebration of Sally Beamish's creative service to Brantwood, as it is of Ruskinian values.

Elegantly produced, with gorgeous photographs that complement Ruskin's own drawings, *The Gardens at Brantwood* is an inspiration. Both accessible and scholarly, it is enjoyable in itself—and even more valuable for the way it brings understanding to a vital aspect of Ruskin's life and thought. **Robert Hewison**

the question: 'A simpler kind of genius?'

The book is a small hardback and landscape in format. This facilitates the inclusion of illustrations which suit the general shape of the artist's canvases. Also included are many closeups relating to specific small details examined so carefully in the text. This generally works very well and one can almost see this book perhaps being developed as a hypertext/multi-media DVD. The photographic illustrations are of very high quality.

It seems from the first chapter, that for many people 'Carpaccio' is something which appears as an item on a menu; originally as a dish of raw beef slices with a Dijon sauce. This was apparently first devised in 1970 by one Giuseppe Cipriani, owner of Harry's Bar in Venice. It has since developed variants including 'venison carpaccio, tuna carpaccio, octopus carpaccio, beetroot carpaccio' and many others. It is to be hoped that this beautifully written new book by Jan Morris will help re-focus attention on the magnificent paintings of this superb artist. William Morris: The Odes of Horace. Facsimile edition; printed on Tatami paper in coloured inks with gold and silver foil; bound in Indian smooth-grain goatskin with five raised bands on the spine; gold blocked on spine, edges and doublures; 192pp. Together with 61-page hard-bound book containing the 1870 photograph of William Morris, an eight-page Commentary by Clive Wilmer, and translations of the Odes by William Gladstone (1894). All in a large handsome box. Folio Society, 2014. £395.

Following its facsimile editions of the Kelmscott Chaucer and three books by Eric Gill, the Folio Society has now produced a splendid edition of Morris's manuscript version of The Odes of Horace. Clive Wilmer's informative Commentary tells the reader of Morris's preoccupation, in his Sunday leisure time in the period 1869-75, with what he called 'painted books'; he produced some 1,500 pages of lettering and ornament, and 18 illustrated books, though only two of them were completed. May Morris's recollections of her father at work at his desk at the time are delightfully quoted. Morris had already shown his enthusiasm for medieval manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford when he was an undergraduate. His early attempts at writing were awkwardly Gothic in form, but he

came under the influence of Renaissance writing-books and developed a clearer and more attractive style. Most of us will know Morris's work in this area mainly through the attractive 1870 Book of Verse facsimile produced by the Scolar Press for the V&A in 1981. Wilmer argues that the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (1872), The Odes of Horace (1874), and above all the unfinished folio Aeneid (1874-5), are even finer. Certainly, the Book of Verse is a quiet little volume, lacking the gold and silver exuberance of the later

books. Morris ceased work of this kind in 1875, giving no explanation, but having learnt lessons about the making of books that would come to fruition at the Kelmscott Press. Overall, Wilmer sees the venture as 'a qualified failure'.

Wilmer gives a clear account of Morris's life, emphasising the influence of Ruskin, both on his criticism of industrial capitalism and, on a smaller scale, quoting his argument that the purpose of illumination 'was not to lead the mind away from the text, but to enforce it'. Wilmer admits that we do not know why Morris chose Horace for such elaborate treatment. I can find no



reference to the Odes or to Horace as a poet in Morris's letters. The first mention of Horace is in a letter to Charles Fairfax Murray, in Italy in 1874, instructing him to get some highquality vellum which Morris needed for this manuscript, remarking that 'the odes are so short so there is nearly an ornamental letter to every page', and adding that 'I have in mind to try and sell a book if I could find a customer: I work much neater now, & have got I think more style in the ornament, & have taken rather to the Italian work of about 1450 for a type'; Morris never found such a customer. Later, in a letter to the aspiring poet James Henderson in October1885, Morris referred to Horace in the advice he gave, but here Horace was simply a source



because of Morris's unfailing inventiveness; on page after page we encounter designs of the utmost elegance and vitality, using gold and silver to impressive effect. There is no repetition, and Morris clearly enjoys taking on new tasks, as for instance in the changing colour-schemes of the pages as they come before us. There is only one fully decorated page, but a host of others filled by the

decorator with the energy of life. In her biography of Morris, Fiona MacCarthy has brought out well how on these pages 'the pictorial decoration swims into the lettering'. She notes the richness of the 'Leaves and grapes and rose hips; honeysuckle trellis; a thousand dotting rosebuds'---giving sometimes 'a sense of demented wallpaper'-and finds the general effect 'inexpressibly peculiar, at once beautiful and decorous yet fraught and slightly manic'. She is led to think of Lewis

Carroll, Blake, French Surrealism and the Czech avant-garde. Wilmer's conclusion is less excited, but conveys admirably the mysterious appeal to be found here:

The Odes of Horace is a little book, kept in a small box. When we open the leather covers and behold the neatly bound pages with their elegant lettering and delicate decoration, we seem to have been granted access to a treasure: vulnerable, threatened by the very transience that Horace's odes resist and lament, and therefore all the more highly to be prized.

The book is undoubtedly expensive, but the reproductive work is of very high quality.

Readers who have the good fortune to be able to afford it will find it a rich source of visual pleasure, and perhaps a stimulus to taking up the study of calligraphy or of the Latin tongue.



for common-sense ideas about writing.

Wilmer argues that Horace appeals to

Victorians, 'troubled by doubt', responded

mortality, his 'humane scepticism'. He

translation of the Odes published in 1894,

poetic talent' and was politically anathema

to Morris by that time. If a reader wants to

know what the poems are about-though

many of us may simply want to look at the

pages aesthetically-it seems to me a pity

that access is not given rather to the

though admitting that Gladstone had 'no

then provides the text of Gladstone's

readers in various ways, and that the

to his emphasis on transience and

James S. Dearden, *Rambling Reminiscences*. A Ruskinian's Recollections. Pallas Athene, 2014. 342 pp. £20.

You can spot him in a crowded room, JSD; amongst a throng. Seen from above, the room's like a simmering pot. And the bit with the most bubbles in it will be the one around James Dearden.

Not that he'll necessarily be holding forth—he's just as likely to be listening with concentrated attention; for he's as good a listener as he is a talker. And after a while, he will move away—not because he's bored, but because he wants to share his time with as many people as he can—and, he cannot but know that this feeling is likely to be reciprocal.

Happy man— within a happy family life. The recent sad news of Jill's death—they had married in 1958—means that one rereads his book already in a rather different way: but Jim will know that; will be only too aware that 'things happen'.

He had worked on determinedly at Bembridge School, even when seen as 'old regime'; surviving two heart attacks in 1993 and 1997...along with all those trips abroad: the weight of responsibility, with the checking-in again and out again, the boxes of exhibition treasure for each show and conference.

I had first met Jim in 1987, but that had been a meeting waiting to happen, and the place in which it was going to happen would be an Art Room/Gallery in a school. My wife and I had first got together in the Art Room of our Birmingham co-ed grammar school (in 1949) and we were soon gazing regularly at Ruskin's lovely (and fading) large blue watercolour, *La Cascade de la Folie* in the Pre-Raphaelite Room of Birmingham CM&AG.

Meanwhile, Jim, as he recounts in his present book, was already in the army-as a second-lieutenant, straight from school, and enjoying it-even National Service. No, especially National Service, in a training battalion! He doesn't deal with the subject at any length, but he is already identifiable in the person of this smart, alert, confident junior officer: called up at the age of eighteen, setting a high standard-adroit at devising with the Platoon NCOs ingenious patterns for marching and countermarching. I squirm with recollected pain, but from this distance in time, I can understand and applaud—for, in a quite different way, I was to get a lot out of National Service, too.

Returning to 'civvy street', Jim found work with antiques and in the book trade, then picked up the skills of traditional printing. At which point, as if predestined, J. H. Whitehouse, saviour of Brantwood and founder of Bembridge School, *died*. Died at the very moment when Jim (a former head boy) was available, and the Whitehouse accumulation of Ruskin treasures and trivia needed to be rearranged and continuous cataloguing ensued. He also taught the boys—*then*, the boys and girls—printing: *craft-printing* with traditional moveable type.

That is what he was doing when I met him for the first time in 1988. I had been very efficiently and thoughtfully despatched (by Janet Barnes) to Bembridge, and the other principal Ruskin collections, in order to prepare for a guest-show project at the Norfolk Street Gallery, to celebrate the centenary of *Praeterita*.



Jim showed me how the printing process (in two or three colours) had brought life to the despairing poems of the young JR addressed to the 'impossibly Catholic'-Adèle ... I was genuinely charmed.

Jim was in charge of the treasure store at Bembridge. He looked at me—and most generously and trustingly—produced one of the saddest letters from Rose La Touche to me, the saddest letter I'd ever read [from Rose La Touche to Joan Severn, 4 September, 1874.]

I've given up forever any attempt to read this aloud: I always blub.

Poor Rose ... Thank you for that, Jim and for your letters, with their many wise and bright thoughts. Congratulations, again; congratulations on it all. Congratulations among the commiserations, Jim.

Donald Measham

Graham Peel: *Alec Miller*. *Carver*, *Guildsman*, *Sculptor*. Tenbury Wells: Graham Peel, 2014, 295 pp. £14.

The work of Alec Miller, sculptor and wood carver, is of a comparable quality to the carvings on the stalls in Amiens Cathedral, so admired by John Ruskin. And like the names of the Amiens carvers, Alec Miller's name was in danger of slipping into obscurity. However, it is now well and truly rescued and documented by Graham Peel in his excellent and very readable new biography.

Alec Miller was born into a poor Glasgow family on 12th February 1879. He was one of six children and he started working as a 'milk boy' at the age of eight. As a child he began drawing and showed talent. When he was twelve he was apprenticed as a wood carver, mainly producing carved panels for furniture. He attended drawing classes and came into contact with one or two people who recognised his ability and helped to foster his interests and career.

He completed his apprenticeship in 1898 and a couple of years later he was attending drawing classes at Glasgow School of Art where he met Muirhead Bone. Soon he was introduced to the London art world and a patron gave him a copy of Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*. Twenty years later, he made heart-felt thanks to Ruskin's influence in a lecture at the Art Workers' Guild.

Miller met C. R. Ashbee and when the latter's arts and crafts community moved from Essex House in east London to Chipping Campden, Miller was offered the running of the wood-carving and modelling workshop. Ashbee came to see Miller as his 'ideal craftsman' and together the two men visited Florence. Miller and the Ashbees

Alec Miller Carver Guildsman Sculptor



This memorial will be formally unveiled early in October, 1949. It is a work of supreme beauty. The sculptor is a leading member of the profession, and during a long life has enriched many of the Cathedrals and other buildings in this country and the U.S.A. This is one of his most important pieces.

remained close friends throughout their lives.

Miller's workshop was doing more and more work for churches up and down the country. Surely one of the largest jobs must have been the screen and bishop's desk for Coventry Cathedral, unhappily destroyed with the rest of the cathedral during the war. By now Miller was also beginning to make lecture tours to America, where he was also obtaining commissions.

After Miller had spent six years with



From Bembridge School newspaper (A Supplement), No. 90, Summer 1949



Saint George and the Dragon. By Alec Millar, Memorial to Old Boys killed in the last war. See opposite page

Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, the Guild closed. However, Miller and two colleagues stayed on at Chipping Campden to continue the work of the Guild's carving workshop. Miller was doing more and more ecclesiastical work and still regularly toured America. Finally, in the spring of 1939, he and his family emigrated to America, ultimately settling in California.

In America, he developed his speciality of carving or sculpting portrait heads in both wood and stone. Largely, these were in the

round, but he also carved a number of small portrait bas-reliefs. He became wellknown for his portrait work and received many commissions. Miller had become a well-known and sought-after craftsman.

But England was not forgotten and he made periodic return visits here—in fact he died here during a visit to Kent, on 17th May 1960.

Alec Miller had kept only limited records of his many commissions, but happily many of them were photographed, and these photographs and his remaining archive was given by the family to the Victoria and Albert Museum. Using this valuable resource, Graham Peel has been able to compile a fascinating and important book recording the life and work of a master craftsman, rescuing him for posterity from the danger of oblivion.

Until I read the book I hadn't realised that my tenuous connection with Alec Miller goes back more than seventy years! When I was ten or eleven, I used to take off on Saturdays on my bicycle, with my sandwiches in the saddlebag, and ride around the lanes of that part of (what was then) north Lancashire, called Furness, visiting the various churches, abbeys and castles. One of my favourite churches was that at Great Urswick—because it was the oldest in the district. But I fear I was always disappointed when I went inside, because I like my old buildings to look old and Campden team had been working in the church, providing a scheme of carved decoration for the whole church principally based on the chancel.

Urswick Church didn't. At that age I didn't know about the Arts and Crafts Movement,

Miller and a small

Chipping

nor did I particularly appreciate craftsmanship. But now I know why the interior of Urswick didn't look old. For several years around 1910, Alec

My next association with Alec Miller was when I was a boy at school at Bembridge. Howard Whitehouse, the founder of the school and its Ruskin collection, must have known Miller for years. They had many mutual friends and in fact Miller's son, Alastair, was educated at Bembridge. In 1949, Miller was commissioned to make a carving of St George and the Dragon to serve as part of the school's memorial to Old Bembridgians killed in the war. The carving, in two pieces of Corsham stone, weighing in at over half a ton, was made in Oxford and Miller accompanied it on its journey to Bembridge. He stayed here for two or three days to see it raised into its position on the chapel tower above the main entrance. During those few days, I had the opportunity to meet him several times. What I didn't know then was that the life-sized head of Fridtjof Nansen, the explorer and statesman admired by Whitehouse, which was at that time in the chapel, had been carved by Miller from a self-portrait which Nansen had given to the school in 1928. The carving is illustrated on page 255 of Peel's book.

Some years later, when I was the Curator of the school's Ruskin Galleries, I had in my study Miller's carved relief of the head of Arthur Geddes, who was the friend of both Miller and Whitehouse. We also had in the collection Miller's sculpted head of his son Alastair. This is now in my collection, and I once saw the almost identical head, carved in wood, in the Cheltenham Museum.

My final connection with Alec Miller was in 1960. Van Burd and I had decided to attempt to trace all Ruskin manuscripts and letters internationally and I had a letter from Alec Miller telling me that his sister-in-law was the daughter of George Baker, the Guild's benefactor and second Master, and that she had a number of letters to Baker from Ruskin. In 1960 I didn't follow that up, but now, who knows what may turn up! James S. Dearden

In this year notable for its release of two films which seriously misrepresent the great master who inspires these pages (*for review, see pp. 54-55*), Jim Spates sends this brief report on two other films which contain, if more briefly than either *Mr. Turner* and *Effie Gray*, a more positive impression of Ruskin. Both are very much worth watching.

The first is an older film, *Enchanted April*, which, as a whole, is exactly as its title implies: two truly enchanting hours of movie-viewing. In the early part of the last century, a number of London ladies, either bored with life or dissatisfied with their husbands or both, decide to go on holiday 'alone together' in Italy. Among their number is an older lady, a Mrs Fisher, played by the always marvellous Joan Plowright, a widower who has made her otherwise uneventful later life pleasant by regularly reading a group of great authors she lovingly calls 'my friends'. Among these is Mr Ruskin. In

OTHER RUSKIN SIGHTINGS

an early scene when we are in her flat, we see his picture-one of those taken during his mid-1880s sittingsprominently displayed. Considerably later, the husbands discover that their wives, who had not been overly forthcoming about where they were going, are in Italy. After which, they show up, one by one, at the rented villa. Complications ensue. All will be resolved in due course. In one scene, one of the surprising husbands, having met our Ruskin-reading dame for the first time, is so taken by her description of her 'friends' that he takes her by the arm and, leading her to another room, gently but enthusiastically says, 'Now, I want you to tell me all about Ruskin!' And, if that isn't enough to whet your appetite, there's Italy!

The second film is much more recent. *My Old Lady* sports a magisterial cast: Kevin Kline, Kristin Scott-Thomas, and the magnificent and eternal Maggie

Smith (on leave here from her Downton Abbey 'dowagership'). The short of the story is that, in America, a fiftyish seriously estranged son (Kline) learns that he has inherited his father's copious Paris apartment. He arrives to take possession of it, only to find a 93-year old woman, of irrepressible, irascible demeanour (Smith), living there. As his father's former mistress, by French law she claims she has life-rights to the place and that, if he wants to live there, he will have to pay her rent! Visiting regularly is her daughter (Scott-Thomas). Complications ensue. All will be resolved in due course. In one of the scenes where the son confronts this antique nemesis, she upbraids him for his dissipated state, telling him in no uncertain terms that (and she should know!) 'There is no Wealth but Life!' (Of course, she does not acknowledge the source of her six words of wisdom, but it is an arresting moment nonetheless.) And, if that isn't enough to whet your appetite, there's Paris!

Jim Spates

RUSKIN IN OREGON— Sara Atwood

Sesame and Lilies

Visiting the coastal town of Cannon Beach, Oregon, this past March, I was surprised to find an interior design store named Sesame and Lilies. Intrigued, and certain that the name could have only one inspiration, I went inside to look around. The store is large and full of beautiful things; one could easily spend hours poking around (and rather a lot of money as well!). I asked the young woman behind the till how the store had come by its name and to my delight she pointed out a nineteenth-century American edition of *Sesame and Lilies* displayed on the counter (alongside it lay a copy of Ian Warrell's *Turner's Secret Sketches*).

'The owner found this book,' she told me, 'and liked the



a she told me, 'and liked the name, so chose it for the store.'

'I know the book well,' I said, 'Does the owner particularly like Ruskin then?'

'Well,' the young woman replied, 'I'm the only one who works here who has read it.'

Oh dear. Perhaps on my next visit to Cannon Beach I'll have a chance to speak with the owner and put in a word on Ruskin's behalf!

The Multnomah County Library

On a recent visit to Portland, Oregon (preparatory to moving to the area with my family), our ten-year-old son, Liam, was keen to see the Multnomah County Library, Portland's main library. A fan of the Percy Jackson books (which brings Greek myth to life in modern America), Liam was keen to see the library in which Percy and his friends discovered a Harpy. Unfortunately, the library had closed for the evening, but as we walked around the building, I looked up and found that I was standing just below a panel that bore Ruskin's name. Morris is also included in the grouping, as is Froebel—an interesting conjunction given the many similarities between Ruskin's and Froebel's educational philosophies.



SEARCHING FOR RUSKIN'S *LAWS OF PLATO*, or, You Can't Always Get What You Want, But If You Try, Sometimes You Get A Recipe For Brown Bread

'To me, every trip to a library or archive is like a small detective story. There are always little moments on such trips when the past flares to life, like a match in the darkness.'

This is a story I've wanted to tell for some time. It's all true, of course, not an embellishment anywhere. It's kind of a hodge-podge: a record of a serious search for an important, unpublished Ruskin manuscript, an object lesson about the surprises which often attend archival research, and a 'scholarly thriller' (there are such things; whether this belongs to the genre you will have to decide) with a (possibly) delicious ending.

For me, a quarter of a century before I 'met' Mr Ruskin, there was, mostly, Plato. He came into my life during my third undergraduate year at Colby College, introduced to me by the study, over a baker's dozen of weeks, of The Republic, the core text in a course-'Normative Social Theory'-taught by the professor, Kingsley Birge, who would be my inspiration for becoming a sociologist. King (we became good friends after my graduation) designed the semester in the shape of a Socratic dialogue, trying to work out with us as we made our careful way through all ten 'Books' (chapters) of The Republic, what the nature of truly good and humane society might be. I was transfixed-and, better, transformed—by the experience, accepting by semester's end Plato's (and Birge's) axiomatic argument that the entire reason for studying society was to discover the answer to the question, 'How should we live?'

So focused, I went to graduate school, only to discover that virtually every professor in my chosen field had no interest in this question whatever. Having adopted the methodological model of 'objective' analysis developed in the physical sciences (chemistry, biology, etc.), they saw their role as essentially 'reportorial,' their task being to explain what was going on in different social settings (nothing wrong with that) but to leave it to others to decide whether the social forms they described were beneficent or inimical. I didn't like it. Later, after I had become a professor, I began going to conferences attended by sociologists from both the US and other countries, finding (not very surprisingly by now) that, with few exceptions, all embraced the value-free approach, and treated with disdain, even hostility, anyone who thought that Plato's core question was the proper one for framing the study of society. I didn't like it.

Into this simmering dissatisfaction, about a decade and a half later, Ruskin enteredby having been placed on the reading list of a course I was co-teaching on 'London in the Nineteenth Century' with a colleague, Claudette Columbus, from our Department of English and Comparative Literature. I had never heard his name before. Immediately, I was taken by his sociological writings—Unto this Last, Munera Pulveris, The Crown of Wild Olive, Time and Tide, Fors Clavigera-for, each and every one of them was doggedly focused on ferreting out which forms of social life were good for us, which were not, and, having made this critical determination, showing us how to secure the former and dismantle or avoid like the plague the latter. I liked it, very much.

But as I read these remarkable books for that first time, not too many pages had moved to the left before I began to think that much of it sounded like Plato. It was no fantasy. In more than a few places, Ruskin himself acknowledged his debt to the Athenian master. At which point, an idea! I would research the connection between Ruskin and Plato and write a book about it. By doing so, I would be able to give Ruskin's claims for what constituted a good society much more credence than they received in his day and simultaneously revivify the relevance of Plato for modern social thought. But I soon learned that finding such links was not as easy as I had expected. To be sure, the index of the Library Edition of Ruskin's works devotes almost a page and a half to Plato's influence on his life and thought (see Works 39.411-12). But, if one checks these references, one finds mostly 'incidental' remarks: 'Plato is the source of all my Political Economy' (Works 17.18); he is Plato's 'disciple' (Works 38.112)-nothing which tells us why Ruskin placed Plato on the very highest echelon of his tutors.

I turned to the biographies and the (few) scholarly studies of Ruskin's social thought. These proved almost as unilluminating.¹ Then came a brainstorm. Knowing that he lived only an hour and a half away, I called Professor Van Akin Burd, to ask if his celebrated work on an important set of letters Ruskin had written between 1858 and 1868 (*The Winnington Letters*), a time when he was intently at work on his sociology, might have provided insight into

—Erik Larson, The Devil in the White City

the Ruskin-Plato connection. 'No,' he immediately replied.² 'But,' he added, after a moment's reflection, 'if anyone would know, it would be Helen Viljoen. Helen,' he continued, 'had been, prior to her death in 1974, one of my great "friends in Ruskin". As a result, she left all the papers pertaining to her massive unfinished biography of Ruskin to me, hoping, I think, that I might finish her task. But, by that time I was hard at work on The Ruskin Family Letters and couldn't possibly entertain the notion. So that other scholars could use them, I donated all her incredibly valuable biographic materials to the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York where she had done most of her research work. If you like, we could go to the Morgan and you can see if she may have learned anything about this.'

And so, a few weeks later, go we did. After routing about in dozens of boxes of notes, letter transcripts, and draft chapters for the unpublished biography, I came to a disappointing conclusion: that, quite understandably, her attentions having been fixed on Ruskin's days instead of on the development of his thought, Viljoen had nothing to say on the subject. Frustrated, while Van continued to work on another aspect of Viljoen's legacy, I thought to have a look at the Morgan's copy of Viljoen's The Brantwood Diary of John Ruskin (the crowning achievement of her limited published scholarship), recalling that, in it somewhere, she had mentioned Plato. Only to find, as I opened the book (p. xvii) this: that, as she edited the manuscript for print, she had included everything in the holograph except the left side of 'pages 105-211 which had... been used for his translation of Books I and II of Plato's Laws'!

It was as if a match had been lit in a dark room. Immediately I walked to the Reading Room desk to ask Inge du Pont (for many years the wonderful aide of scholars working there) if she would call up the real Brantwood Diary (Viljoen had donated the manuscript to the Morgan after finishing her work). A few minutes later, that remarkable record containing Ruskin's account of his frightening march toward his first mental breakdown in 1878, was at my seat. Gingerly, I opened to page 105. There it was! Page after page in his hand which, likely, no one, save their writer, Viljoen, and F. J. Sharp (the collector who bequeathed the diary to Viljoen), had ever

seen! What a find! Having read Ruskin's theory of the complex nature of the thing we commonly call 'fate,' and which he called 'fors,' I was sure that this was a case of the helpful side of fors at work. After hitting blank walls in my search for evidence explaining why Ruskin had chosen Plato as his prime counsellor in matters of social study,³ I had been shown another road by which I could make an even more significant argument.

In this way: almost always, when presenting passages from Plato in the letters constituting Fors Clavigera, Ruskin uses his own version. He does so because of his conviction that all the English translations of Plato's works then available were problematic, either because a translator's Greek was not sufficient to grasp what Plato was really saying, or because the more modern writer got the 'tone' of the original wrong, making his rendering stilted compared with Plato's more lyrical, appealing, and convincing statement-or both. Prime among translations wide of the mark, Ruskin believed, were those of his Oxford colleague, Benjamin Jowett, whose complete version of the dialogues had, after their publication in 1871, become the standard edition. Most offensive was Jowett's rendering of The Laws, Plato's last, longest, and, save for The Republic, most sociological work. Although he was never to finish his version, it seemed likely that Ruskin had in mind that he would publish his Laws of Plato as a corrective not just to Jowett's effort, but as an object lesson to all translators, current or future, in how Plato should be represented in English. All this in mind, I decided I would write a book called Ruskin's Plato's Laws, publishing in it, for the first time, Ruskin's translations of Books I and II of The Laws, including everything else (not an insignificant amount) he had written about this last Platonic dialogue, and interpret everything as I went.

But difficulties loomed. For one, decoding Ruskin's hand, even for one well-practiced in the task (as I am), is a chore under the best of circumstances. And, as I looked at Ruskin's pages translating Plato's Laws, I saw that, decidedly, these were not such circumstances: his hand is considerably smaller and more cramped than usual, complications made worse by corrections he makes to his original renderings with words or phrases interpolated by means of arrows, superscripts, and subscripts. To convert all this into workable prose would require at least six weeks of work while rooming and boarding in very expensive New York City. For another, Viljoen's comments in her version of the Brantwood Diary inform us that much of Ruskin's work on The Laws derives from notes, some extensive, he had made and transposed from his copy of Bekker's eight volume compendium (1825) which

reproduces every dialogue in the original Greek. If my book was to exhaust the sources for Ruskin's work on *The Laws*, it was clear that I had to access this edition. Trouble was, the Bekker set was housed, with the rest of John Howard Whitehouse's invaluable trove of Ruskiniana, at the Ruskin Galleries at Bembridge School on the Isle of Wight off the south coast of England, another costly outing.

As we made our way back to Upstate New York, I explained all this to Van. Hearing me out, he said: 'Well, you know, Jim, although I gave to the Morgan everything of Helen's which pertained to her biography, there was one box of materials I kept, things which had to do with sources she had used. I thought I might eventually consult them in my own work.4 Have you ever heard of Charles Goodspeed?' I replied that I knew that he was a famous Boston bookseller who, at one time, collected Ruskin. 'More than collected,' Van returned. 'For many years he was a sort of archival vacuum cleaner, buying up everything of Ruskin's he could find—letters, manuscripts, paintings, whatever came on the market. Then, so that he could buy more expensive things, he started selling off items of lesser significance. A lot of important Ruskiniana he kept at his shop to show possible customers, but many of the rarest things he kept at home. In the early 1940s, his house caught fire. He and his family ran out, saving themselves. But quickly it became evident that the house would be lost, along with his most treasured Ruskin items. So, very bravely, he raced back in, re-emerging with some of these treasures in his arms, among them the holograph of Ruskin's autobiography, Praeterita-smoldering! After this fright, he decided he could not take a chance that this irreplaceable material might be lost in another catastrophe. So he donated many items to the Beinecke at Yale and other libraries. The Praeterita manuscript went to the Beinecke. If you call it up, as I have, you can still see the singeing on the pages! The point of telling you all this is that, in that box of Helen's, there's a catalog for one of Goodspeed's "Ruskin sales." You might find something.'5

And so—the helpful *fors* obviously at work again—it proved to be. For in Van's box was a catalogue, issued by Goodspeed's Book Shop in 1932, offering for purchase no fewer than 77 Ruskin paintings and drawings [instance: a 'Street View of Amiens' (1880; \$60!)] accompanied by no fewer than 24 Ruskin manuscripts, among them—imagine my delight!—a red-clothbound volume bearing the title, *The Laws of Plato*, containing: two pages of an "Introduction" to *The Laws* in Ruskin's autograph; 13 pages of "Notes to Plato" (ten relating to The Laws), also in his hand; pages (number unspecified) from Jowett's Plato translations with Ruskin's notes; notes on Athenian history dictated by Ruskin to Alexander Wedderburn; and a fair copy in Wedderburn's hand of Ruskin's translation of Books I and II of The Laws with notes correcting the secretary's version-\$100. In short, it was a book essential for my project. The savings in time and money which would result from being able to use a clean copy of the translations of Books I and II (with Ruskin's corrections!) was almost impossible to contemplate. To entice prospective purchasers to buy this and other manuscripts, Goodspeed inserted this



Some of the Ruskin Manuscripts offered for sale in Goodspeed's 1932 Catalogue (The Laws of Plato second from bottom).

picture in his catalogue.

But then reality raised its head. The present moment—1996—was more than sixty years later. How could I, during those days when most libraries had yet to post their holdings on the fledgling internet, find out who had this book? After generously loaning me the catalogue (Van, as many reading these lines know, is always generous!), I thanked him and, as soon as I was back at Hobart and William Colleges, went to Joseph Chmura of our library staff and asked his help in flushing it out. Over the next few weeks we tried much: an internet search on the title (nothing), a trip to the University of Rochester to collect a print-out detailing the whereabouts of all Ruskin manuscripts in the UK (nothing), a search of the files (annually published) of all manuscript gifts to colleges and universities of manuscripts (nothing), a query sent to an international list-serve, 'Exlibris,' regularly consulted by libraries and museums (nothing).

At last, a vein opened. A librarian in Kansas who had seen our Exlibris request said that he knew, from his time there as a student worker, that the library at Dartmouth College had a dozen or more letters which Ruskin had written to a "B. Jowett" in the early 1880s. Wonderful! Though not the ms itself, it was possible that the letters might contain complaints Ruskin had posted to his colleague regarding that *eminent*'s translations of not only *The Laws* but other Plato dialogues. Moments after

Sarah Quill, Ruskin's Venice: The Stones Revisited. Lund Humphries, 2015. 256 pp. £24.

What does the Ruskin scholar, enthusiast, or initiate take to Venice? Even in compact formats the Stones themselves are unwieldy-and daunting to many. Ruskin made an edition 'in more serviceable form' intended 'for the use of travellers while staying in Venice and Verona' (1879-81) but did not follow through his initial intention to include 'photographic reductions of the principal plates in the larger volumes'. Arnold Whittick's Ruskin's Venice of 1976 is a valuable and compact compilation, structured on Ruskin's 'Venetian Index', with the advantage of including some key paintings, especially a long section on the Tintorettos in the Scuola di San Rocco-but the photographs are quite limited, and all black and white. Since the new millennium, the cicerone has had to be Sarah Quill's Ruskin's Venice: The Stones Revisited (subsequently available in paperback) with its sparkling colour photographs, and a tripartite organisation based on Ruskin's texts, interpreting the two venerated styles of Byzantine and Gothic and a-not entirely hated-Renaissance. Now The Stones Revisited has itself been revisited in a major new edition. Some facts: Its octavo format has expanded slightly, and considerably thickened from 206 to 256 pages, giving it more the feel of the substantial art monograph associated with the Lund Humphries imprint. Its pages are more handsome, too, with an invitingly calm double-column format, far preferable to the busy design of the previous edition-and the updated hardback is 300 grams heavier (a paperback version is available). This might be called the 'Pevsner-effect' whereby increased content has to be weighed somewhat against portability. So this is a real 'new edition' with many new photographs to show the significant amount of restoration and cleaning that has taken place since 2000-striking in the case of the façades of S. Moisè and S. Stefano, or the north façade of the Basilica of S. Marco. Tantalisingly, it

has also been possible to include a few daguerreotypes from the collection of Ken and Jenny Jacobson-those 'missing' and discovered in auction in Penrith in 2006 (and just published in Carrying off the Palaces: The Lost Daguerreotypes of John Ruskin). For example, Quill includes The Fondaco dei Turchi (c. 1845) and Palazzo Zorzi Bon (c. 1849) as antecedents to her own vivid photographs, originally taken on film in the last quarter of the twentieth century for the first edition; see the glowing Turnerian Columns of the Lion of St Mark and St Theodore in the Piazetta (Photo: 1997, p. 69 new ed.; p. 61 1st ed.). Along with presenting the great churches and

RUSKIN'S VENICE The stones revisited



SARAH QUILL New Edition

palaces of the three periods, one great quality of Quill's first edition was its feeling for Ruskin as a gleaner and gatherer of the fragments of a lost Byzantine-medieval Venice 'hidden in many a grass grown court, and silent pathway'. Just as Ruskin did in his 'Bit [Note] Book', and other pocket-books, she assiduously sought out and recorded these more humble 'bits' coequally with the noble traceries of the Frari, or the capitals of the Ducal Palace. Compare the crucial section on 'Orders of Venetian Arches' in the new edition with the earlier. In his 1849-50 'M' Diary, Ruskin notes his discovery on 23rd November 1849 of this enduring taxonomy: 'I obtained today for the first time a clue to the whole system of pure Venetian Gothic'. Quill now includes these decisive pages showing Ruskin's sketch of the key stages in the evolution of the Orders whereby the Gothic subtly infiltrates the stilted Byzantine hierarchy and then transforms it with flowing energy. The sense of discovery is pointed up with new photographs of the 14th-century Palazzo Moroni showing a not

uncommon hybrid mixture of fourth and fifth-order arches on the same façade. Altogether this important section of the book is some thirty percent longer than before. Then, for the portals of Venice, Notebook drawings from the 'Gothic Book' and the 'House Book 2'-aligned with more new photographs-reinforce the understanding of Ruskin as a visual thinker; here scrutinising a door near the Fondaco De' Turchi, or some pages later, the magnificently arborescent portal to the Ca' Magno in the Campiello della Chiesa. This enrichment, nuancing and amplification characterises the whole, making it-if not quite a new book-very much more than a normal 'new edition'. Everyone who bought the first book will need and want this one, too, and it is certain to attract fresh admirers. The new edition has only a historic 1847 map of Venice to contextualise Ruskin's research; the

reference map linked to grid-references in the Index has been omitted—but this outline map was always intended to be 'used in conjunction with a good street map'. So, to find Ruskin's gleanings in the labyrinths of Venice, into the explorer's shoulder-bag along with the indispensable Quill—should go the map-guide *Calli, Campielli e Canali*.

Stephen Kite

NEW COMPANIONS, 2014-2015

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learning this, I called the head librarian, explained my project, and asked if he might be so kind as to send me photocopies. He would be glad to be so kind.

Ten days later, the copies came. Eagerly, I opened the packet and read the first, brief missive: 'Dear Jowett, The typesetting on the last chapter was wonderful. I shall send the next shortly. [signed] JR.' (???) I read the second: 'Dear Jowett, I am doubtful that I can get the ms of the new book to you by Christmas. However that may be, my confidence in you is infinite, and when it does arrive, you will handle it with your usual brilliant compositional skills! JR.' (???) The rest were all in the same vein-hardly the vein I had hoped for!-terse notes about publishing. Then I remembered: for years Ruskin had employed a typesetter, Henry Jowett, with whom he, always particular about how his words sat on the printed page, corresponded. The letters were to this Jowett not his Plato-translating namesake! I called the Dartmouth librarian and told him of the mistake in his archive listings. He apologised profusely and promised to right the wrong. Decidedly not a good stroke of fors!

Happily, my disappointment did not live long, for, a week later, the Exlibris notice generated another email. One of the librarians at Harvard's Houghton Library, suggested that I call George Goodspeed, Charles Goodspeed's son. George, I was told, had inherited everything on his father's death in 1950. Though in his nineties, his mind was, he thought, still pretty good. He might recall and, even if he didn't, financial records might exist which would tell me to whom or to what institution The Laws ms. had been sold. To help me along this path, he kindly included the younger Goodspeed's address and the phone number for his home in Brookline, one of Boston's posh inner suburbs.

Two days later, I posted a long letter explaining my project to Mr Goodspeed and the need I had to find, if only to read and transcribe passages from, the missing manuscript. Days passed. Nothing. Deciding to take the bull by the horns, I dialled the Brookline number. After a few rings, an answer, the voice obviously aged but clear: 'George Goodspeed here.' I introduced myself, then asked: 'Did you get my letter?' 'I have it,' he said. 'My letter?' [Short pause, then:] 'Didn't you hear me? I said I have it, but you can't take it!' (???) 'Are you speaking of my letter, Mr Goodspeed, or [hope springing!] are you saying that you have the book containing Ruskin's manuscript called The Laws, the one which once belonged to your father?' Again, with irritation: 'I said, I have it, but you can't take it!' 'The manuscript?' 'I'm looking at it right now. It's across the room. In the bookcase. I can see it.' (!!!) 'Really?! That's wonderful!

I don't need to take it. But might it be alright with you if I came to Boston sometime-soon-came to your house and read it? I'd also like to take some notes if that would be acceptable. It would help my project more than I can explain!' Long pause. 'You can come, but [still more intently] you can't take it!' 'Yes, sir, I understand. I could come once my semester is over. In June.' 'You can come, but [most vehemently yet] you can't take it!' 'Yes, of course! Understood! [Pulling out my calendar:] Would the third Friday in June be alright? I could come to your house at, say, 1:30 in the afternoon?' Another pause. Then: 'Yes, come. But remember you can't take it!' 'Of course! I shall so much look forward to seeing you, Mr Goodspeed! You are most kind.' Here was the answer to the mystery! The Laws manuscript had not sold and so had descended to the son. For some unknown reason, he had kept it, and, for a second unknown reason, was intensely attached to it. No matter. The point was to read and take notes on it. There is was!---in Boston—all these years! Found! Fors!!

At last the two months needed to bring our semester to an end passed and my family and I headed to New Hampshire to visit some dear friends. After a few days at their summer camp on the shore of one of America's loveliest lakes, I donned a suit and tie and drove, with my dear friend, Jack Harris, to Boston for my much anticipated meeting with the bookseller's son, worrying, as the miles shrank, how I might convince that elderly, apprehensive owner to let me have what I knew would need to be many hours of work with the ms if I were to extract the information I needed. As the appointed hour neared, Jack, having some errands to run in Boston, dropped me at the foot of Brookline's Webster Street.

A short walk takes me to the Goodspeed door. I knock. Nothing. I knock again. Finally, steps. The door opens. I am greeted by a woman in her 60s. Seeing my surprise, she says she is Mr Goodspeed's daughter. She often comes to help him out. I am expected. Would I like to come in, go upstairs, and meet her father? Happily! As we ascend, I see that I am in not just a lovely house but a remarkable Ruskin house-because, as we climb, I see that we are accompanied every step of the way by stunning Ruskin drawings. At the top we are welcomed by yet another drawing, a large watercolour of one of the palazzi of Venice. Turning toward the living room, I see, on the right hand wall, another goodsized, very beautiful, Ruskin painting (a landscape) looking brightly out from over a couch. It is flanked by two lesser Ruskin drawings. The opposite wall is occupied by a six-shelf built-in bookcase which reaches

to the ceiling. (Immediately, I start scanning for a volume bound in red-cloth.)

Moments later, from another room, an old, bent gentleman, very properly dressed in a coat and tie considerably more elegant than his visitor's, emerges: Mr George Goodspeed. He moves slowly, offers his hand as he approaches, introduces himself, and asks, clearly having forgotten, who I am. As I give my name, he leans over so that he might hear my words. 'Oh yes!' he interrupts before I can say anything else. 'Now, I'm very sure that you will like to examine these paintings with me.' 'I'd be honored,' I reply. And examine them we did, for nearly half an hour. Moving from one to the next, Mr Goodspeed tells me the dates when Ruskin had drawn each, gives their titles, and recites, at some length, the reasons why the great Victorian selected these subjects. He ends each presentation with the story of how his father came to own the drawing. It was all quite stunning; beyond words. The living room tour complete, he says: 'I have more in the bedroom and, of course, in the hallway you come up. Shall we look at these as well?' 'Well,' I say, now a little concerned about not having broached the real reason for my visit. 'I would dearly love to see all you have, but you'll recall that I've come to look at Ruskin's manuscript, The Laws of Plato.' 'Manuscript?' he repeats, pausing in the amble he has begun toward the bedroom: 'What manuscript?' 'The Laws of Plato,' I say, a sinking feeling entering my stomach. 'I don't have any *manuscript*!' he says with the same forcefulness I had heard on the phone. 'Aren't you here to buy drawings?' 'No," I reply, the interior hole widening. 'Don't you remember my letter and our phone conversation? You told me that you had this Ruskin Plato manuscript, that it was here [pointing], in this bookcase in fact, and that, although you'd be glad to let me see it, I couldn't take it. That's why I'm here-to see The Laws manuscript.' Mr Goodspeed is considerably confused. I am too. 'Aren't you the gallery owner?' he asks. 'No,' I say, 'I'm the sociologist.' Reaching into my folder I produce a copy of my letter and give it to him. After a moment, he says: 'I never got this. Who are you again ...?' 'I'm ...," I begin...

'Oh,' interjects his daughter who, until now, has been silent. 'I'm so very sorry! You know what must have happened? My father's in his mid-90s and, as you can see, is *very* hard of hearing. When you called, he must've thought you wanted Ruskin paintings. He's now willing to sell them. The children, myself included, like them, but, to tell the truth, we would rather have the money they will bring. So Daddy's agreed selling's the best thing.' 'But,' I say, despondence beginning to mingle with the abdominal vacancy, 'our conversation was

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Images: The People Who Live On The Plank (detail) by Adam Dant

Continued from p. 59...

never about paintings. It was about a lost manuscript of Ruskin's.' 'I'm sorry,' she returns: 'That sort of thing happens all the time. It's partly his loss of hearing and partly' [here she glances over at her perplexed sire and says, soto voce] 'that his mind just isn't as agile as it was. He misunderstood.' One more chance! I ask if any financial records from her grandfather's sales of his Ruskiniana survive. 'Once,' she says, 'we had boxes and boxes of them. He sold so many things. But Daddy destroyed them decades ago. They were just taking up space and no government agency or anyone else-until, today, you!-ever was interested in them.' 'Do you have any idea whether the manuscript burned in the fire in the 1940s?' 'I never knew much about that,' she says, 'but I do know that my fatherwell, you can see for yourself-has no memory of it now or, for that matter, of many other things.' A few minutes later, after thanking the good Goodspeeds for their time, I find myself (the description is apt) again on Webster Street, walking slowly to the spot where I am supposed to meet Jack. When he arrives, he discovers in the guise of his friend, a very glum Ruskin scholar.

There is one more part to the story. The part with the recipe.

More than a little daunted by these visitations by the *un*helpful *fors*, I press on. On, specifically, to the Isle of Wight. I write Jim Dearden, who, at that pre-Ruskin Library time, was still conducting at Bembridge School his invaluable oversight of the Whitehouse Collection. (What a debt those of us who revere Ruskin owe both of these gentlemen!) 'Yes,' Jim says, replying to my request, 'Come over. I'll give you a table and you can take your time with Ruskin's Bekker.'

And so, in mid-summer, I arrive, only to be treated to one of the truly great moments of my Ruskin journey: the chance, while they still existed, to work in the Ruskin Galleries that Whitehouse founded after Ruskin's death. They were nothing less than a treasure trove, chockfull of Ruskin's drawings, manuscripts, and letters. After a tour, Jim, as he had promised, sits me at a large table and brings out the eight volumes of Bekker. Immediately, I begin copying everything which seems relevant to my project. There is much, and much of substance. Along the way, I encounter Ruskin remarks pithy and delightful, likein a passage remarking on Jowett's translation of The Republic: 'Poor Jowett! He really has this bit completely wrong.' Andcommenting on a passage in The Laws: 'Plato's being utterly foolish here-all twaddle this and for the next four pages.' And, this-on The Symposium: 'Here's the glorious bit on true friendship!' I have allotted a week for the work. Before the first day is through, I know this is not even the

beginning of enough time. Ruskin's annotations are copious, not only as they relate to *The Laws* and *The Republic* but almost every other dialogue.

Dejected, but determined to use the time I have, I continue. Sometime, early in the third day, for a change, I ask Jim if I might see some of Ruskin's diaries for the 1870s, a time when he was working intently on Plato. Jim produces a stack of holographs. I start but soon I am again in despair. There is so much to read and no time to do it. I set them aside. Later that same day, taking a Bekker break, I wander into Jim's office. As we begin to chat, I notice, out of the corner of my eye, in a bookcase, quite a few red cloth-bound volumes, looking just like those offered for sale by Goodspeed in his catalogue. 'What are those?' I ask. 'Those are Wedderburn's typescripts,' Jim replies, 'of Ruskin's diaries. To make their work on the Library Edition easier, Cook and Wedderburn gave Ruskin's letters and manuscripts to hired typists. With the resulting typescripts they could more easily interpolate what they needed into the volumes of the Library Edition as these were produced. I didn't show you them because scholars always want to work with the originals. Of course, you are welcome to look at them if you want to save time.'

But by now my interest in diaries has vanished. I tell Jim about Goodspeed's volume of The Laws manuscript. 'Might there be a chance,' I ask, 'that a second copy existed and, if so, where might it be?' 'Almost surely at Oxford,' he says. 'Wedderburn gave a number of typescripts to the Bodleian when he died.' I ask, 'Do you have a list of what he donated?' 'Of course,' Jim replies and leaves the office. Minutes later, he is back: 'I checked my record of what's at the Bodleian,' he tells me, 'and found there is a volume called The Laws of Plato, 144 pages.' 'Oh, my goodness,' I think, 'there is another copy!' I tell Jim I must see this book. Since I've never worked at Bodley, he says he will call and recommend me as a responsible scholar who can read rare manuscripts. He does so and is given the procedure by which I can obtain a visiting scholar's card. But how to make this happen? My flight to the US is only three days away and commitments at home, not to mention money, preclude changing plans. There is only one way. I will finish today's Bekker work, then, tomorrow, take the first ferry and train to Oxford. The morning after I will get my card the moment the office opens and then go directly to the Bodleian. Knowing time is of the essence, Jim kindly dials Oxford again and asks if The Laws can be reserved so I can start work right away. It can. At the end of the working day, no more than half way through Bekker's volumes, I thank Jim profusely for his help and generosity. There

is no doubt in my mind that *fors* is at work again. But at this point, having been tempered by earlier events, I am in some doubt about which variety has emerged.

It is two mornings later: I am at the scholar's door five minutes after securing my pass, where I am treated to the second great library honour of this trip: I am brought to Duke Humphrey's reading room. First opened in the late 15th century, in the spectrum of scholars' reading rooms in which I have had the privilege of reading across North America and Europe, there is no match for its elegance and sense of history. For here you are encircled by a collection containing many of the greatest maps, manuscripts, and music scores Western civilisation has created. an environment which makes you feel that, as you turn your pages and take your notes, Dante, Milton, Bacon, and Shakespeare are there with you. And Ruskin.

I am seated at a small carrel and brought a stack of Wedderburn's typescripts. These include, in addition to The Laws of Plato, Ruskin's diaries for the 1870s which I have ordered 'just in case.' The Laws volume is in the middle of the pile. As soon as I am alone, I pull it out. In seconds I know it is not a second copy of Goodspeed's manuscript. It is a typed copy of Ruskin's translations for Books I and II. As such, it is no small find, as, once I get a copy to the US, it will allow me to check the Brantwood Diary holograph against it, saving me many hours of work. But it contains nothing more: no Ruskin 'Introduction,' no 'Notes to Plato,' no annotations of Jowett's translations, no dictated Athenian history, and these versions of Books I and II have no Ruskin corrections. Fors

That's almost the end of the story. I never did find the manuscript of Ruskin's *Plato's Laws*. No more matches ever flared in dim archival rooms. Possibly it is held in private hands, or stands quietly on the shelves of some small library. (If anyone knows, do let *me* know!). But I doubt it. I think the most plausible explanation is that it was lost in the elder Mr Goodspeed's fire, not being, when that frantic collector re-entered his flaming home, of the same holographic status as the smoking manuscript of *Praeterita* (and rightly so!). Likely we shall never know its fate.

Nor did I, though my discovery of the typed translations of Books I and II at Oxford made it possible, ever finish *The Laws* project. (Glad to help any scholar interested, though. Just ask.) For, during that same trip to the Morgan with Van, while reading Viljoen's files, I learned that had she ever published her biography, Viljoen would have argued, based on reams of new evidence gathered from thousands (yes!) of letters other biographers had missed or chosen not to read, that all of Ruskin's biographies were in *serious* error on virtually every *major* aspect of his life story: his relations with his parents, the intense crisis he fell into after discovering that his idol, the painter J. M. W. Turner, had created a substantial cache of pornographic drawings, his love of Rose La Touche, the reasons for his increasingly severe bouts of madness. Publishing these corrections, particularly after the disappointments generated by my unsuccessful search for Ruskin's *Plato's Laws*, seemed the more important contribution. This I have done.

Lastly. After discovering the contents of The Laws volume at Duke Humphrey's, I knew that, what with my plane flying the Atlantic the following day, I hadn't time to copy Wedderburn's transcriptions (no portable computers in those days). So, some unexpected hours on my hands, I decided to read through a number of the diary transcripts. Aware that the three volume version of Ruskin's diaries published by Joan Evans and Whitehouse had omitted significant elements (his drawings and side comments, for instances), I read to see if any stray comments he may have made about his Plato work had been among the excisions. I found none. As I neared the end of the last diary, a piece of paper written in Ruskin's hand fell out. It had been sandwiched between a page enlivened by his critique of a Raphael cartoon and another containing a list of 16 Turner drawings he owned, with estimations of their worth. Why and how this stray bit of holograph had come to rest in this location, I had no idea. Reading it, I found that Ruskin, waxing eloquent and elliptical as always, had set down a recipe for 'the greatest brown bread' he had ever tasted. It was so delicious, he recorded, there was no question it was 'much better than anything we have *ever* made at home [Brantwood].' (He probably never shared the sentiment with Joan Severn.) There was no indication of where or when he had tasted the bread or from whom he had the recipe. As I read on my Laws-less spirits began to rise, because Ruskin's rendering of the steps required to bring this remarkable loaf to its delicious conclusion seemed emblematic of the whole search I had made for Ruskin's Plato's Laws. There were steps specific, steps fuzzy, steps surely correct, steps surely wrong, with some steps, apparently, having been left out altogether! It was a veritable roller-coaster ride for the kitchen, a ride which, like life, was attended every step of the way by all the varieties and vagaries of fors, leading... I copied the steps out verbatim and re-nestled the original where I had found it, between two of the world's great painters. You can't always get what you want, but...

And so here it is: Mr Ruskin's recipe for Brown Bread, published here for the first time (my interpolations in brackets).⁶ Try it (if you can figure it out). Let me know what you think.

<u>NOTES</u>

1. In the latter category, see J. C. Sherburne, John Ruskin, Or the Ambiguities of Abundance (1972), P. D. Anthony, John Ruskin's Labour (1983); the best treatment is in W. Henderson, John Ruskin's Political Economy, Ch. 5 (2000).

 Although I have used quotation marks throughout, some conversations derive from memory alone, whilst more important ones are recounted from notes I was minded to make at the time.
 Other classical writers, Ruskin makes clear, also played significant roles in shaping his social thought--among these, Xenophon, Livy, Horace, Virgil, and Cicero.

4. A few years later, Van donated this box to the Morgan, specifying that it become part of the 'Viljoen Papers.'

5. For a delightful memoir detailing a life in books, see Goodspeed's, *Yankee Bookseller*

(1937). Especially pertinent for readers of *The Companion* is Chapter 12, 'The Spell of Ruskin.'

6. The holograph can be found at the Bodleian Library, Oxford: Ruskin Diary, 1871-72-73: Ms. Eng. Misc. c 226; between pp. 130-131. Reading the recipe I could not help but be reminded of the remark made by Ruskin's long-time guide on the Continent, Joseph Couttet, about his often impractical master: 'Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre.' (*Works* 27.61) Thanks to Clive Wilmer for locating the remark. Thanks, as always, to Jenn Morris for her perceptive comments on a draft. Thanks, too, to Jenn Webb of the Digital Learning Centre at Hobart and William Smith Colleges for designing the recipe page.

POST SCRIPT

In the next issue of *The Companion*, you will be able to read about attempts to make this bread as part of *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD*.

Mr. Ruskin's Brown Bread

Sweet water and chemicals in patent yeast. [chemicals?]

Put in a tea cup – fill three parts full of boiling water, stand cooling for half an hour.

Grate one potatoe [sic] in the flour [no specification for flour or amount], a little salt.

Make dough in flour on a pasteboard; pour the barm [off? In?]

Rise in an earthen pan with a cloth over it for two hours by the side of the fire - hob at fireplace

Finish off with as much flour as will bring it to a stiff dough. Foam up as light as possible. Sprinkle the flour – done by dusting.

Half a wineglass full of caraway seeds pounded into tin.

Stir about in cold water two large tablespoonfuls [sic] of meal, pint of cold water - a pint of new milk boiling

Stir in the oatmeal [oatmeal? how much?] Stir for a quarter hour on a sloe fire - a little salt to palate.

Pour the oatmeal through a hair sieve. Blow chaff away, bad for throat.

A little treacle and some bram chucked into it and stirred up. The treacle very wholesome. Black [treacle] best.

Three tablespoons treacle – coarse Pollards [company]. Put in when the dough is thoroughly worked up. Work it again.

If it's to be baked on iron, put it on ashes to keep it from burning at the bottom. [No specification as to cooking time]

About 1/2 done, pound down, while it's warm.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2nd, 3rd, 8th & 10th September Clive Wilmer's lectures in California, US.

17th September Ruskin Foundation Lecture Andrew Hill: 'No Wealth but Life': Ruskin's Message for the Modern Merchant

24th October Economics Symposium Mary Ward House, Bloomsbury in conjunction with ShareAction (see advert)

7th & 8th November **Guild AGM Weekend** Millennium Gallery, Sheffield **The Ruskin Lecture**: Dr Marcus Waithe: Ruskin and Craftsmanship plus Companions' Dinner & RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD exhibition, Ruskin Re-Viewed (details with AGM papers)

19th January—5th June **Ruskin and Craftsmanship** (third triennial exhibition) Millennium Gallery, Sheffield

27th February John Ruskin Prize Exhibition opening New Art Gallery, Walsall

13th May Whitelands Ruskin Lecture *by* Dr Rachel Dickinson

14th May Whitelands May Festival

10th & 11th June Companions' Weekend Sheepscombe & Bewdley

25th June Ruskin & Sustainable Societies Cornerhouse, Oxford Road, Manchester an event with Manchester Metropolitan University

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The Companion (logo) John Ruskin, after Carpaccio. St George and the Dragon. Sepia, pencil, and ink with white highlights on paper. 1872. (Guild of St George Collection, CGSG00191).



THE COMPANION

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American sources directly.

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RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD

PROJECT LAUNCH Walkley Community Centre 1st February 2015

ARTISTS, historians, academics, museum staff and members of the public turned out in their dozens to attend the launch of *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* in Walkley on Sunday (1st Feb) evening—with one attendee travelling all the way from Japan for the occasion.

More than 100 folk braved the freezing temperatures and icy conditions to gather in Ruskin Hall at Walkley Community Centre to learn more about events and activities taking place this year to rediscover the heritage of John Ruskin—the 19th-century writer, artist, art critic and social reformer—in Sheffield. The programme will culminate in an exhibition at the Millennium Gallery this autumn.

Dr Janet Barnes CBE, a Director of the Guild of St George, welcomed everyone and explained how people could get involved in the project, which aims to explore Ruskin's legacy in

Walkley, Totley, Rivelin Valley and Stannington. The *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* project is supported by the Guild of St George and an award has been made by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The community heritage project will focus on two of Ruskin's Guild of St George projects in Sheffield in the late 19th century—St George's Museum in Walkley, which was created to inspire and educate the metalworkers of Sheffield. It was the original home of the Ruskin Collection, now housed in the Millennium Gallery after the closure of the dedicated Ruskin Gallery in Norfolk Street.

And St George's Farm in Totley, acquired for a group of working men to cultivate while making their livelihoods through boot making.

After the brief introduction, those attending had the chance to mingle with the staff and volunteers involved with the different arms of *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* and even to try their hand at drawing objects such as a magpie's wing or a piece of driftwood.

Teatime refreshments helped the thirsty work of meeting many like-minded people interested in the work of John Ruskin and learning more from the talented craftsmen and artists from across the country—not to mention academic Chiaki Yokoyama, of Keio University in Japan—to give their time and share their talents and interest in John Ruskin's involvement in Sheffield. And there was even a special wheatsheaf loaf on display, baked to commemorate the launch by Gerry of South Road, Walkley-based Gerry's Bakery (*see front cover photo*).

Michele Vincent





HAVE YOUR SAY...

The next issue of *The Companion* will include accounts of all the major events in the *RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD* calendar. Why not send us your stories, memories, sketches, photos and whatever else the project has inspired you to create—for possible inclusion in the magazine? Just email secretary@guildofstgeorge.org.uk





