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Welcome

This, the Summer 2017 edition of the Magazine, has come together through a number of different considerations: firstly, to commemorate the reopening of the home of Emery Walker, the engraver, photographer and printer, neighbour and great friend of William Morris, who shared his enthusiasm for typefaces and socialism. Through the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith partnership project between The William Morris Society and the Emery Walker Trust, essential repairs, renovations and improvements to allow greater public access have been carried out and 7 Hammersmith Terrace opened again in April. Academic curator Aileen Reid’s article tells the history and significance of the house, and explores the issues around restoration, conservation and preservation that have to be addressed uniquely in every such project.

Secondly – and I am surprised that no members have complained about this – other than Owen Holland’s article on ‘How I came to Morris’, under my editorship the Magazine has so far neglected to cover Morris himself in any detail. It is possible to reflect Morris’s own interests and his influence in many spheres, which makes editing this magazine so interesting, but it seemed overdue that it should include something more precisely concerned with the man himself. And lastly, being conscious that I had failed to touch upon it to date although it formed such a significant part of Morris’s passions and output, I had been pondering how to include something concerned with literature in the Magazine, in an approach which would differ from that of the Journal.

These two failings have been confronted initially in a wonderful introduction by Florence Boos to Morris’s poetry. She considers the role of poetry in structuring his ethical framework, together with its distinctiveness in its variety, its narrative quality and its relationship with a set of beliefs about the past. Professor of English at the University of Iowa, Florence has written extensively on Morris and nineteenth century working-class literature and edits the US Society’s newsletter, Useful and Beautiful. Her article is accompanied by illustrations in the form of pages from his works, reproduced by the William Morris Archive, of which she is the general editor. This is the first of what I intend to be a series of primers on Morris’s writing by a number of commentators.

For something of a contemporary nature, bringing together, as Morris did, literature and beautiful book design, I interviewed Lydia Fellgett of Persephone Books, the publishing house that revives out-of-print books, largely dating from between the two world wars, largely by women and instantly recognisable for their new clothing of elegant grey covers and patterned endpapers.

In addition volunteer Sally Roberson has written knowledgeably on the May Morris bedcover in Emery Walker’s house, artist David Mabb has contributed his own ‘How I came to Morris’ and we have reports on the Society’s AGM and lectures given at Kelmscott House by Philippa Bennett and Elizabeth Carolyn Miller.

In the Autumn issue I hope to include an article on Morris and his relationship with the Howard family, another relating to the forthcoming National Gallery exhibition on the influence of the Arnolfini Portrait on the Pre-Raphaelites, an interview with a recent William Morris Craft Fellow, and more information about volunteering for the Society. Please do send me any of your thoughts about the Magazine, for publication or otherwise, alerts or reports on items of interest to the readership and suggestions for articles you would like to see, either by yourselves or by others.

Susan Warlow, Editor
HERE BEGINNETH THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE.

BUT, KNOWING NOW THAT THEY WOULD HAVE HER SPEAK, SHE THREW HER WET HAIR BACKWARD FROM HER BROW, HER HAND CLOSE TO HER MOUTH TOUCHING HER CHEEK, AS THOUGH SHE HAD HAD THERE A SHAMEFUL BLOW, AND FEELING IT SHAMEFUL TO FEEL OUGHT BUT SHAME ALL THROUGH HER HEART, YET FELT HER CHEEK BURNED SO, SHE MUST A LITTLE TOUCH IT; LIKE ONE LAME SHE WALKED AWAY FROM GAUWAIN, WITH HER HEAD
I was pleased to be asked to present some thoughts on William Morris’s poetry to a Morris Society audience, including those interested in other aspects of Morris’s work such as his designs or political ideas who may be unaccustomed to reading nineteenth-century poetry. Writing poetry was basic to Morris’s identity; he wrote verse at every stage of his life, from late adolescence until the year of his death. He published at least ten entire volumes of poems as well as additional ungathered lyrics, poetic translations, and poems inserted into longer prose narratives. Moreover the gifts he developed in composing poetry – a sense for rhythm and emotive language, dramatic skill at representing moments of crisis, versatility in anticipating audience response, and the ability to turn introspection into meta-reflection – arguably helped shape the style of his later journalism, essays on art and socialism, and political romances such as News from Nowhere.

It is in his poetry, too, that Morris wrestled with what for him were the underlying metaphysical issues of life: how can human existence, so brief and so little remembered, have any enduring meaning? What can help compensate for failure, suffering, or the loss of love? And most important, faced with a potentially annihilating world, how can a lone individual resist or ameliorate the forces of destruction? The inevitably partial answers to these questions form the ethical framework of Morris’s lyrics and narratives, as they motivated his private life and outward endeavors.

In what follows I will argue that Morris’s poetry is distinctive for its variety; its narrative quality; and its embeddedness in history, or rather, in a set of beliefs about our relationship with the past. All of these traits can initially seem alienating or intimidating to modern readers, but when fully internalised and understood they will be seen to constitute its strengths.

**Variety and comprehensiveness**

Versatile in this as in his other endeavors, Morris composed in several modes, even within a single poem. He wrote dramatic narratives and monologues, dreamlike symbolic lyrics, expressive personal poems, a dramatic masque, extended linked verse tales in a variety of stanza patterns (rhymed couplets, Spenserian stanzas, interspersed lyrics), a Scandinavian and contemporary epic, and what might be called socialist hymns. The foremost commentator on Victorian metrics, George Saintsbury, found his lyrics among the subllest of the age. Some of his poems are intentionally ambiguous or
THE WEARINESS OF NOVEMBER.

Are thine eyes weary? is thy heart too sick.
To struggle any more with doubts and thought
Whose formless veil draws darkening now and thick
A cross the sea as smoke-tinted mist-wreaths, brought
Down a fair dale, to make it blind and nought?
Art thou so weary that no world there seems?
Beyond these four walls hung with pain and dreams?

Look out upon the real world, where the moon,
Half-way twist root and crown of these high trees,
Turns the dead midnight into dreamy noon,
Silent and full of wonders; for the breeze
Died at the sunset, and no images,
No hopes of day are left in sky or earth —
Is it not fair, and of most wondrous worth?

So I have looked, and seen November there;
The changeless seat of change it seemed to be
Fair death of things, that living once, were fair,
Bright sign of loneliness too great for me;
Strange image of the dead eternity;
In whose void patience how can these have part
These outstretched feverish hands, this restless heart?

THE EARTHLY PARADISE
BY WILLIAM MORRIS
PROLOGUE
THE WANDERERS

CERTAIN GENTLEMEN AND ARISTOCRACY OF LONDON, HAVING CONSIDERED ALL THAT THEY HAD HEARD OF THE EARTHLY PARADISE, SET SAIL TO FIND IT AND TO PEEL MANY TROUBLES OF THE LUST OF MANY YEARS ACCUMULATION OF A KMEN, OF WHICH THEY HAD BEEN THE WITNESS. THERE THEY DIED WHEN THEY HAD LIVED THEIR CERTAIN YEARS, IN EXCEEDING HONOUR OF THE STRANGE PEOPLE.
embedded in foreign ways of thought; others are direct, clear, and contemporary. In the face of so many different styles and stages of his work, one may well ask, where to begin?

Since the next sections consider his narrative poems and 'existential' historicism, here it seems appropriate to mention the simplest of his poems, his lyrics. These share with other Victorian verses a sense of poetry as music, evoking a direct response through sound, cadence, rhythm, colour and symbol rather than logical connectives. Here, for example, is the November lyric of _The Earthly Paradise_, published in 1870 when its author was 37:

Are thine eyes weary? is thy heart too sick
To struggle any more with doubt and thought,
Whose formless veil draws darkening now and thick
Across thee, e'en as smoke-timed mist-wreaths brought
Down a fair dale to make it blind and nought?
Art thou so weary that no world there seems
Beyond these four walls, hung with pain and dreams?

Look out upon the real world, where the moon,
Half-way 'twixt root and crown of these high trees,
Turns the dead midnight into dreamy noon,
Silent and full of wonders, for the breeze
Died at the sunset, and no images,
No hopes of day, are left in sky or earth –
Is it not fair, and of most wondrous worth?

Yea, I have looked and seen November there;
The changeless seal of change it seemed to be,
Fair death of things that, living once, were fair;
Bright sign of loneliness too great for me,
Strange image of the dead eternity,
In whose void patience how can these have part,
These outstretched feverish hands, this restless heart?

A great deal could be said about this poem – its sources, its speaker, its form and images, its use of sounds to convey emotion, its careful repetitions and contrasts, or its relationship to the longer sequence, _The Earthly Paradise_, of which it is a part. But no reader needs to ponder these matters to understand its meaning – its evocation of enduring and total isolation. As in Morris's other lyrics, its art consists in its controlled simplicity.

Twenty-one years later Morris composed another lyric poem on a similarly sombre subject, this time directed toward a more public context: _Alfred Linnell, Killed in Trafalgar Square_ November 20th, 1887: A Death Song. Written to be sung at the funeral of an innocent bystander killed by the police as these attacked peaceful protesters in Trafalgar Square, the poem presented Morris with the difficult task of commemorating the tragedy of Linnell's death yet nonetheless inspiring his audience with hope and resolve:

What cometh here from west to east awending?
And who are these, the marchers stern and slow?
We bear the message that the rich are sending
Aback to those who bade them wake and know.
Not one, not one, nor thousands must they slay,
But one and all if they would dunk the day.

We asked them for a life of toilsome earning,
They bade us bide their leisure for our bread;
We craved to speak to tell our woeful learning:
We come back speechless, bearing back our dead.
Not one, not one, nor thousands must they slay,
But one and all if they would dunk the day.

They will not learn; they have no ears to hearken.
They turn their faces from the eyes of fate;
Their gay-lit halls shut out the skies that darken.
But, lo! this dead man knocking at the gate.
Not one, not one, nor thousands must they slay,
But one and all if they would dunk the day.

Here lies the sign that we shall break our prison;
Amidst the storm he won a prisoner's rest;
But in the cloudy dawn the sun arisen
Brings us our day of work to win the best.
Not one, not one, nor thousands must they slay,
But one and all if they would dunk the day.

Once again Morris uses the cadenced patterning of emotive language to build up to the final claim of solidarity: 'Not one, not one, … / But one and all.' The simple images (a march, voices denied speech, a dead man shut out of lighted halls, a storm followed by a cloudy dawn) were easily accessible by his audience and channeled anger (not acceptance) into a shared bond of strength.

Narrative poetry

Morris was best known in his day for his narrative poems, especially _The Life and Death of Jason_ (1867), _The Earthly Paradise_ (1868-70), and _Sigurd the Volsung_ (1876). An attraction of Morris's narrative poetry is its psychological complexity, combined with grace of narration, moments of sudden realism, and an emphasis on music or melody. If modern audiences continued to appreciate long poems, these works would still be more widely esteemed and enjoyed. It is hard to convey the effects of Morris's narrative tales without quoting extended sections; and in any case, it is not the plot per se but the narrator's participation through choices of language and detail that add vividness and evoke empathy.

Morris's early narrative poetry is often remarkably visceral and direct. Consider, for example, _The Haystack in the Floods_, from Morris's early volume _The Defence of Guenevere_ (1858). The poem is set in France during the Hundred Year's War, and its narrator describes the death of two lovers, Robert and Jehane, who are entraped by French guerillias as they attempt to escape over the border into safety. For the twenty-four-year old author, steeped in the patriotic narrative of Jean Froissart's _Chronicles_, it seemed clear that the war's worst atrocities had been perpetrated by the French. At the poem's end, Robert and Jehane die bravely in full awareness of their shared fate. Morris's account is both stark and empathetic.

For Robert – both his eyes were dry,
He could not weep, but gnomelike
He seem'd to watch the rain; yea, too,
His lips were grim; he tried once more
To touch her lips; she reach'd out, sore
And vain desire so tortured them,
The poor grey lips, and now the hem
Of his sleeve brush'd them.

With a start
Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;
From Robert's throat he loosed the bands
Of silk and mail; with empty hands
Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw
The long bright blade without a flaw
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his hand
In Robert's hair; she saw him bend
Back Robert's head; she saw him send
The thin steel down; the blow told well,
Right backward the knight Robert fell,
And moan'd as dogs do, being half dead,
Unwitting, as I deem: so then
Godmar turn'd grinning to his men,
Who ran, some five or six, and beat
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turn'd again and said:
"So, Jehane, the first fitte is read!
Take note, my lady, that your way
Lies backward to the Chatellet!"
She shook her head and gazed awhile
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had
Beside the haystack in the floods.

The seemingly mundane but evocative image of a 'haystack in the floods’ – concrete, bleak, and unrelieved – provides a fit setting for sadism and murder.

In his later tales Morris often inserted internal witnesses – poets, singers, storytellers, or wisdom figures – to comment on the action and appeal directly to his audience. Victorian writers tended to address their audiences directly (perhaps the most famous example is the declaration of Charlotte Brontë's _Jane Eyre_: 'Reader, I married him!'), but Morris is unusual in the importance he ascribes to the singer-witness. We have seen such an example in the November lyric, spoken by an unnamed voice which is presumably that of the author of the cycle's tales. Another example appears in the figure of Orpheus, who in _The Life and Death of Jason_ sings of the meaning of the Argonauts' voyage, and in _The Story of Orpheus and Eurydice_, of his loss of Eurydice and defiance of the gods.

A further distinctive feature of Morris's poetry is its concrete interest in the crafts and occupations of ordinary people, the skilled activities needed for more realistic 'heroism'. Some of the more dramatic passages of _The Life and Death of Jason_ may be found in its narration.
Lonely Love and Heartless Death

I have been heartening
To come sweet occurrence?
While other, in the world,
What hearts are in disquiet,
What other is enough
That the world is a clear river
Cambrian, the sunshine,
And the left around there,
And then shall be?

...it were, it were,
But a song for good
The light that seemed sometime,
The creeping thought?
How is turned to bending
That constant endeavor?
To find love that bound me
To hold she so brought?

She held the sobbing
Grace from temples told over
Than earnestly the hearing
Grace enough sent back
I dreamt of exalting
And blessing the world
Till the burning peace and bearing
The light, and did reach

...reach, and reach
Let him, that came so far,
Tell love once conquered
Tell hope ever lived?
Till love was left better
By the light that love received

...way

A DEATH SONG
BY MR. W. MORRIS.

Killed in Trafalgar Square,
NOVEMBER 20, 1887.

MEMORIAL DESIGN BY MR. WALTER CRANE.

Price one penny.
of the Argonauts’ exhausting journey as they
drag their ship through the snow northwards
and overland from the Caspian to the Baltic Seas.
In a different register, the heroine of the Story
of Cupid and Psyche steps on a carpet, ‘[w]rought
by the brown slim-fingered Indian’s toil / Amidst
the years of war and vain turmoil’ (lines 337–
338). Yuri Cowan has remarked that this trait
intensified after Morris’s encounter with the
sagas, whose heroes appear as often in the role
of craftsperson as they do as raiders or warriors,
and in his essay Early England Morris describes
the Vikings as ‘shipwrights, housebuilders and
armourers… almost every one [of whom] could
settle a copy of verses on occasion.’
Perhaps Morris’s most highly regarded single
narrative poem is The Lovers of Gudrun, the
medieval November tale from The Earthly
Paradise. In this case the story’s wisdom figure
is not a poet but ‘Guest’, a visitor endowed with
the gift of prophecy, and the narrator pauses to note
details of Icelandic occupations and crafts, as
well as the emotions of those who practise them.
The poem contains many dramatic scenes, in
one of which Bodli, husband of Gudrun and
foster brother and friend of Kiartan, kills his
friend at his wife’s revengeful insistence. Morris
attends carefully to oppositional viewpoints: the
slaying would never have occurred had the
passing speakers who witness the attack not
refrained from intervention, motivated in part
by bitterness toward the region’s wealthy
landowners:
Then said the herdsman: “Sore
The troubles are that on the country-side
Shall fall, if this same meeting shall betide;
He is a great chief; let us warn him then!”
“Yea, yea!” his master said, “and all such men
As fate leads unto death, that we may
Twist the two millstones ground right merrily,
For great men’s use; emptied of joys of life
Let us lie close to see the merrily play! …
These are great men – good, let them hack and
hew Their noble bodies for our poor delight!”

My own favo ures among Morris’s narrative
poems include the Earthly Paradise tales The
Love of Alcestis, a wistful portrayal of largely
undeserved attachment, and Bellerophon in
Lycia, which transforms a classical story of
monster-killing into an allegory of the struggle
to overcome fear. Before Bellerophon can find
the monster, several men have perished merely
from viewing him, but Bellerophon arrives to
find a tiny shrivelled skin. Quickly grasping the
situation, he shudders with recognition as he
views the bodies of his dead predecessors; in
the words of a witness:

by then the day
Showed how my fellows on the pavement lay
Dead, yet without a wound it seemed;
then the new-comer sighed
And said: ‘Belike it was of fear they died,
Yet wish them not alive again, for they
Had found death fearful on another day…

The collapse of time / existential historicism
Whereas later poetry seeks to disguise or remove
the author’s overt voice, Victorian poetry often
foregrounds or heightens it. This has the merit
that the writer speaks directly to the reader, as it
were vaulting across time. Morris himself
especially loved such leaps, as in his poems he
frequently speaks directly and with deep
personal emotion to historical figures such as
Chaucer, the Icelandic saga-hero Grettir, or even
to his own characters. A late-twentieth century
school of criticism has proclaimed ‘the death of
the author’ (Roland Barthes); Morris would not
entirely disagree with such a view, since he
liked to imagine anonymous singers or writers of
the past or even ventriloquise them, but there is
a sense in which his imagined singers, speakers,
and ‘own’ voice embody a resurrection of the
author – conceived as actually existing persons
speaking to actually existing persons across time
and space through the frail medium of language.
One can remain sceptical about the realism of
this approach, but it inspires some unusual
thought experiments on Morris’s part. The faith
that through empathetic historical recreation we
can most closely approach human communion
reappears many times in Morris’s writings. An
arresting instance occurs in Gunnar’s Howe
above the House at Laidhend, in which Morris’s
speaker contemplates the bleak grave of a
tormented hero in the Njals saga. After he has
been ambushed and murdered in his home,
visitors to his grave by night witness a vision of
the hero’s spirit singing:

. . . I name him that Gunnar of old, who erst in
the haymaking tide
Felt all the land fragrant and fresh, as amidst of
the edges he died.
Too swiftly fame fadeth away, if ye tremble not
lest once again
The grey mound should open and show him
blind-eyed without grudging or pain.
Little labour methinks to behold him but the
tale-teller laboured in vain.
Little labour for ears that may hearken to hear
his death-conquering song,
Till the heart swells to think of the gladness
undying that overcame wrong.
O young is the world yet mesemeth, and the
hope of it flourishing green,
When the words of a man unremembered so
bridge all the days that have been,
As we look round about on the land that these
nine hundred years he hath seen.

Thus if his contemporaries admired Morris for
the flow of his stories, easily read aloud and
emotionally evocative, they also embody a
serious philosophy of existence. This might
be described as a totum simul perspective – the
belief that all history occurs at once, and we
who are now living are implicated in it. This view
is both terrifying and consoling: terrifying because
deeply rooted, obliterating evil seems likely to
recur, and again recur, even if there may be
temporary and relative ‘golden ages’; and
consoling because we have a part and a duty
within this process to act heroically for the good.
Moreover we are not alone in this effort but
surrounded by the community of all who have
similarly acted from time immemorial into the
indefinitely extending future. In short, history
(and for Morris history was the emotional life
of the past as embodied in its art and literature)
gives hope.

One might respond, ‘But this isn’t quite the
message of News from Nowhere!’ Yes, but
although there is hope at the end of Nowhere
that the inhabitants of the future will make Guest’s
vision into a reality rather than a dream, it’s not
certain that they will do so – or why would Guest
need to appeal to them? – and moreover we have
a long way to go before this transformation can
happen. One might say that Morris’s poetry is
generally poised at the moments before the
change, when his speakers (himself or others)
must face a rather large abyss – partly internal,
parto sly-caused, and partly the workings of fate –
and fight their way out of this abyss to
something better. Viewed in this context, it is
obvious why to dismiss as escapist Morris’s
poems with historical or legendary settings
entirely misses their significance, and also why
the sensibility which underlies his poetry also led
Morris to radical views in both art and politics.

Florence Boos is Professor of English at the University of
Iowa, has written extensively on Morris and nineteenth
century working-class literature, edits the US Society’s
newsletter and Useful and Beautiful and is general editor of
the William Morris Archive.

Thanks to Kimberly A. Maher, Project Manager of the William
Morris Archive, for help with illustrations.

Further suggested reading: The Defence of Guenevere; from
The Earthly Paradise: the lyrics of the months, The Story of Cupid
and Psyche, The Story of Ogyg, The Lovers of Gudrun, the
Bellerophon tales, and The Hill of Venus; Love Is Enough,
especially songs of The Music; Book 3 of Sigurd the Väking;
Poems by the Way: The Pilgrars of Hope, Chants for Socialists.
Morris’s poems may all be found at the William Morris
Archive, morrisedition.lib.uiowa.edu.
Founded by Nicola Beauman in 1998, Persephone Books reprints forgotten novels, diaries, poetry and cookery books, mostly by women and mostly dating from the early to mid-twentieth century. The paperback books in their Originals series are distinguished by their grey covers and patterned endpapers with matching bookmarks that are specifically chosen for each publication.

Susan Warlow
I thought it was appropriate to interview someone from Persephone Books, because Morris was very interested in the printed book. He produced luxurious editions that weren’t affordable to most people, but Persephone Books is different because while your books are beautifully produced they are not very expensive. They all cost the same and there’s a kind of democracy there.

Lydia Fellgett
We feel very strongly about that. It’s not necessarily to everyone’s liking, because you can buy (Marghanita Laski’s) *The Victorian Chaise Longue*, which is one of our ghostly novellas, less than 100 pages, and it costs the same as our new publication, the autobiography of Tirzah Garwood – the engraver, married to Eric Ravilious – which is over 500 pages long. Those are two very different things, clearly they cost us a different amount to produce, but we are a small company and we like things to be admin-light, so all the books are the same price. It saves us time and effort but it’s also for exactly the reason that you mention, which is that all the books are the same in our eyes, whether they are big or small, they are all as good as each other and they don’t need to be different prices.

They’re relatively expensive to produce compared to most paperbacks but we do like to keep them as affordable as possible. They have a removable dust jacket, which is an added expense, and the endpapers, the colourwork, adds to the cost. We like good paper – very important – and all our books are printed in GGP, which is an old German printers in what was Eastern Germany. They use what’s called dispersion binding, so the books open and lie flat without the spine breaking. That horrible reading experience when you lose the first word from each line in the gully is avoided.

**SW** If one looks for a reprint of a classic book in a bookshop, often they are horribly reproduced from the old edition on cheap paper.

**LF** Whenever people come into the shop they always say it smells lovely and I say it’s a combination of dust and good quality paper. It’s partly for aesthetic reasons and partly for practical reasons so that when you’re reading a Persephone book you can’t see what’s coming next through the page.

We felt that these books have been neglected and forgotten, so we wanted them to be treated in a way that they hadn’t been previously. Most of our books we re-set and some of our books are facsimiles. *Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day*, which is our absolute bestseller, has beautiful illustrations and a quite beautiful font, so we used a facsimile from the 1938 edition for that one. We do have a few other facsimiles: *The Country Life Cookery Book* by Ambrose Heath has illustrations by Eric Ravilious, so obviously we want to keep those in. If it’s legible and it’s beautiful we quite like doing a facsimile edition, but otherwise they’re refreshed.

**SW** Why is the publishing house called Persephone? Rebirth and fertility, is that it?

**LF** That’s basically it, it’s for those reasons but also it’s a nice-sounding word, it feels nice in the mouth somehow. She is a symbol of female creativity and cyclical, going down into the dark and coming up each spring.

**SW** Do you scour second hand bookshops for things you’d like – how does finding books to publish come about?

**LF** Yes and no, also lists in the backs of books,
there's lots of things on the shortlist, lots of things on the longlist.

**SW** Does Nicola choose the books – or there are three of you aren't there, are you all involved?

**LF** Nicola has the final say, absolutely, but we all read everything. Persephone Books started because Nicola wrote a book in the 80s called *A Very Great Profession: The Woman's novel 1914-39* – about these inter-war women writers that she's always loved. She was at Newnham, reading all the men and actually she much preferred reading Dorothy Whipple. In the 90s the books she loved were still all out of print and she decided that she was going to reprint them. We’ve always been a mail-order company, which is why all the books look the same on the outside. When you order a Persephone book you know what’s coming through the letterbox, it’s a beautiful grey book. There’s a uniformity to them, with a simple, classic design on the outside and that’s why they’re different on the inside, with those beautiful textiles.

**SW** Were they like that from the word go?

**LF** Yes, Nicola likes grey, has always liked grey, but she’s also always liked pattern. If you ever meet Nicola, she will be wearing a combination of grey and a pattern. A Persephone Book looks like Nicola in that respect. You know those beautiful French editions of classic books, where they look very elegant and simple, those cream and red ones (Les Classiques pour Tous), they too were partly the inspiration for Persephone Books.

**SW** How do you go about selecting the patterns for the endpapers and bookmarks?

**LF** They’re mainly textiles. They’re often an upholstery fabric, but there are scarves, dress fabrics, a few wallpapers. *The Carlyles At Home* is by Thea Holme who was a custodian of the National Trust house (in Chelsea) and she wrote a book about Thomas and Jane Carlyle and their time in the house. For the endpapers for that book we’ve used the famous painting of them both sitting in their living room, which now hangs in the house; there’s some lovely meta-stuff happening there. The endpaper should be from the year that the book was written, or set in, we do like ones designed by women but that’s not an absolute necessity, much like the books – a lot of people think of Persephone as women writers only but we do have a few men. The designs have to be related to the book in some way. We have *No Surrender*, a suffragette novel from 1912 and we’ve used a Duncan Grant fabric that’s purple, green and white – the suffragette colours – and the pattern’s almost cell-like. Our utterly inspirational memoir by Hilda Bernstein – her husband was arrested with Mandela – that’s a South African textile. You can get a sense of the tone of the book from a particular textile, from the endpaper that’s been chosen. *Miss Buncle’s Book* by D E Stevenson is an incredibly light, funny novel about a woman who writes a novel based on everyone in her village. For that we used a Vanessa Bell textile which has slightly dreamy, pastel flowers: it’s light, it’s fun, it’s pretty. *Consequences* by EM Delafield is an angry, spiky novel about what happens if you're unmarried and your parents send you off to a convent, a terrible example of Victorian values going wrong, and it’s a thistle print on the endpaper.

**SW** Do you find them in catalogues and archives of textiles?

**LF** A few are from private collections. Not many of our authors are still living, but we published some short stories by Diana Athill. The endpapers for that book are some curtains she had in the 70s. Similarly, for *Vain Shadow*, which is a novel by Jane Hervey that was written in the 50s and published in the 60s, we used one of her Heal’s upholstery textiles, which lots of people recognise, they come in and say ‘Ah, my mother had curtains of that fabric’. So it’s national archives, like the V&A or MoDA, but also personal archives.

**SW** One thinks of patchwork quilts and women saving used material, because they’re so fond of it, because they’ve got all these associations with it.

**LF** Exactly! We’re just down the road from the Foundling Museum and when women used to leave their child at the Foundling Hospital, they would leave a sample of fabric (as a token) and the Hospital would keep hold of it. That’s a perfect example of why textiles and prints are important to women.

**SW** Many Persephone Books are linked to the idea of home.
LF Yes, well it’s what women were writing about. There are many reasons why this is a particularly rich moment for women writers, this inter-war period. It’s partly to do with lots of men dying at the front: there was a new generation of specifically middle-class British women who’d gone to university for the first time, who were more educated than ever before, but society wasn’t quite ready for them to be out in the workplace. So writing was the perfect way for middle-class women who were incredibly well-read, who were intelligent and educated, and who had time. We think of it as domestic feminism – they wrote about what it was like to be a woman and often that meant being in the home, and family life. That’s not necessarily true of all our books, but most of what we publish is domestic fiction.

Some of the writing is genius. Juliet Gardiner the historian, who has also written prefaces for us, calls it fingertip history, this period. It’s almost there, you can just about touch it and that too is part of the interest in this particular period. I don’t like to think of it as nostalgia, I think of it as an important moment in the history of women’s writing and writing generally – the 30s was such a politically, socially fascinating, often traumatic moment in western civilisation in particular and these books articulate lots of the complexity of that, and have become the source books for many contemporary writers, thinking about the experience of women in these moments.

SW How do you go about commissioning the introductions (prefaces or afterwords) to the books?

LF When we find a book we like or we think our readers will like, that’s a great read, that has a purpose, that has interesting themes, that is not like anything else that we publish although also can be classified as a Persephone Book, then maybe we think Jacqueline Wilson would love this novel! And you send it to them. Adam Gopnik wrote the preface for A London Child of the 1870s.

SW I was also quite interested in your marketing strategy – you produce an catalogue annually, you produce a magazine – the Persephone Biannually – it’s generous, isn’t it? People can get the magazine for free by signing up to the mailing list and that’s so unusual, because it’s very personal. Normally publishers produce catalogues of books and send them out to booksellers or reviewers, they don’t produce them for the benefit of readers in that way.

LF We’ve always been a mail-order company so you have to have a catalogue in that respect. We’re unusual in that the office has a shop on the front so anyone can walk in and see the person who founded it – the person who’s now watering the window boxes – and that’s very important. There’s also a very obvious thing to say – who’s going to believe us that these books are worth reading? P art of the reason that they’re beautiful is so that people are attracted to them and look at them and say ‘what’s this?’ Every publisher wants someone to walk into a bookshop and on a table or shelf of books, they want them to be drawn to THAT one, and that is true of the catalogue or magazine too.

SW You organise events as well, you’ve got your book club and occasionally screenings and trips out to places associated with the authors.

LF It’s a word-of-mouth thing, Miss Pettigrew was only a bestseller because it was word-of-mouth, then it was made into a film and obviously that helped. It’s meant to be a nice thing to be a part of. The idea is you’ll like one book so you’ll like them all, it’s meant to be inclusive.

SW I think it has that feel, you can come in and pick up a catalogue…

LF Oh, we like talking to our readers, who come in or phone, will read a short story in the magazine and then tell us ‘I love that short story, who is this Dorothy Whipple?’ and then we say ‘Oh my god, you’re so lucky! You get to read Dorothy Whipple for the first time.’ We send them a book and they tell their friends about the amazing Dorothy Whipple.

SW In the past you had mail-order book clubs and people subscribed because they relied on the selection that was made for them, and it’s got something of that.

LF Definitely! Persephone Readers, we like to call them – capital P, capital R – trust us, or trust Nicola in particular, to find really good books for them to read.

www.persephonebooks.co.uk
7 Hammersmith Terrace

Aileen Reid explains what makes Emery Walker’s house unique
'I visited 7 Hammersmith Terrace yesterday with two friends and was enchanted with the house and seriously disturbed at the thought that so unique a London interior of the Morris period together with its... pictures, chairs, cabinets, hangings and Morris papers, should be dispersed... There is now no other Morris interior in London to equal it, nor was there ever a Morris interior to retain so many relics of the Morris movement. Of course, its appeal is as a private house, not a museum, and the way the walls are hung with a mixture of photographs, water colours and illuminated manuscripts and the way the twinkling light from the Thames at the bottom of the garden shines on the blues and greens of Morris papers and fabrics and old brown hand made furniture, leads one in to a kingdom that can never be created again. This house and its contents must be preserved'.

For anyone who has been following the fortunes of Emery Walker’s house, 7 Hammersmith Terrace, the Arts & Crafts house just along the Thames from Kelmscott House that has recently reopened to the public, these words might appear be those of an enthused recent visitor to the house, keen to convey its special character and its subsequent need for ongoing financial support. In fact, John Betjeman, Poet Laureate and tireless protector of Victorian architecture wrote them more than fifty years ago. It is a matter of delight that his description of the house’s charms remains as true today as then and that finally, with the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the collaboration of the William Morris Society, Betjeman’s dream of preserving the house and its ambience has come true after more than half a century.

When Betjeman got to know 7 Hammersmith Terrace in 1964, it was still very much a home, though one where domestic convenience was often sacrificed to preserving the character and contents of the house. At that time it belonged to Elizabeth de Haas, who had lived there since 1948 and who had recently been left the house by her friend Dorothy Walker. Together they had striven to preserve the house as it had been in the early 1900s, as a memorial to Dorothy’s father, the printer and antiquary Emery Walker, Morris’s great friend and associate. Walker had moved in with Dorothy and his wife Mary Grace in 1903, but they had not moved far, just four doors, from No 3, where
they had arrived as a young family with new baby Dorothy in 1879. A major charm of these tall Georgian terraced houses, then as now, was the river, which, unusually for houses round here, most of which are separated from the river by a road, runs along beneath the back garden wall. When the angle of the sun is right, the reflection of the river seems to glimmer on the ceiling of the drawing room.

It was as a young married man that Walker first got to know William Morris, who had moved to Kelmscott House, a few hundred yards downriver, the year before. Morris later spoke of how the sight of the tall, soberly clad Walker walking past his house holding the hand of tiny Dorothy clad in a white muslin dress, had caught his eye. The two got to know each other properly through their shared enthusiasm for socialism and Walker was a founder with Morris of the Hammersmith Socialist Society. Their friendship was cemented when Walker helped Morris realise his final creative ambition, to create a beautiful hand-printed version of his poem *The Earthly Paradise*. Walker, as well as being a successful commercial printer who used his own refinement of photogravure to reproduce photographs, paintings and prints in books, had also studied the fifteenth century master printers. It was said that a lecture Walker gave, illustrated with limelight lantern slides of fifteenth century Venetian type which was considered the peak of font design, was a Eureka moment for Morris, who felt that if he could capture the character of that type he could realise his ambition to create his ‘great book’. This is, essentially, what happened when he set up the Kelmscott Press, with Walker’s advice on practical matters of where to find the deepest, truest black ink and the finest handmade paper.

By the end of Morris’s life, these shared interests had deepened into a profound personal friendship such that Morris ‘did not consider a day complete without a sight of Emery Walker’. Just as important was Walker’s friendship with Philip Webb, joint father with Morris of the Arts & Crafts movement and architect of Red House. He considered Emery Walker ‘the “universal Samaritan”, who should be laid on like water, only we don’t pay rates for him’. And when Webb died he left Walker all his possessions: his furniture and Morris textiles; his Powell of Whitefriars glass.

More than a century on, the traces of these friendships are still everywhere in Emery Walker’s house. Open a drawer in a desk and there is a pair of William Morris’s spectacles and a cutting of his hair, taken by Walker on the day he died in 1896. In another is Walker’s wallet, still with his membership cards for the National Trust from 1932-33, the year he died. Nearby stands the seventeenth century chair often seen in photographs of Morris’s study, and given to Walker by Janey after her husband died, adorned with a tapestry made for Walker by May Morris and inscribed ‘MM to EW’. In the drawing room stand Philip Webb’s office bookcases and cabinet, still with his engraved keyring in the lock. In another room is a Windsor chair, the legs cut down to suit Webb, who was short of stature. In every room there is original block-printed Morris wallpaper, while beneath the green felt in the entrance hall is original Morris printed linoleum still in situ; we believe this is the only house in the world that can claim both these distinctions. Elsewhere are numerous pieces of Cotswold Arts & Crafts ceramics and furniture collected when, after Ernest Gimson’s death in 1922, Walker rented his former showroom, Daneway House in Sapperton.

The reason that the house retains this authenticity, this sense that the original occupants might at any minute walk back into the room, is that it remained a private house until relatively recently. Elizabeth de Haas lived...
in the house until her death in 1999, shortly before which she set up the Emery Walker Trust as a vehicle for keeping the house and contents together. A few years earlier she had sold Emery Walker’s collection of Kelmscott Press and Doves Press books to Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum, now known as The Wilson, which has the best Arts & Crafts collection outside the V&A. For some time after the Trust was founded this provided something of a dilemma. Walker is best remembered as the father of fine printing in the twentieth century, yet there were few private press books left in the house; some trustees felt that the ‘soul had gone out of the house’ with the books. Worse, though Cheltenham paid handsomely for the books, the sum raised was insufficient to endow the house in perpetuity. The idea of keeping house and contents together was deemed ‘naïve and romantic’. Yet it is the character of the house, so vividly evoked by Betjemam’s words, that is so special and which, ultimately, appears to have saved it. Trustees and volunteers came to understand its uniqueness not so much as the home of a printer, but as a uniquely authentic Morris-era interior.

Before the house was first opened to the public in 2005 (an event that was expected to be a one-off before the contents were dispersed and the house sold), groups of the great and good were shown round to ask their advice. Most were charmed by the house, and understood how special it is, yet one group questioned whether this was ‘an Arts & Crafts interior’. Not everything was from Morris & Co: not all the rugs and not all the furniture. Yet as more research was done on the house, the more apparent it became that though this may not be Morris & Co, it is Morris. Compare the interiors of 7 Hammersmith Terrace with photographs taken by Emery Walker of Kelmscott House, and you are struck by the similarities. In both there are many textiles and wallpapers from Morris & Co, but there are also Middle Eastern rugs on the floors, Chinese blue and white porcelain and German Westerwald stoneware on the shelves, English eighteenth and nineteenth century chests and chairs, and on the walls prints and paintings by artist friends. William Morris could have had an entirely Morris & Co-furnished house yet he chose not to. He had, instead, things that he ‘knew to be useful or believed to be beautiful’, including Georgian furniture, supposedly anathema to those like Morris and Walker inspired by Ruskin. The same spirit imbues 7 Hammersmith Terrace.

The Arts & Crafts Hammersmith project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and private donations, builds upon the longstanding informal collaboration between The William Morris Society, which has long been based in the basement and coach-house at Kelmscott House, and The Emery Walker Trust, which owns 7 Hammersmith Terrace. The relationship is symbiotic, celebrating the connection between Walker and Morris and making the most of the different characters of the houses. Walker’s house is fully furnished but relatively small and its contents precious and fragile, and can accommodate only small parties; the main part of Morris’s house is a private house, but the Society’s premises can accommodate events and educational activities.

Walker’s house has the authentic feel of a Morris-era home, still filled with furniture, textiles, ceramics, paintings and drawings as well as personal mementoes collected and used by Walker, his daughter and Elizabeth de Haas. Which brings us to the issue of the so-called
time-capsule house. I believe that there is no such thing as a house frozen in a moment of time. We all know from the way that we rearrange our own homes, moving pictures and furniture about, replacing a chair one year, wallpaper the next, that houses are fluid entities that evolve year by year, sometimes day by day. Emery Walker’s house is no different. When I first started work there, cataloguing the contents in 2001, I assumed that the interest in the house diminished with Emery Walker’s death in 1933, and died with Dorothy in 1963. But the story of the house turned out to be much more complex and nuanced. Elizabeth de Haas worked at first with Dorothy and later on her own to preserve the house. But of course both women had to adapt it to their changing needs… the basement was turned into a separate flat and the former telephone room on the ground floor became a kitchen; woodwork and ceilings were repainted, new paintings and drawings were added. This last is a good example of how there is no absolute line between what is and what is not Arts & Crafts in the house. After Dorothy Walker’s death Elizabeth de Haas continued friendships with some of the surviving Cotswold Arts & Crafts artists who had known Emery Walker, notably Norman Jewson. The owl panel in the conservatory was made by her, from Jewson’s mould and under his supervision, and there are watercolours by Jewson from the 1960s on the walls. She got to know new artists in that tradition, including Robin Tanner, some of whose prints, specially made and inscribed for her are on display.

But what would it mean to freeze the house in time? To keep it as it was when the Emery Walker Trust acquired it on Elizabeth de Haas’s death in 1999? But where does that process of ‘conserving as found’ stop? With her washing still in the machine? The dangerous wiring she lived with? The vast array of Christmas decorations and candles on every surface? Or should it be ruthlessly pruned back to eliminate everything that arrived after 1963? To create an illusion of an Arts & Crafts time capsule? The Trust’s approach, which I believe to be honest and pragmatic, has been to preserve with great care the authentic surfaces of the house, especially the Morris & Co wallpapers, to privilege sometimes the Morris rugs over the Moroccan rugs acquired by Elizabeth de Haas in the 1980s, which are particularly attractive to moths, and to make the house viable as a place open to the public, turning the top-floor bathroom into a kitchen for the Trust’s small staff, making the back drawing room, which had been converted into a bathroom in 1960 by Dorothy Walker, into a display area for photographs and letters that would otherwise remain unseen. This continues the process of conservation and gentle evolution of the interior that has existed for more than 100 years, ensuring that this remarkable and precious survival of a Morris interior can be enjoyed for many years to come.

Dr Aileen Reid is academic curator at 7 Hammersmith Terrace and Research Associate on the Survey of London, UCL.

Emery Walker’s House can be visited by guided tour only on Thursdays and Saturdays this year until 25 November. To book visit the website: www.emerywalker.org.uk.
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Emery Walker’s newly restored house in Hammersmith is a treasure trove of Arts & Crafts textiles. One of the finest of these is the crewel-work bedcover, designed and embroidered by May Morris for Walker’s wife, Mary Grace, when she was bedridden towards the end of her life (she died in 1920). The bed cover was used as the pall on Mary Grace’s coffin in 1920, on Emery’s in 1933, Dorothy’s in 1963 and finally on Elizabeth de Haas’ coffin in 1999.

It is a magnificent mille-fleurs piece, covered entirely in flowers inspired by an English meadow in spring or early summer, and arranged almost as if they were in an Elizabethan knot-garden. The ground fabric is a camel-coloured felted wool and all the embroidery is worked in wool thread.

From an embroiderer’s point of view, the construction of the bedcover must have been a significant challenge, not least in the difficulty of transferring the design accurately to the fabric, compounded by the tendency of the thread to knot.
The bedcover has eighty-five flowers, while ten half-flowers run down each long side. Forty-five, in nine rows of five, are set in square or rectangular rounded frames, each embellished with Elizabethan lovers’ knots, while the remaining forty flowers, in ten rows of four, lie between the frames. The frames are embroidered in shades of blue, perhaps referring to the river running nearby. Each frame is worked in four lines of elongated chain stitch, and there is irregular variation in the choice of colour; most are in a single shade of mid-blue, but one row, towards the lower edge, shows an inner line of lighter blue, while some, towards the upper edge, are outlined in a curiously irregular stitch in black or navy, and others nearby have an incomplete white outline.

Ten different kinds of flowers have been deployed, five of them within frames, while five other species fill the spaces between the frames, so no two neighbouring flowers are of the same sort. The flower types do not appear with equal frequency; one species only five times, and one only once, while others occur up to a dozen times. Like the similar piece that May designed for her father’s bed at Kelmscott Manor some years earlier, the choice of flowers was probably inspired by the meadows and hedgerows near their Oxfordshire home. It is possible to identify knapweed, daisy, carnation, iris and lily, together with snake’s-head fritillary and perhaps pimpernel and gentian, although in some cases their interpretation is more artistic than botanical, a situation partly resulting from the difficulty of representing precise detail in the chosen medium, crewel work.

The flowers are not all embroidered in the same way; some are worked in different stitches or in different colours for the same flower type. They are all, however, worked as solid embroidery, rather than merely outlined, using stem stitch, split stitch, satin stitch, chain stitch, French knots and some couching. These are all simple stitches used in the renaissance of embroidery brought about by William Morris’s art needlework and fostered by his daughter’s creative ability, as well as by his talented wife and the many other embroiderers to whom they passed on their skills.

Sally Roberson has been a tour guide for the National Trust at two Arts & Crafts properties for the last ten years. She curated The Story of Embroidery exhibition for Standen, and holds a Certificate in Technical Hand Embroidery from the Royal School of Needlework. Sally has also photographed and compiled condition reports on many of the textiles from Emery Walker’s house while they were in store.
STANDEN’S GARDEN RESTORED
A five-year restoration project at one of the country’s most important Arts & Crafts gardens has been completed at Standen in West Sussex, designed for James Beale and his family in the late nineteenth century by Philip Webb.

The twelve-acre hillside garden was designed by Beale’s wife Margaret and saw its heyday in the 1920s. An accomplished gardener and plants-woman, Margaret was inspired by a world tour in 1906-07 and created a series of outdoor rooms at Standen, including a scented rose garden – the Rosery – and a lime tree walk, along with more exotic areas with bamboo, ponds and lush foliage.

More than ten years ago, a group of volunteers discovered the Beale family swimming pond while clearing out some overgrown bamboo in part of the garden. Following extensive research, the garden revival project began in 2012 and is one of the biggest that the National Trust has undertaken.

James Masters, head gardener at Standen, explains: ‘In the latter part of the twentieth century, Standen’s gardens saw alterations and replanting which covered or removed some of the original features. When I was first investigating the undergrowth in areas of the gardens I realised there was much more than met the eye.

Over the years our discoveries have included lost walls, a rock garden and rare and unusual plants all overgrown by the vigorous modern planting that had masked the original beauty of Margaret Beale’s design. So we were lucky to have a wealth of archive material that has helped us research how it would have looked, ranging from family photographs, maps and receipts, to Margaret’s garden diaries which she kept for over forty years. These have enabled us to piece it together and bring the garden back to its best.’

Among the garden features that have been restored are: the original swimming pond and rose garden growing Margaret Beale’s coveted China pink roses; a fine oak trellis rebuilt to the original design by Philip Webb; lime trees reinstated along Grandfather’s walk; 10,000 tulips including rare varieties; the kitchen garden and the original espaliered apple trees; views opened from the top terrace across to the Ashdown Forest and the medieval quarry face revealed alongside the drive, which inspired the Beales to build Standen in this location.

The £500,000 funding for the restoration project included generous legacies to the Trust for the purpose of garden projects and properties in Sussex.

A new exhibition about the garden and its revival will be taking place in the house from 6 May to 3 September and will include many of Margaret Beale’s original documents that were used for the restoration.
MAY MORRIS: ART AND LIFE
The William Morris Gallery is appealing for help through crowdfunding this landmark exhibition on the life and work of May Morris, the younger daughter of William Morris and a central figure in the Arts & Crafts movement of the early twentieth century. The appeal launches on 14 June on the Art Fund’s Art Happens site, the UK’s only crowdfunding platform for the museum sector.

May Morris was one of the most significant artists of the British Arts and Crafts movement. A designer, embroiderer, writer and teacher, she exhibited widely in the UK and abroad. Founded the Women’s Guild of Art and was responsible for creating some of Morris & Co’s most iconic textiles. May also participated in the early Socialist Movement and was instrumental in preserving and shaping her father’s legacy.

While the Gallery owns a number of key works by May, important examples are held elsewhere, including the National Museums of Scotland and Wales, regional museums and galleries, National Trust properties and university collections. If the campaign is successful, it can bring these works together for the first time, giving an unprecedented insight into May’s extraordinary life and career. The funds will also support vital conservation work on fragile objects included in the exhibition.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
The Society’s 2017 AGM took place at Kelmscott House on Saturday 20 May and was well attended. Chair Martin Stott gave a presentation noting some of the highlights and successes of the past year, including Edmund de Waal’s Kelmscott Lecture, The Unsung Muse exhibition by BP National Portrait Award winner Clara Drummond and Kirsty Buchanan, and the improvements funded by the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith project. He also thanked two trustees who were stepping down, Simon Hawkins and Penny Lyndon.

A short address was given by Jack Walsdorf, former President of the US William Morris Society. For the first time in the Society’s history there was a contested election for trustees, with members having the opportunity to vote electronically in advance or in person at the AGM. Jane Cohen, Rebecca Estrada-Pintel and Michael Hall were all re-elected, and Serena Dyer and Fiona Rose were elected as new trustees. Serena is Curator of the Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture (MoDA) and an historian of craft, design and material culture. Fiona has worked in corporate public relations and for the NHS and women’s health charities, and now runs her own online business specialising in Arts & Crafts interiors.

The meeting was followed by Elizabeth Carolyn Miller’s talk on William Morris & Radical Print which examined Morris’s print aesthetic in the context of the radical print culture of the late nineteenth century, from his early venture into printing in Commonweal, his own writings such as News from Nowhere and A Dream of John Ball, to the Kelmscott Press publications of his later years.

The Society’s annual report for 2016 is available to view or download from the website.

140TH ANNIVERSARY OF SPAB
The Spring 2017 edition of the SPAB Magazine celebrates its 140th anniversary with a cover illustration of Morris in a Kitchener-style pose. There is a short section on p5 with a photo of Morris, referring to his letter to The Athenaeum 140 years ago that sowed the seed for the establishment of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and to the setting up thirty years ago of the ‘SPAB’s hugely respected William Morris Craft Fellowship’.

The substantial Casework section – pp25-45 – draws attention to seven important cases with which the Society is currently involved.

On pp38-40 the editor Kate Griffin looks back on the early history of the Society, beginning with the inaugural meeting held on 22 March 1877 in the offices of Morris & Co at Queen Square, Bloomsbury and including a photo of Tewkesbury Abbey and a list of early members, including Ruskin, Carlyle, Burne-Jones, Milais, De Morgan, Watts and Holman Hunt. As Griffin puts it, ‘Morris worked tirelessly for the fledgling Society’. A list of nearly thirty Key Dates on p41 takes us from the founding to 2017, by which time 105 craftspeople have benefited from thirty years of the William Morris Craft Fellowship.

The origins of the Fellowship is described by the architect John Bucknell and its development by Philipp Venning, while Patrick Cormack writes confidently about its likely future.

On pp70-75 Lewis Proudfoot discusses his firm’s recent work on...
This summer, visitors to National Peter Faulkner St Alban’s cathedral, placing it in the restoration of the west front by the NATIONALENTST PROPERTIES, contemporary art, arts, crafts and architecture as part of its trust new art program run in partnership with arts council England since 2009.

For visitors taking a stroll through the gardens at Standen there is a new discovery to be made nestled in the trees. Bothy is a small folly-like space built by designer and maker Will Shannon, using the Arts local materials and traditional handcrafted skills to reflect upon the radicalism, ethos and philosophy of the movement. Will’s inspiration for the project came after spending time at Standen last autumn where he soaked up the atmosphere of the Beale’s family home and grade II listed gardens. His research led to materials being sourced from within a 25 mile radius of Standen, including the four local elements of sandstone, Sussex bricks, handmade clay tiles and local sustainable timber. Whilst Will is a skilled designer and maker, he still describes the building as made by the hand of the professional amateur. Bothy was constructed at Standen with the help of volunteers. nationaltrust.org.uk

REWILDING MORRIS
On 18 February Phillippa Bennett gave a lecture at Kelsmcoft House considering how in his last romances, the fantasies Morris wrote in imitation of medieval prose towards the end of his life, Morris’s thought anticipated current debate around wilderness and wilderness. Before The Story of the Glittering Plain, in News from Nowhere wilderness and wilderness is appreciated as part of the extended ‘garden’ of the land, as expressed by the old man Hammond: the forests a resource of timber; the mountain ‘wastes’ of use for sheep farming. In his 1877 lecture ‘The Lesser Arts’ Morris had written ‘the land is a little land… England, expressing the sense that to come home is to come out of a wild space, and even in Iceland Morris expressed an ambivalence about the wilderness.

Phillippa argued that in the Last Romances Morris is coming to terms with wilderness and wilderness. Thus in The Story of the Glittering Plain ‘At last he (Hallblithe) looked, and saw that he was high up amongst the mountain-peaks: before him and on either hand was but a world of fallow stone rising ridge upon ridge like the waves of the wildest of the winter sea’.

She cited a number of recent publications concerning wilderness and a concern for a rewilding of the planet. For example in Feral George Monbiot makes us think what it is to rebuild ourselves through a reinvolution with the natural world, or ‘to engage with and delight in the natural world’. Mark Bekoff in Rewilding Our Hearts writes of ‘appreciating, respecting and accepting other beings and landscapes for who or what they are, not who or what we want them to be’. Similarly in the Last Romances Morris is not assimilating or conquering wilderness in the manner of Empire but allows it to be.

In The Idea of Wilderness Max Oelschlaeger states that the ‘idea of wilderness is what anyone or group cares to think’, considering how the concept of wild nature has evolved with human existence. In the UK the National Trust was established in 1895, building upon the work of the Kyrle Society with which Morris was involved. To what extent in the twenty-first century do such organisations give us a preserved conception of wilderness?

Monbiot writes that the ancient character of the land was very different from contemporary wilderness, in the manner conceived by Daniel Pauly in 1995 as Shifting Baseline Syndrome – which in turn affects our judgement of what is the normal state of nature and therefore how to restore it. These are not the wild spaces of a century or more ago.

Wilderness has also, problematically been conceived as different to us. Thus in Ecocriticism, Greg Garrard cites how at Yosemite National Park ‘wilderness’ has been preserved by expelling the Ahwahneechee Indians and the white miners who lived and worked there. It had previously been ingrained in Judaeo-Christian tradition, that nature was valueless until humanised: something to be endured rather than loved or embraced.

The poet Gary Snyder of whom it has been said ‘if Ginsberg is the Beat movement’s Walt Whitman, Gary Snyder is the Henry David Thoreau’ is a deep ecology movement philosopher and ecologist. For him ‘Wild is the process that surrounds us all, self-organising nature’.

Morriss was already thinking such things through in the late nineteenth century.

In Child Christopher & Goldilind the Fair Oakenrealm is a kingdom of trees, where a squirrel can leap from tree to tree without touching the ground, while in The Water of the Wondrous Isles for indeed he entered it (the wood) and they that had brought back tales wild

and confused thereof. From learning to flourish within this and other challenging spaces Birdalone goes on to create a new, revitalised society.

In *The Story of the Glittering Plain*, symbolically it is a raven rather than a dove who says things will be alright. Wilderness is intrinsic to completing oneself. In *The Well at the World’s End* and *The Sundering Flood* it is implied that we are not fully developed unless we embrace that discomfort, that challenge.

To be in a wild state invokes gratitude, wonder and a sense of emotion. It is *How we live and how we might live* as opposed to *capitalism*, which takes away our right to be wild. Eroticism is part of the wildness, thus we have Goldilind bathing and drying herself unclothed, or Birdalone travelling unclothed. Moral constraints are released and erotic encounters possible. So ‘they two looked in together and saw… the strange shadows that the moon cast from the settle on to the floor. Then Birdalone drew in her love, and went about lighting the candles and quickening a little cooking fire on the hearth, till the yellow light chased the moon away from the bed of their desire.’

In 1872 when trying to pen a novel, Morris wrote of it ‘tis nothing but landscape and sentiment’. This is the man who according to Shaw was ‘unmanageable in a drawing room’. In *News from Nowhere* the symbolic figure Ellen critiques novels, where ‘towards the end of the story we must be contented to see the hero and heroine living happily in an island of bliss on other people’s troubles; and that after a long series of sham troubles (or mostly sham) of their own making, illustrated by dreary introspective nonsense about their feelings and aspirations, and all the rest of it.’

Readers get irritated with the *Last Romances* because of the language; there is a wildness in Morris’s writing – including awful punctuation – and he confronts us with the immediacy of words. The use of present participles in the sentences convey the immediacy of the landscape. There is also a natural sense of the romance as a political form, as suggested by the literary theorist Northrop Frye.

For Monbiot being ‘ecologically bored’ informs his desire to engage with the wilderness in the form of rewilding, the pulling down of fences, the reintroduction of missing plants and animals. For Bekof rewilding is a call to action, but possibly within our own lives. But for Morris we have to plunge into the enchanted wood and through to the promised land beyond: *Socialism: The Ends and the Means*. Philippa is the author of the 2015 book *Wonderlands: the Last Romances of William Morris* and delivered the 2006 Kelmscott Lecture, *The Last Romances and the Kelmscott Press*. 
Calendar

MORRIS EVENTS
Please see the annual Events leaflet enclosed with the Magazine for forthcoming events organised by the Society. We would particularly like, however, to draw members’ attention to the following:

MEMBERS’ GARDEN PARTY
Kelmscott House, London
8 July, 2-5 pm
All members and guests are welcome. There will be tours of Kelmscott House during the afternoon – spaces are limited and members are advised to contact the WMS office to reserve places on a tour.

‘AS IF I MYSELF SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND’: WILLIAM MORRIS IN ICELAND
Kelmscott House, London
23 September, 2-15 pm
A talk by Lavinia Greenlaw, poet and writer of fiction and non-fiction, whose books include Questions of Travel: William Morris in Iceland.

DESIGN AND CRAFTSMANSHIP IN THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES
Kelmscott House, London
14 October, 2-15 pm
A talk on David Mellor Design’s past history and current projects by Corin Mellor, its Creative Director.

THE 2017 KELMSCOTT LECTURE
REBEL CROSSINGS: WILLIAM MORRIS AND SOCIALISM IN BRISTOL AND MANCHESTER
Kelmscott House, London
28 October, 2-15 pm
This will be given by internationally renowned historian of feminism and radical social movements, Sheila Rowbotham. Sheila will draw on her latest book Rebel Crossings: New Women, Free Lovers and Radicals in Britain and the United States, which relates the intertwining lives of four women and two men as they journey from the nineteenth to the twentieth century from Britain to America, and from Old World conventions towards New World utopias. The lecture will explore the influence of William Morris on the thinking and politics of these six radical pioneers.

Pre-booking for all events is strongly advised. Book online at williammorrissociety.org or email events@williammorrissociety.org.uk

EMAIL BENEFITS
If you supply us with your email address you can receive the Society’s e-bulletins, which are sent out between issues of the Magazine with up to date news of the Society and other Morrisian developments as they happen, and a pdf of the US Society’s Newsletter.

To add your name to the list for either item please email Penny McMahon, Membership Secretary: membership@williammorrissociety.org.uk

EXHIBITIONS
ALBERT MOORE: OF BEAUTY AND AESTHETICS
York Art Gallery
to 1 October
Featuring more than 20 paintings and watercolours by York-born Moore, the exhibition includes examples of Moore’s youthful Pre-Raphaelite works as well as the
beautiful classical figures of his mature style
yorkartgallery.org

THE WEavers APprentICE
Dovecot Studios, Edinburgh
to 1 July
Commemorating the centenary of the deaths of John Glassbrook and Gordon Berry, this celebrates the legacy of their apprentices’ work, up to the current apprentice, Ben Hymers
dovecotstudios.com

ALPHONSE MUCHA: IN QUEST OF BEAUTY
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool
to 29 October
Around 100 works by the Czech-born artist, one of the most prominent of the Art Nouveau movement, including drawings, paintings, photographs and a rare sculpture, together with a selection of sculptures by his friend Auguste Rodin
liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

DESIGNING THE V&A
V&A, London
to 31 December
Through original drawings and photographs, this display highlights the artists, designers and engineers who created the V&A, charting the building’s transformation from the 1850s to today, culminating with the opening of the Exhibition Road Quarter
vam.ac.uk

PURPLE CLAY: CHINESE TEAPOTS FOR SCHOLARLY TASTES
V&A, London
to 15 September
Teapots made of purple clay (zisha) from Yixing, Jiangsu province, are particularly favoured by scholars in China; hand-made and unglazed, the teapots are prized for their ability to retain heat and flavour
vam.ac.uk

THE EDWARDIANS
Manchester Art Gallery
to 31 December
Works from the gallery’s collection illustrate the glamour, rural nostalgia, evocative landscape and the city of the 1900s, the sparkling point between the Victorian and Modern periods
manchesterartgallery.org

MAY MORRIS: ART AND LIFE
William Morris Gallery, London
7 October to 28 January 2018
Whilst the gallery owns a number of important works by May Morris, this exhibition hopes to bring together important examples held elsewhere including the National Museums of Scotland and Wales, regional museums and galleries, National Trust properties and university collections
wmgallery.org.uk

‘COMING OF AGE’: RUSKIN’S DRAWINGS FROM THE 1840-41 TOUR
Ruskin Library, University of Lancaster
to 1 September
A vivid visual account of the Ruskin family’s travels through France and Italy
lancaster.ac.uk

MONUMENTAL MURALS
Watts Gallery, Compton, Guildford
to 5 November
Showcasing GF Watts’s ambitious mural projects, focusing particularly on two rare, large-scale murals that he painted for private houses in the 1850s
wattsgallery.org.uk

LUCIENNE DAY: A SENSE OF GROWTH
Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester
to 16 July
Part of the nationwide Lucienne Day centenary celebrations. She was an enthusiastic gardener and plant forms inspired many of her textile designs
whitworth.manchester.ac.uk

REFLECTIONS: VAN EYCK AND THE PRE-RAPHAELITES
National Gallery, London
2 October to 2 April 2018
Acquired by the National Gallery in 1842, the Arnolfini Portrait informed the Pre-Raphaelites’ belief in empirical observation, their ideas about draughtsmanship, colour and technique, and the ways in which objects in a picture could carry symbolic meaning
nationalgallery.org.uk

EDWARD BAWDEN AND HIS STUDIO
The Higgins Bedford
to 28 January 2018
Bawden donated the contents of his studio to this gallery and through letters, photographs and works his studio practice is examined here.
thehigginsbedford.org.uk

COCKNEYS IN ARCADIA: CR ASHBE IN CHIPPING CAMPDEN
to 9 July
Court Barn, Chipping Campden
Includes the full range of Ashbee’s work from his Campden period, as a designer of furniture, metalwork, silver, jewellery and printed books
courtbarn.org.uk

DESIGN: HAND, HEAD, HEART
19 August to 19 November
Court Barn, Chipping Campden
Celebrates nine contemporary craftspeople who are distinguished in their field and echo the rich heritage established by CR Ashbee and his Guild of Handicraft.
courtbarn.org.uk

ERIC GILL: THE BODY
Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft
to 3 September
Within Gill’s work, the human body is of central importance; this major exhibition asks whether knowledge of Gill’s disturbing biography affects our enjoyment and appreciation of his depiction of the human figure.
ditchlingmuseumartcraft.org.uk

A BETTER, MORE BEAUTIFUL WORLD?
Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton
to 23 April
The first in a series of displays from the De Morgan Foundation; resulting from a new partnership that has made Wightwick the Midlands centre for the De Morgan Collection for the next ten years
nationaltrust.org.uk/wightwick-manor

INGENIOUS WOODWORK
The Wilson, Cheltenham
Until Autumn 2017
This new display includes decorative wood carving for furniture and ornament, intricate inlays and veneers and freestanding sculpture, featuring work by Ernest Gimson, Arthur Simpson, George Jack and others
cheltenhammuseum.org.uk

MASTER OF ALL TRADES: THE JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE 2017
Millennium Galleries, Sheffield
21 June to 8 October
Artists, makers and craftsmakers have this year been asked by The Big Draw in collaboration with the Guild of St George to investigate the theme of the artist as polymath
museums-sheffield.org.uk

Left: Rhéne, Aphonse Mucha, colour lithograph, 1896, © Mucha Trust, 2016. The young woman is shown leafing through a book of decorative designs.
Right: Woman Bending or Bath Mat, Eric Gill, Bath Stone sculpture, 1923, private collection.
Books

THE SHAPE OF CRAFT
by Ezra Shales
Reaktion Books, 272pp, £20 hb (Sept 2017)
reaktionbooks.co.uk
The author, a Professor of History of Art at Massachusetts College of Art & Design, explores considerations of authenticity, what we mean by a craft object and how that shapes our understanding of what craft is. His text ranges across contemporary makers and objects, from a Native American basket maker to people in India who weave things for IKEA.

JOHN LOCKWOOD KIPLING: ARTS AND CRAFTS IN THE PUNJAB AND LONDON
Edited by Julius Bryant and Susan Weber
Yale University Press, 600pp, RRP £50 hb
Special price to members of the William Morris Society of £40 with free UK p&p between 15 June and 31 July 2017. To receive the discount, use discount code Y1734 when ordering online or if ordering by phone: 020 7079 4900 yalebooks.co.uk
Published to accompany the recent exhibition at the V&A, this fully illustrated new collection of essays on John Lockwood Kipling takes us from his formative years as a student in Staffordshire, through his time as Curator and Collector at the Lahore Museum, 1875-93, and finishes with reflections on his return to the United Kingdom.

ART AND NATURE IN THE MIDDLE AGES
by Nicole Myers
Dallas Museum of Art, 136pp, £27.50 hb yalebooks.co.uk
Explores the theme of nature in the context of medieval philosophy, theology, and poetry through objects in the collection of the Musée de Cluny in Paris. The book provides an understanding of the symbolism and significance of motifs taken from the natural world, as well as the technical mastery of the medieval artisans who produced these remarkable objects.

ILLUMINATING WOMEN IN THE MEDIEVAL WORLD
by Christine Sciacca
Getty Publications, 120pp, £17.50 hb yalebooks.co.uk
The pages of illuminated manuscripts reveal the many facets of medieval womanhood from preoccupations with biblical heroines and saints to courtship, childbirth, and motherhood. While men dominated artistic production, female artists, authors, and patrons were instrumental in the creation of illuminated manuscripts. Featuring over one hundred illuminations depicting medieval women from England to Ethiopia.

THE NORSE MYTHS: A GUIDE TO THE GODS AND HEROES
by Carolyn Larrington
Thames & Hudson, 208pp, £12.95 hb thamesandhudson.com
An introduction to the world of the Norse myths with new translations by the author, who describes their origins in pre-Christian Scandinavia and Iceland, and their survival in artefacts and written sources, from Old Norse sagas and poems to the less approving accounts of medieval Christian writers.

LOST UTOPIAS: PHOTOGRAPHS BY JADE DOKSKOW
Essays by Richard Pare, Jennifer Minner
Black Dog Publishing, 128pp, £29.95 hb blackdogonline.com
Famous and less notable constructions at world exposition sites, in varying states of preservation and decay, are presented here, provoking the viewer to consider how idealistic feats of architecture can either succeed or disappear into obscurity.

ARC OF UTOPIA: THE BEAUTIFUL STORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION
by Lesley Chamberlain
Reaktion Books, 256pp, £20 hb (Oct 2017) reaktionbooks.co.uk
Offers a fresh look at the German philosophical origins of the Russian Revolution, themselves inspired by the French Revolution of 1789.

A DAY AT HOME IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND: MATERIAL CULTURE AND DOMESTIC LIFE, 1500-1700
by Tara Hamling & Catherine Richardson
Paul Mellon Centre BA, 304pp, £40 hb (Oct 2017) yalebooks.co.uk
Following the pattern of a day from early morning to the middle of the night, this book examines the profound influence that the domestic material environment had on structuring and expressing modes of thought and behaviour of relatively ordinary people.

REFLECTIONS: VAN EYCK AND THE PRE-RAPHAELITES
by Alison Smith, Susan Foister, Anna Koopstra
National Gallery London, 96pp, £14.95 pb (Oct 2017) yalebooks.co.uk
Following the National Gallery’s acquisition in 1842 of Jan van Eyck’s Arnolfini Portrait the young painters of the nascent Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood were drawn to van Eyck’s luminous palette, attention to detail, and refined manipulation of oil paints. The authors explore how the Arnolfini Portrait informed the Pre-Raphaelites’ belief in empirical observation, inspiring them to explore how everyday objects could be endowed with symbolic meanings.

A painted wooden wedding chest, c. 1888 with brass fittings, with Kipling’s name inscribed on front edge of lid © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection.

Follow the pattern of a day from early morning to the middle of the night, this book examines the profound influence that the domestic material environment had on structuring and expressing modes of thought and behaviour of relatively ordinary people.
How I came to Morris

DAVID MABB

As an artist I have been working with Morris wallpaper, fabric and more recently Kelmscott book design pretty consistently for eighteen years. I became aware of Morris by a fairly familiar route, or rather two routes. The first was through an awareness of Morris’ designs through their popular if debased dissemination, what I have later called Morris Kitsch: tea towels, mugs, note paper, etc, as well as mass-produced wallpapers and fabrics. The second route was through reading EP Thompson’s William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary, as I was interested in the history of the Left in Britain. Thompson’s book gave me an understanding of the development and importance of Morris’ political thought and activism. It was these two parallel routes or rather parts of Morris’ work that I began to consider when I first started reworking his designs alongside doing some fairly extensive reading of the quite significant bibliography on Morris. At that point I didn’t have an understanding of the relationship between Morris the designer and Morris’ politics; they even seemed rather contradictory.

My interest in Morris’ designs also stemmed from my earlier work on fabrics. I first bought fabrics to paint on as grounds during residencies in Nebraska and Alberta where the fabrics were particular to the place – Mid-West imagery and Canadian tourist tea towels, respectively. I found it helpful to work off a surface that already existed, as it provided a starting point. On returning to London I looked for materials which were English and articulated something of the context of where they were from. In John Lewis I bought one and a half metres of Morris’ iconic Fruit or Pomegranate fabric. I stretched the fabric and pondered. Morris’ fabrics are everywhere in England, cloaking, suffocating and fuzzy. In their mass-produced form they decorate the middle class semis of suburbia and country houses, providing a cheap simulacrum of Arts & Crafts living. Although in his own time Morris’ design represented a radical break with Empire Style and Neo-Gothic interior design, to me, as a modernist with an interest in Russian Constructivism and Bauhaus design, it seemed very conservative. In a struggle to make sense of it, I started to destroy the pattern with materials I had left in the studio, pouring resin, rubbing gold leaf, dripping varnish and smearing paint. The painting was lying flat on the floor, a bit like a Jackson Pollock drip painting, and like Pollock I walked on it, degrading it further. I was so successful in ruining Morris’ design that when I stood the painting up to look at it, the design had virtually disappeared. Realising that I had gone too far (to show that something has been taken away it’s necessary to represent at least a trace of what was there) I tried to get rid of some of the mess. But the paint and resin had dried and couldn’t be wiped, scraped or sanded off or in any way easily removed. Now the Morris design needed rescuing from its obliteration. I started painting, with white oil, over the mess and around what was left of the shapes of the twigs, leaves, fruits and flowers, which enabled the pattern to become visible again, silhouetted against the white, but now filled with messy residue.

By accident, I had created the process of removing parts of Morris’ design and juxtaposing them with new elements to alter and change their meaning. This process of inclusion and exclusion, selection and deselection enabled a rethinking and transformation of Morris’ designs. In my subsequent work I have painted out elements of Morris’ designs, bringing them into conjunction with other imagery to produce dialectical relationships with moments from the history of design, architecture and painting. These dialectical images (to paraphrase Walter Benjamin) allow the past to come together in a flash with the now to form new constellations, enabling us to reimagine the future. This possibility articulates the link between the two parts of Morris, his designs now often reproduced as kitsch and his later politics as discussed by EP Thompson.

David Mabb is an artist and Reader in Art at Goldsmiths, University of London
From the collection

**THE HISTORY OF GODEFREY OF BOLOYNE**

Curator Helen Elletson writes about one of the Kelmscott Press books held in the Society's collection at Kelmscott House: Of the several Kelmscott Press books within our collection, one that has a particularly interesting provenance and a fascinating story behind it is *The History of Godefrey of Bolyne and the Conquest of Jerusalem*. Printed in Troy type, with the list of chapter headings and glossary in Chaucer type, the Society's edition of *Godefrey of Boloyne* was one of six printed on vellum at Morris's Kelmscott Press in 1893. Priced at twenty guineas, the publication is extensively decorated with beautiful drawings by Morris for initials and borders. It is the first of the Kelmscott Press books to use the new printers mark designed by Morris. This was the fifth and last of the Caxton reprints and it was edited by Henry Halliday Sparling.

The Society's copy is inscribed by Jane Morris: "Amy Jane Tozer on her marriage from Mrs Morris Feb 14 1908". Amy Jane Tozer, née Carruthers (1867-1961), knew the Morris family well through her father, John Carruthers (1836-1914), a civil engineer and economist. Morris came to think highly of John Carruthers and there are a number of surviving letters from Morris to him, usually concerning their shared interest in socialism. Carruthers joined the Hammersmith Branch of the Social Democratic Federation in 1884 and Morris thought him an important member of their branch. He became an active supporter of the Socialist League and subsequently the Hammersmith Socialist Society. Carruthers also accompanied Morris on several trips, including to France and Norway. The Society owns a copy of Carruthers' *Socialism and Radicalism*, published by The Hammersmith Socialist Society in 1894.

According to the Kelmscott Manor visitor's book, Carruthers and his daughter Amy Jane stayed with the Morris family on 14 and 15 October 1894. This wedding gift demonstrates the regard in which Jane Morris held Amy Jane.

Godefrey of Boloyne has been in the Society's collection since the 1960s and, in 2004, we received another generous donation consisting of a small archive regarding the Carruthers family. It was thrilling to see within this archive Amy Jane's wedding present list – containing the Society's copy of Godefrey of Boloyne, enabling us to connect these two items. Other notable wedding gifts Amy Jane mentions in her list include an embroidery given by May Morris, a Doves Press book from Emery Walker, a Book of Hours from Sidney Carlyle Cockerell, a table runner from Katharine Adams, a picture from T M Rooke, and books by Morris from her parents. Amy Jane went on to present her copy of the Kelmscott Chaucer to the National Library of Scotland in 1960 and presented Dorothy Walker with books and gifts including a photogravure of an Edward Burne-Jones drawing given to her by Henry Holiday before her marriage.

Members wishing to view any aspect of the collection are welcome to do so, by contacting Helen Elletson at Kelmscott House. **

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