

Editorial

Patrick O'Sullivan

This issue brings the usual mixture of Morrisian subjects, although it is first necessary – sadly – to mark the death of one of the stalwarts of the William Morris Society in recent times, Peter Preston. Peter Faulkner does this in the pages immediately following this editorial, so all I can (and must) do here is to record that as Chair of the Society, Peter Preston was extremely welcoming to me when I first became editor, and always most helpful and encouraging. Later I also learned that he was one of the best and most patient chairs of potentially divisive meetings I have ever had the privilege to watch and marvel at, and I frequently thought how good it was for all concerned, not least the Society, that it was he, and not I, who was occupying that particular position.

In this issue, we reproduce a previously unpublished letter by Morris with comments by Peter Faulkner. Florence Boos and I then discuss the relationship between Morris and the Devon Great Consols mine, the source of the Morris family wealth, and the departure point for much ill-informed sniping at Morris's reputation over recent years. Peter Faulkner next broadens the subject to that of Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites, and the extent to which the influence of Pre-Raphaelitism on Morris's work was retained over his lifetime. Our third and fourth articles, by Kathleen Ullal, and by Ingrid Hanson, then confirm a trend I think I may have noticed since becoming editor – the continued, perhaps increasing interest in Morris's late prose romances.

We then carry reviews of books on another of these (*The Wood Beyond the World*), and on the ways in which Morris's metrical thinking interacts with his poetic practice in *Love is Enough*. Next come reviews of Martin Crick's history of the William Morris Society, and of biographies of Morris's life-long friend Edward Burne-Jones, and of Niklaus Pevsner, an early twentieth century champion of Morris. The wider impact of Morris's ideas is then considered in a review of Patriotism and the British Left, from Morris's time until the first Labour administration in 1924. Finally, Mike Foulkes and I review a book which provides much interesting background for the issue of 'William Morris and Arsenic', which brings us back, in a way, to Devon Great Consols.