

THE NEW GLADSTONE REVIEW

Issue No. 2

June 2018

a quarterly e-journal

*Informal commentary, opinions, reviews, news, illustrations and poetry
for bookish people of philanthropic inclination*

Contents

1. Introduction
2. The Luttrell Psalter. BM
3. Keeping us on Tenterhooks: book review by Penny Young
4. Poems: Rachael Lindsay
5. The Food Ethics Council: 20th anniversary BM
6. The Justice Women: Stephen Wade
7. A modest request
8. From: The Fables of Aesop
9. A new venture: a stall in Southwell Market

1. Introduction

This is the (14 page) second issue of the New Gladstone Review, the publication which succeeds that sent to subscribers as a PDF attachment to emails. With the move of Gladstone Books from Southwell to Lincoln, this e-journal will appear at about 3 monthly intervals and new issues will be posted on the Gladstone Books website, so that it will be *freely* accessible to all who might be interested to read it.

Currently, I am also retaining free access to some articles published earlier in the Gladstone Review for the benefit of readers new to this publication. The first of those archived gives a brief account of the history of Gladstone Books, and why it is so-named. But the catalogue is now discontinued.

I am most grateful to three guest contributors to this issue. Penny Young provides one of her typically engaging articles, which is based on a review of a biography of Wilkie Collins. Rachael Lindsay contributes a poem of her own, as well as a translation of one from the Spanish by Pablo Neruda. Stephen Wade offers some background insights to his experiences of researching and writing the recent book 'The Justice Women.' I hope this growing trend of readers offering material for publication will continue. Please let me know if, and what article, you would like to contribute.

A disadvantage of making the publication freely accessible is that I have little idea of how widely it is read or appreciated by its readers. So, I should be grateful for emailed comments, positive or negative, to assess whether it is a venture that merits my efforts in producing it. You can also record comments on the independent *Book Guide* website – see item 7 of this issue.

Ben Mephram

2. THE LUTTRELL PSALTER

Lincolnshire covers such a large area that it is perhaps unsurprising that many people who live in, or near, the county are unaware of several of its notable associations. Following the return of Gladstone Books to the city, in future issues of this Review I aim to explore some of those which have literary and/or cultural importance: for I believe that the unexplored environment within easy reach of our homes often provides as richly rewarding experiences and insights as those much further afield that attract more attention.

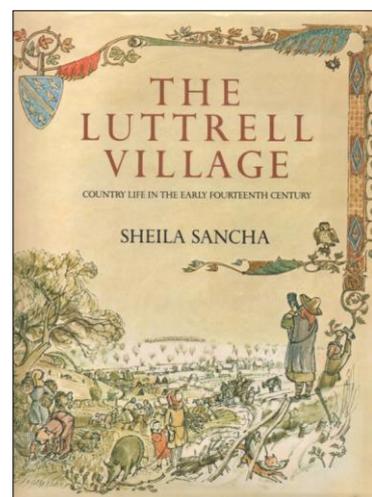
A case in point is Irnham, a small village on the high limestone ridge about 10 miles south east of Grantham. For example, the distinguished art historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner was much impressed by the village, with its “grey stone houses, enlivened by much leafage, with a sprinkling of vernacular estate cottages ... while its sequestered position adds to the delight.”



My recent photos of St Andrew's Church and houses in the main street confirm his point

But the great cultural significance of the village is that in medieval times, the squire of Irnham, Sir Geoffrey Luttrell (1276-1345), commissioned an illuminated Psalter as a devotional book and also as a visual record of his life and that of the ordinary people on his estates. Now known as *The Luttrell Psalter*, and written sometime between 1320 and 1340, it is regarded as one of the most important historical manuscripts held in The British Library. The Psalter was the work of one scribe and at least five artists, none of whose names is known. But it seems clear that with so many collaborators the book must have been made somewhere of substantial size – the city of Lincoln being the most likely possibility.

Although this was not the first psalter to include scenes of rustic life, according to the British Library it is exceptional in the number and fascinating detail provided. In this respect *the lively and often humorous images provide a virtual 'documentary' of work and play during a year on the estate.*



The Psalter was written in Latin but, fortunately, in 1982 Sheila Sancha wrote an accessible account in English – and I have used this as the main source of information in compiling this article.

The village (named *Gerneham* in the Domesday Survey of 1086), was then virtually self-sufficient. With the open-field system, there were 64 oxen in the village, which worked in teams of eight to drag the ploughs through the narrow strips of heavy clay soil. Typically, nearly half (28) belonged to the lord of the manor, Sir Geoffrey – the remaining 36 being shared between the villagers, on a daily rota. It took about a day to plough a strip (about 220 paces long and 22 paces wide), the length being called a ‘furlong.’ On average, each man, as householder, had about 30 strips to support his family. But a poorer group of villagers, *villeins*, were also obliged to spend 2-3 days a week labouring on Sir Geoffrey’s strips, as well as their own. The poorest, *cottars*, had no strips to cultivate, and survived by working for modest wages or following trades like bee-keeping or basket weaving.

But the rustic simplicity of all the villagers’ lives was in stark contrast to that of Sir Geoffrey. Periodically he would visit Irnham for a few weeks, as part of the regular tour around his five estates. But this was no business-like inspection to check that all was in order, for he always travelled with a household of about 100 people, namely Dame Agnes, his wife, his children, friends, chaplains, squires, waiting women, servants and pages. The arrival of this cavalcade was signalled by the loud trumpet blasts of the three squires who rode into the village, ahead of the party, on their finely-bred horses. But it was not only people who swamped the village, for they brought ‘*chests of clothes, bundles of bedding, rich tapestries, windows (complete with frames), barrels of wine, sacks of spices, suits of armour, swords, spears, longbows and shields.*’ Notably, they omitted the kitchen sink.

The picture below shows Sir Geoffrey at dinner, with his wife, Agnes, on his right. On her right are his chaplain, Robert of Wilford, and his confessor, William of Foderingeye.



Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1773585>

We might imagine that the villagers would, if only discretely, have welcomed the departure of Sir Geoffrey’s party, to return to the simple, but less oppressive experience of his lordship’s visitation. In a heavily-wooded limestone district, most houses would have been made of timber, wattle and daub, or clay lump – and they may have brought stones from the fields for foundations.

Sir Geoffrey’s manor house would probably have been built of limestone, but the church (shown above) is the only building parts of which are known to have survived from the 14th century, although it was ‘*drastically altered a century later.*’ The church contains the tomb of Sir Geoffrey’s grandfather and Sir Geoffrey himself was buried near the altar in the church.

But, although physically hard, the life of the villagers would surely have been a rich, communal experience, as evident from the varied activities that needed to flourish to sustain healthy lives. The Psalter abounds in references to the smithy, ale house, brew house and malting house, water well, gardens, orchards, the armoury, dog kennels, fish ponds, dove cotes, the wind mill and the bake house. And harvest time demanded that every able-bodied person in the village worked in the fields as long as the sun shone.



A ploughing scene from the Psalter

Animals were a very important part of the villagers' lives – involving milking of sheep and goats (there is no mention of cows), production of butter and cheese; and poultry keeping. Indeed, oxen were often housed under the same roof as their owners. Sheep were shorn in mid-summer, and after washing the fleeces in the stream, and subsequent carding, the women spent most of their spare time twisting the wool into spun yarn. While spinning wheels were rare, the yarn was woven into lengths that were stitched into tunics, hoods, cloaks and gowns - in preparation for the coming winter.

Despite the overriding demands of the village community, the villagers were not entirely isolated from outside influences, for there was a weekly market and, annually, a midsummer fair that lasted several days. People flocked to the fair from several miles around, often to buy up surplus produce. But rare opportunities were also provided to buy knives, shears, needles, cooking pots and pans and other items that couldn't be made at home. Wives of some of the wealthier villagers (referred to as *freemen*) could afford to buy spices, silk ribbons and good quality cloth.

As I now consider the Irnham described in the Psalter with what I experienced recently when visiting it for the first time, I can't help reflecting on how prosperous it now seems - but lacking in any distinctive character. With so little evidence of the way the physical environment then shaped people's lives, sustaining a rewarding connection with their roots, the village today, like others in similar situations, appears to have become a sedate dormitory for those who commute to work in neighbouring towns. But, although most residents will undoubtedly live much longer and more 'comfortable' lives than 700 years ago, the rich experiences of living in intimate connection with the natural world have surely now almost completely disappeared.

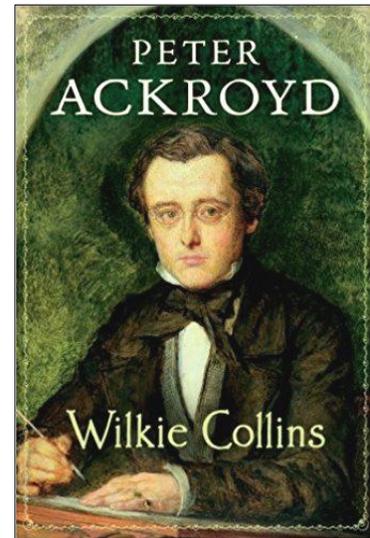
In an era when 'all seems possible,' is it too much to hope that, if not *we* then, our successors might contrive to arrange affairs so that humanity has the 'best of both worlds'?

BM

3. Keeping us on Tenterhooks

The recent television adaptation of Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* may have resulted, as TV dramas often do, in a number of viewers rushing off to buy or borrow the book. Having read *The Woman in White* some time ago, I can only imagine their dismay at being faced with a dense 600-plus pages of slowly unreeling narrative containing not a few longueurs and, if I remember rightly, a rather lengthy exposition of what the reader has already managed to work out for themselves (but do put me right if I'm wrong). The TV series has, though, made me want to read the book again, but I suspect most modern readers prefer their Victorian literature filleted. As it happens, I've recently finished reading a biography of Wilkie Collins. This is Peter Ackroyd's *Wilkie Collins* (Chatto & Windus, 2012), which is a short and very readable account of Collins' life and work.

Nowadays he is famous for just two novels: *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, the latter considered to be the very first detective novel and containing many of the elements associated with the Golden Age of detective fiction – a country-house party, with every one of them a suspect, an eccentric detective (Sergeant Cuff), a bumbling and inefficient local police force, and the crime being eventually solved by an amateur. But Wilkins was in fact a prolific author, producing in his 65 years over 20 novels, innumerable essays and reviews, short stories, original stage plays - as well as dramatisations of his novels and accounts of his travels.



Collins and ill health were constant companions, and his travels in Europe and long periods spent living in France and Italy were attempts to escape the London's damp and fogs. He suffered continually from a combination of complaints: gout and what he called 'gout of the eyes', rheumatism, a nervous condition (which seemed to be a family failing) and periods of weakness and exhaustion. These led to his becoming more and more dependent on opium and laudanum, with their resultant side effects; all of which led at times to his living the life of a semi-invalid and appearing prematurely aged. But the latter seems hardly surprising considering not just his ill health but his almost feverish writing regime.

Many of his jaunts were taken in the company of Charles Dickens, a close friend and collaborator in many literary projects. Dickens' daughter Kate married Collins' younger brother Charles – a man of whom Dickens had a very low opinion, and who, in his elder brother's words, 'never succeeded in satisfying his own aspirations'. Collins was not only a regular contributor to Dickens' popular magazines *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, but was also at one time on the staff of *Household Words*. As everyone who knows anything about Charles Dickens will know, he was a great theatrical man (in both senses). For Wilkie Collins too, the theatre was in his bones; in fact his ambition was to be able to make a living (a fortune) from the theatre, believing his creative gift was essentially a theatrical one. He was both actor and dramatist, working tirelessly on the dialogue, writing and rewriting, paying close attention to every detail of the production – the staging, costumes, choice of actors, scenery and effects. Apart from a few egregious disasters, his plays were extremely successful. As were his novels, which were serialised in Dickens' and other magazines of the day.

The public's appetite for fiction was becoming insatiable – 'we have become a novel-reading people' observed Thomas Hardy – and the cliff-hanging nature of Collins' novels added to their popularity. When *The Moonstone* was serialised, crowds gathered outside the publisher's office, anxious to get

their hands on the latest instalment. Publishing a novel in serial form, however, as Collins discovered, was not without its problems. By the time the final instalments were produced, readers could already have read the published book in its entirety. To obviate this, in the original preface to *The Woman in White*, Collins had asked reviewers not to reveal the ending – not to ‘let the cat out of the bag.’ ‘The cat out of the bag!’ exclaimed one reviewer: ‘There are in this novel about a hundred cats contained in a hundred bags and mewing to be let out. Every new chapter contains a new cat.’ The first edition of the novel sold out on publication day, and in the following couple of months five more editions were published. And then as now publishers were quick to profit from its success – *Woman in White* bonnets, cloaks, perfumes and other merchandise were snapped up eagerly. The novel was a sensation.

Collins’ novels were characterised by what Ackroyd calls ‘a strange power’ – that of curiosity, ‘as the reader goes forward eagerly to find out *what happens next*. He hints perpetually at something “under the surface”, a “hidden motive” or a “terrible secret”, that further provokes an insatiable curiosity.’ The novels have that supreme page-turning quality desired by readers. They were labelled by one reviewer as ‘sensation novels’ – designed to ‘electrify the nerves’: a type of literature which many in the medical profession found disturbing (in a different sense from that intended by the author); but, as Ackroyd believes, Collins was dissecting deep hidden mysteries of the human psyche, years before Freud began his investigations.

The Victorian age was rife with undercurrents and contradictions, and Collins was very conscious of the hypocrisies of the age, especially the ill-treatment of women (much of it sanctioned by law), and the injustices and inequalities of the class system. Without preaching or the appeal to popular sentiment indulged in by Dickens, he fills his novels with independent and strong-minded women who defy the conventions, and are ‘more sinned against than sinning’, with whom he expected his readers to sympathise. Reviewers however, more than likely thinking of their bread and butter, tended to be severe in their criticisms, the anti-heroine of one book being described as ‘fouler than the refuse of the streets. Such strong words were designed to protect the genteel sensibilities of potential middle-class readers, sensibilities which Collins abhorred, and which he undermined in his novels full of dark family secrets, mystery and intrigue, illegitimacy (which meant no legal right to claim inheritance), mistaken identity, murder, madness, suicide, bigamy, fraud, seduction, violence. So many threads for the reader to keep hold of down the labyrinthine plots and sub-plots kept the reading public on tenterhooks until the next week’s instalment!

With our ubiquitous and rather world-weary modern media, it’s perhaps hard to imagine the atmosphere created at the time by the prodigious exertions of such literary sensations as Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens, and thinking of them as writing machines would imply a mechanistic quality to their work which is far from the case. But each of them was ‘driven,’ working at speed, and often in very trying circumstances (which in the end shortened both their lives).

Collins was very much a social animal, leading the life of a literary celebrity, giving readings and lectures, and undertaking a reading tour of America. He also had multiple house moves to contend with and the maintaining of two ‘marital’ establishments. Though he never officially married – maybe in defiance of the Victorian respectability which he so loathed – he did in fact maintain two separate homes: one with Caroline Graves, a widow with one daughter, with whom he lived until the end of his life; the other with Martha Rudd, by whom he had three children. It was an arrangement that seemed to suit them all – at least it suited Collins. Short though his life was by today’s standards, as Ackroyd says of his novels ‘it was all a great adventure.’

Penny Young

4. POEMS

by Rachael Lindsay

Spring

A translation

The bird has come
to orchestrate life:
from each of its bright syllables
water is born.

And between water and light that develop the air
spring is already inaugurated,
the seed already knows it has grown,
the root draws itself into a crown,
the keepers of pollen finally open.

An ordinary bird did all of this
from a green branch.

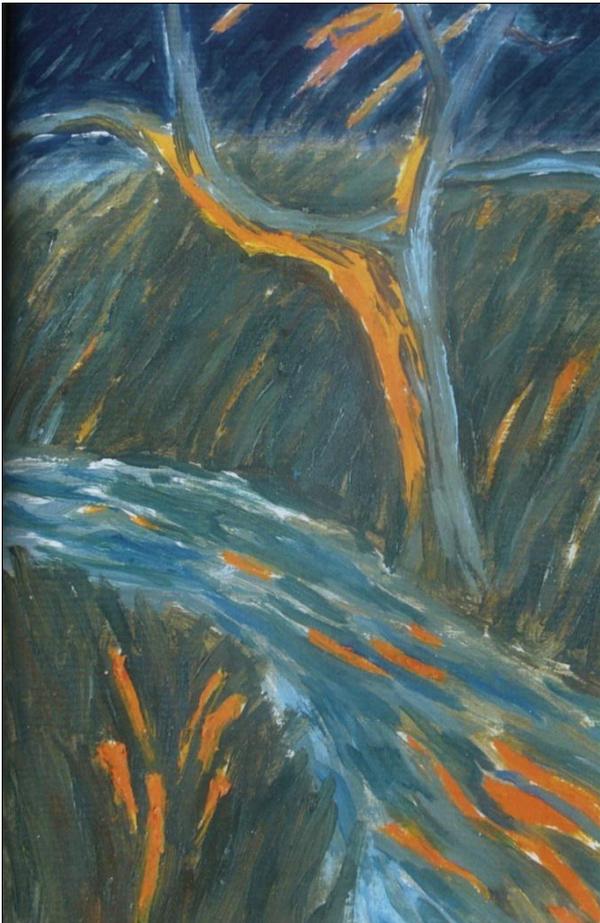
Rachael Lindsay is a writer, translator and researcher, who lives in Nottinghamshire.*

Spring (left) is a translation from the Spanish of *La primavera* by the distinguished poet Pablo Neruda

Unseen Tiger, and the accompanying illustration by Sam Wilson,** is from Rachael's book of poems *Love and Volcanoes* (*Amor y volcanes*), published by *Baile del Sol* in 2010, which gives English and Spanish versions of all the poems

*rachael-lindsay.com

**<http://quichekebab.com/>



Unseen Tiger

I move
Stealthily
Unseen Tiger
Don't you wish you were bigger than I?

If you caught a glimpse
it was only the sun glinting on a bough
which made it look
Orange
and Proud

If you heard a roar
it was only the wind
or the water, falling
cascading down

If you feel my breath
it's a lie
conjured in silence, perhaps
in your mind

And if I licked your brow
by shady trees
and wasn't as strong as you supposed
it wasn't me

5. The Food Ethics Council celebrates its 20th anniversary this year

At a time when profound changes in so many aspects of our lives are proceeding at such a rapid and seemingly remorseless pace (whether in relation to political developments, military conflicts and terrorist attacks, environmental threats, information technology and privacy, or declining public health), it is worthy of note when an organisation created 20 years ago, virtually on a shoestring, is still continuing to play an important role in promoting a more ethical approach to the production, marketing and consumption of food. That, fortunately, but without any sense of pride or complacency, is an achievement of the organisation known as the *Food Ethics Council*.



The Council was established as an independent think-tank by a group of concerned individuals, of whom I was one, who all had a long-standing involvement in academic fields such as the biological and veterinary

sciences, environmental sustainability and the pharmaceutical industry. Its objectives are summarised in the above excerpt from an early Council brochure

I was appointed as the first Executive Director, which was made possible by recent retirement from my permanent academic position at the University of Nottingham (although still employed there on a part-time contract as Director of the *Centre for Applied Bioethics*, which I had established three years earlier), and when awarded a grant by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust we were able to start work from an office in Minster Chambers, Southwell – the building which formerly housed Southwell Grammar School. Situated on the top floor, it had splendid and, to most people, unfamiliar views of the Minster.

In those early years our main focus was on producing well-researched reports which made recommendations for priorities to be implemented in relation to the whole food-chain (in the phrase prominent at the time ‘from field to fork’ – although we extended that to effects on the wellbeing and health of consumers, farm animals and the biosphere, as a whole). Each report entailed the deliberations of a working party who met several times at various locations across the country, as well as receiving written submissions from people invited to express their, or their organizations,’ opinions on the matters concerned. I wrote the first four reports, which were all launched at meetings at the House of Commons, at the invitation of MPs sympathetic to our objectives. The first four reports were entitled:

- *Drug use in farm animals*
- *Novel foods: beyond Nuffield*
- *Farming animals for food: towards a moral menu* and
- *After FMD: aiming for a values-driven agriculture*

One of the features of these early reports was use of a conceptual tool I had devised, called the Ethical Matrix,



use of which sought to facilitate – but not prescribe – decision-making. (Early trials of the utility of this tool were carried out in meetings over a number of days, and involving people with diverse political perspectives, at the Saracen’s Head Hotel in Southwell.) The theory of the Ethical Matrix is explained in chapter 3 of my book *Bioethics* 2nd edition (2008) published by Oxford University Press, and can be viewed by clicking on the link shown on the Gladstone Books website and selecting ‘sample material.’

All the full reports were accompanied by publication of brief summaries expressing the main points in diagrammatic form, the covers of two of which are shown above. The reports were generally well received – as exemplified by the comments we received on the publication of one report – which sought to make ethically-sound recommendations in the aftermath of the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, which had such serious impacts on many aspects of public life at that time.

Reviewers’ comments on the report *After FMD: aiming for a values-driven agriculture*

- “Words fail me for adequate praise ... and the backup research in the footnotes is fantastic. One of the aspects of the matrix that is so striking is its sheer simplicity” Dr J M, Trinity College Dublin
- “Read it from cover to cover. Just very good. Made me think about things in a quite different way.”
Member of the Guild of Food Writers and of a regional Food Standards Agency body
- “Your report is wide ranging and relevant to a number of colleagues in DEFRA, as well as other departments and agencies such as the Food Standards Agency. I am arranging for copies to be made to key officials here.” Lord Whitty, Minister in the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Following a minor stroke in 2003, I resigned as Director, but continued as a member. My role was then taken over by Tom Macmillan, who moved the office to Brighton. With the increased funding the programme was expanded extensively, as evident from the website of the Council.

<https://www.foodethicscouncil.org/>

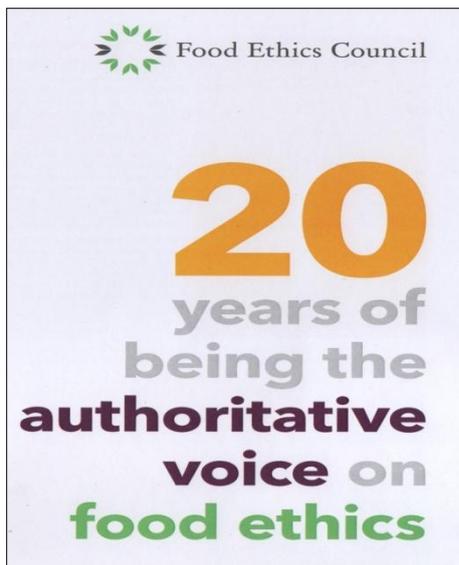
During Tom’s tenure, several social changes influenced the way communication between Council members was conducted – so that the time-consuming and expensive meetings of working parties were largely replaced (as throughout society) by email correspondence and the publication of reports on-line. Personally, I feel that something important is lost when face-to face interactions become ‘digitised’ – but it is difficult to see how that could now be avoided in a world where ‘multitasking’ has taken control of many lives. But our influence clearly continued to grow, for in 2007, at a national ceremony in London, the Council was awarded *The Caroline Walker Trust Special Award* for “outstanding work in encouraging thinking and debate on the many issues relating to food, nutrition and public health.” This took the physical form of a handsome crystal glass bowl, which Tom MacMillan and I jointly received on behalf of the Council. Subsequently, when I retired from membership of the Council in 2013, I was presented with this bowl, now also inscribed with my name, and had the honorary title *Founder Director* conferred on me.

To cite the current website: **Our work** includes:

- Regular expert [blogs](#) on our website - essential reading on the key issues that matter in food and farming.
- [Business Forum](#) - an opportunity for senior food executives to gain expert insight into ethical issues that are becoming core business concerns. Hosted by leading opinion formers, each of the bi-monthly meetings meets over dinner to discuss key issues.

- **Publications**- we produce reports on key issues of the day, from food distribution to food packaging and many more.
- **Ethical tools** - our publication 'Ethics – a toolkit for business' introduces business leaders and policy makers to key ideas in ethics and provides a framework for making better decisions.
- **Workshops and events** - we organise policy workshops, conferences and seminars, independently and in partnership with others.

Following Tom's move to be Director of Innovation at the *Soil Association*, Dan Crossley is now the Executive Director of the Council, and the office has moved to London. Although no longer an active member of the Council, I have little doubt that food ethics is of increasing importance for the future of human society – and that the Council is continuing to play a crucial role in promoting this aim.



The celebratory conference of the 20th anniversary of the Council was held on June 20th at the Coin Street Centre in Central London. Pages of the brochure are shown here.

The guest speaker was Olivier de Schutter, UN special rapporteur on the Right to Food, from 2008 to 2014. He is a professor of international human rights law, EU law and legal theory at the *Université catholique de Louvain* in Belgium. The audience consisted of many people with related concerns such as food safety, consumer interests, environmental sustainability and animal welfare.

The meeting concluded with a dinner at an Islington pub for present and former Council members, where I was invited to give a talk on the history and future aims of the Council.

<p>Some of the reasons our food systems are failing...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The huge inequalities that exist in access to healthy diets and land. • Our inability to live within the means of the planet, including tackling urgent issues like climate change. • The concentration of power that rests in the hands of a few organisations. • The global economic model that requires infinite growth on a finite planet, which can only be achieved through unsustainable practices. • People's increasing disconnection with where our food comes from. 	<p>A history of the Food Ethics Council</p> <p>Ben Mepham founded the Food Ethics Council in 1998, "as a result of widespread public concern over recent developments in agricultural and food industries, some of which offended commonly accepted ethical principles".</p> <p>Prior to this, in 1995, the Ministry of Agriculture ethics committee had recommended establishing a standing government committee to explore ethical implications of farm animal biotechnologies. However, the government had failed to act.</p> <p>The landscape at the time was a mix of food scares - including salmonella, E. coli and BSE - and silver bullet solutions. This had led people to question the direction of travel and how our food was produced. Too much was hidden and not enough known. People rushed to solutions off the back of different shocks and scares, but it wasn't an 'all things considered' approach.</p>
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Ben Mepham

6. THE JUSTICE WOMEN

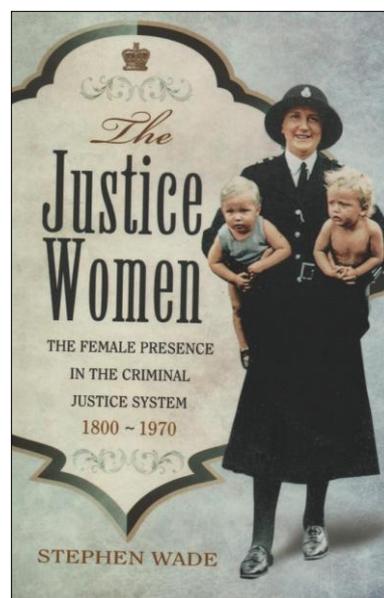
Insights of the author - Stephen Wade

I have been a biographer and historian for many years now, and my special interest in the history of crime and law developed after I worked as a writer-in-residence in a number of British prisons. There is so much to write about when it comes to life in our jails. Under those roofs there is an abundance of stories, waiting the visitor every day. Some inmates are silent and others are full of stories, usually about themselves. Consequently I was never short of 'material' as a writer. My notebooks grew apace. But it didn't take long for me to understand that the staff in the prison establishment are, in some ways, far more interesting than their charges.

The more I came to know about the working lives of probation officers, prison officers, medical staff and administrative workers, the more I wanted to enquire into the history of their professions. The result was that I wrote *The Justice Women*, which was published by Pen and Sword in 2015. The book looks at the working lives of women working in prisons, courts, probation and police, with the addition of a glance at the top brass – the sheriffs and lieutenants in all their pomp and regalia.

What did I discover? I found that in the case of the majority of people in the scope of my research- the police and prisons – women had been, unsurprisingly, playing second-fiddle to the men. As leaders and managers, they were late on the scene. In the case of prison governors for instance, men (ex-military usually) ran the places, but the matrons took care of all the urgent, life-threatening and desperately emotional situations. Take the Lincolnshire story of alleged killer Priscilla Biggadike for instance, whose remains lie in the Lucy Tower in Lincoln Castle. The matron's journal recording the care Priscilla received in her last days after the sentence of death for poisoning her husband, tells us that she had a glass of milk every evening until her last night, when she was given a glass of wine.

My book is about heroes actually: some little-known. I write about the first female police officers; the first lawyers who wore skirts instead of trousers, and the first wardresses, who had to cope with medical as well as penal matters (as they do today).



Writers will usually say that their research almost took over the writing itself; this was certainly the case with *The Justice Women*. Many of the discoveries I made compelled me to move sideways and follow new leads. This is a universal experience for historians, of course, who tend to be so enamoured of the past that they investigate the sprouting shoots as well as the plant itself when they delve into archives.

Perhaps the best explanation of my book is found in my introduction, where I point out the contrast between today and in about 1850:

The contrast with today's situation is staggering. In a half-hour walk around the inns of court and the Temple in September, 2014, I looked at the chambers around Hare Court and saw, in the lists of staff, a fair sprinkling of female barristers. One chambers list was headed by Lady Butler-Sloss. On a notice-board I saw a list of lectures relating to the question: 'Who will be the next judges?' A female barrister was pictured and quoted on the notice.

Back on the Strand, I bought a Financial Times, and the first advert I saw in the magazine was for Moreton Hall, the school in Oswestry, with the boast that it had been 'stretching potential-realising ambitions since 1913' and the young woman clearly delivering a speech on the advert was 'Madeline-aspiring lawyer.'

We live in a world in which the female presence in the workings of the law is significant and powerful; arguments in favour of that presence in all quarters are indeed very strong. Women prison officers are prominent now in all categories of jails; the probation service has a large percentage of women officers, and women in police uniform- from community support grades to senior officers – are seen everywhere.

For a writer and historian, perhaps every book produces changes the attitudes and opinions of the pen-pusher who assembles all the facts. With this book, that was definitely the case. It was immensely enjoyable to research and to write. I hope it attracts a little more attention now that it did at first.

*Stephen Wade is a Yorkshireman, but has now lived in Lincolnshire for 30 years. He was formerly a teacher and lecturer, but now writes full-time, with special interests in crime history and literary biography. His forthcoming books this year are *The Count of Scotland Yard* (Amberley) and *Murder in Mind* (Scratching Shed Publishing). See the website: www.stephen-wade.com*

7. A modest request

The return of Gladstone Books to Lincoln has had the welcome effect that with the much lower running costs than those at the shop in Southwell it has been easier to again become financially-viable. But the change of location has not, so far, resulted in significantly higher sales.

I suspect this is partly because, in the uncertain times we are living through, people are generally less willing to make purchases that seem unnecessary, and combined with the social climate in which books are for many, especially younger people, less attractive than digital devices, this results in hard times for many – including booksellers.

And yet, my albeit, so-far, limited experience with the stall in Southwell Market (see below), suggests that when browsing is easy and accessible, interest in quality books has by no means been extinguished. One problem is that many who might be interested are unaware of the continuing existence of Gladstone Books since I left Bull Yard.

This brings me to my *modest request*. If some of the several people who have made favourable comments about my stock and the reasonable prices charged were to register such opinions on the *Book Guide* website, it might make more people aware of this service. In the past, I received a number of visits to the Southwell shop from people, sometimes travelling some distance, who had only learned of its existence by reading comments on the website below:

<https://www.inprint.co.uk/thebookguide/shops/multi.php?id=2297>

You can read the previous comments posted there, or via a link on my website:

www.gladstonebooks.co.uk

Many thanks, in advance, to those who avail themselves of this opportunity!

8. From: The Fables of Aesop

A new version from the Original Sources by Thomas James M A

Published by John Murray (1911)



THE HARES AND THE FROGS

FABLE 70

ONCE upon a time, the Hares, driven desperate by the many enemies that compassed them about on every side, came to the sad resolution that there was nothing left for them but to make away with themselves, one and all. Off they scudded to a lake hard by, determined to drown themselves as the most miserable of creatures. A shoal of Frogs seated upon the bank, frightened at the approach of the Hares, leaped in the greatest alarm and confusion into the water. "Nay, then, my friends," said a Hare that was foremost, "our case is not so desperate yet; for here are other poor creatures more faint-hearted than ourselves."

Take not comfort, but courage, from another's distress; and be sure, whatever your misery, that there are some whose lot you would not exchange with your own.

9. A new venture: a stall in Southwell Market

With the retirement of the second-hand bookseller who had had a stall on the Saturday market for many years, I decided to try my hand at this way of supplementing my sales. There are pros and cons to such an outdoor-activity, and whether I shall make it a regular activity, at least over the summer period, largely depends on how popular it proves to be.



On the positive side is the fact that I meet and chat with several of the people who were customers, when I had the shop in Bull Yard, while the prominence in the town centre adds to the number of browsers – and possibly sales. The major challenge is making the most appropriate selection of the 200 or so books that I can reasonably easily cart from home.

The display shown here includes local topology, poetry, essays, social history, arts and crafts, children's books, modern and classical fiction, biographies (including an antiquarian 6 volume set of *Boswell's Life of Johnson*) and many more.

My first customer on 12th May, taken with his permission

So far, the weather has been quite favourable, but on one day I had to close shop very early, because rain started to drip through a gap in the awning. And I can imagine that the prospect of spending a Saturday morning perched on a stool, exposed to a strong wind and and/or heavy rain, will curb my enthusiasm. Currently, the stall is up by about 8.00 and I usually begin to prepare for departure at about 12.30. But the timing may change in future.

As always, I enjoy congenial chats with a diverse range of browsers. But the continuation of this 'service' depends on my selling enough books to cover the running costs, and to justify the time and (far from insignificant) physical effort involved in assembling and taking down the display.

It must be admitted that sales are often disappointing, but poor days are sometimes compensated for by an inexplicable boost in sales the following week.

The key message is - 'use it or lose it.'

BM



The above border of this page is compiled from *The Treasury of Book Ornament and Decoration: from early 20th Century Italian Sources* (Edited by Carol Belanger Grafton; Dover Publications, New York, 1986)