

I have beside me a slim volume of fifty five poems, by Jay Appleton (now aged 89) who will be known to many geographers and LRG members as Emeritus Professor of Geography at Hull or twice Chair of LRG. Before he retired, he tells me he consulted two Hull University academics, Philip Larkin and Andrew Motion (!!) who gave him the thumbs up on the writing of light hearted (by which he means metrical rhyming poetry). Most appealing to me, on reading his poetry, is the unassuming melding of geology, topography and feeling that pervades what he writes. Many of his landscape poems are infused with his thesis of Prospect and Refuge. Many refer to Shropshire where, as a boy at Shrewsbury School, he struggled with classics and gravitated towards geography. He is a man of great niceness with a dry attractive humour. I include here one of many of his poems that appealed to me. Others have a wider or more geographic purview. This latest volume is entitled *A Love Affair with Landscape* and is published (2009) by the Wildhern Press, 131 High Street, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 8HH. ISBN 978-1-84830-098-9. Others are *The Cottingham Collection* and the highly amusing *Grains among the Chaff*. BY

### SAINT MARY'S CHURCHYARD

Here in the heart of our community  
 A little haven of tranquillity  
 Struggles to hold modernity at bay  
 And keep alive a bit of yesterday.  
 And since the rule of nature still prevails,  
 The magic of this garden never fails  
 To generate a mood of harmony  
 Of peace, contentment and serenity.  
 Wood-pigeons fluting in the afternoon  
 Gently repeat their syncopated tune,  
 And squirrels, showing-off their expertise,  
 Practise their acrobatics in the trees.  
 A silhouette against the fading sky,  
 A blackbird sings an evening lullaby.  
 It is a recipe for happiness  
 When culture mingles with the wilderness.  
 The added bonus of a rustic seat  
 Contributes to the mood of this retreat,  
 And makes a comfortable place to sit  
 And think about the folk who planted it.

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## Landscape Research Extra

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### Contributors

Georgia Bennett  
 Hamish Reid  
 Evelyn Owen  
 Terry O'Regan  
 Philip Pacey  
 Brian Goodey  
 Martin Spray  
 Jay Appleton  
 Bud Young

### O'Regan regrets the Celtic Tiger

By Terry O'Regan

The Connemara rain fell vertically on my August holiday - and diagonally, even horizontally: at times it seemed to go out with the tide only to come back in 12 hours later. But without that Atlantic-flavoured rain the Connemara light would not light up your life, its sharp clarity would not bring a catch to the throat and give that extra glow to each plant, flower, rock, seaweed and to each white bungalow. And landscapes without the clouds are hardly landscapes at all.



Alcock & Brown landing site, not intentionally phallic? Nor a play on the aviator's name? Terry reassure me.

The sun was setting one evening as I made my way along the track over Derrygimlagh bog (centre), south of Clifden, to view the Alcock & Brown landing site (front page image). The Twelve Bens (centre top) were misting down on my left, Mannin Bay with Ardilaun (high island) shining up burnished silver on my right; by my side, dark bog holes, water lilies and rushes, patches of western gorse, heather and heath, turf sod stacks. Stress evaporated with the sweat from my brow as the brown bog landscape eased its way into the pink equally spongy landscape of my brain.

The mellow landscape slowly yielded up its colour to the cloak of night as the silver sun slipped away to New York and I reluctantly retraced my steps to the *Celtic-tiger*-mauled small town landscape of Clifden – a case study for landscape-in-the-round if ever there was one.

Players move through the encircling audience in a theatre-in-the-round. In the same way, landscape-in-the-round suggests itself as a useful descriptive term for the dynamic, interactive landscape envisaged by the ELC (and also by the LAI Landscape Circle Guide<sup>1</sup>) – the players and audience are interchangeable and the set is under continuous construction, de-construction, and reconstruction – a wise, creative, set designer always in the background.

Unplanned landscape change (where now the creative set designer?) amounts to little more than destruction. Clifden (centre lower) used to be wonderfully situated: a compact town, nestling in a

wooded hilly landscape, overlooking a picturesque inner estuary, a very attractive small harbour with old

stone warehouses: a town comfortable in its skin. The town hasn't moved, but it is an uneasy place now, having ignored its harbour context and turned its naked backside on its finest asset. A recent 'flagship' redevelopment containing a large supermarket, plus apartments and a partially underground three storey car park (modelled on Alcatraz) screams out to all and sundry 'Who gives a frig about landscape!' - particularly to those who travel in from Ballyconneely and Roundstone. This cardinal sin was not committed innocently, for the frontage does try to show some deference to the relict integrity of Clifden's streetscape -- but they don't really do irony in Clifden; the block features a large auctioneer's poster displaying – you guessed it – a panoramic very selective view of the estuary and harbour. It all reminded me of the shabby leftover film set of a long dead western!

The world envied us the brief reign of economic growth, *the so called Celtic Tiger* in Ireland. Let us hope they will equally envy us our recovery from a few self-indulgent and very expensive years of gross irresponsibility.

West Connemara is blessed with a bounteous, glorious landscape: Clifden sits in

the middle, the ideal holiday centre for visitors. Why was its simple landscape logic taken and smashed in a



blind fit of building frenzy? Where were the planners? It gets worse, for the 'flagship' was part of a well-armed flotilla. The urban mish-mash along the main road into Clifden has neither shape nor meaning – a soul less landscape of a universal urban sprawl edge. The planning and development process failed Clifden abysmally, but it must go deeper – in Ireland the process danced to the tune of many masters. Clifden is no longer a town – it is a question mark! Maybe there will be a silver lining to the collapse of the construction industry – more time to ruminate on missed opportunities. To be fair, Clifden is not the only Irish town with a question mark hanging over it – in the 1970's, 80's and 90's we rubbished our cities and large towns. With the turning of the century we turned on our small towns and village's with a similar rampaging vengeance. Now we are left with Big Urban Sprawl and Little Urban Sprawl – a brutal 'Tiger' legacy!

Small wonder that the following day I went back to the bog.

*"I live my best in the landscape, being at ease there; The only trouble I find I have brought in my hand. See, I let it fall with a rustle of stems in the nettles And never for a moment suppose that they understand."*<sup>2</sup>

#### TO'R Notes

*1 The Landscape Circle Guide (a way of observing and recording landscape) was published by Landscape Alliance Ireland in October 2008 and is available from the author. tjoregan@eircom.net*

*2 The Ram's Horn, John Hewitt*  
**All photographs by the author who may be approached for permission to reproduce high quality images.**

### NUCLEATED URBAN BLOBS AND ECO TOWNS

Following the media comment about new eco-friendly towns, I have found it difficult to distinguish campaigning for the global environment and scattering the landscape with blobs of built environment as an alternative to urban sprawl. Of course some of these potential eco town areas are visually degraded. And the UK desperately needs more houses (yeah!). Best perhaps to be naïve and accepting in 'a very good cause.' After all eco towns have all these plus points — you may think I am being ironic here:

- community heat sources, charging points for electric

- cars;
- all homes within 10 minutes walk of frequent public transport and everyday services;
- parks, playgrounds and gardens to make up 40% of towns;
- zero carbon buildings including shops, restaurants and schools;
- car journeys to make up less than half of all journeys;
- homes fitted with smart meters plus solar and wind generation;
- residents can sell surplus energy back to the grid.

#### From the internet:

The locations of four new "eco-towns" have been announced as part of scaled-down government plans. They are Rackheath, Norfolk; north west Bicester, Oxfordshire; Whitehill Bordon, East Hants; and the China Clay Community near St Austell, Cornwall. However, the developments — including 4,000 homes on the disused airfield at Rackheath, near Norwich, and 5,000 in the Cornwall town — must still go through the planning process. Housing Minister John Healey wants to see a second wave of at least six eco-towns and is making up to £5m available for

Of those not announced: Michael Fabricant says: "I oppose the location of a large eco town in Curborough which will, in effect, join Lichfield to Fradley in one continuous urban sprawl."

councils to conduct further planning work on proposals. Rossington near Doncaster and North-East Elsenham in Essex are still developing proposals for their sites. But before the announcement, shadow housing minister Grant Shapps, branded the scheme an "eco-con" and a "gimmick".

*"Many of these schemes are unsustainable, unviable and unpopular, but Gordon Brown wants to impose them from Whitehall irrespective of local opinion," he said. "All the low-flush toilets in the world can't make dumping a housing estate on green fields somehow eco-friendly."*

Meanwhile, Arun District Council was delighted with the news that the town of Ford would not be one of the chosen eco-towns. The council has campaigned against the town's inclusion on the shortlist and the potential urbanisation of the nearby countryside.

*My thanks to those whose words I take from Internet news sources.*

**BY**

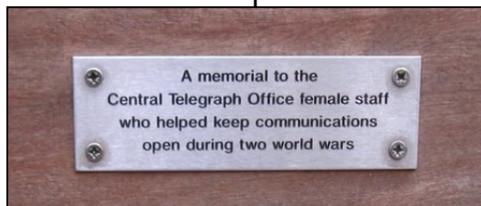
# FROM INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITIES TO FACELESS PLACES

by Brian Goodey

My slide collection (not fully digitised as yet) contains a large number of green/blue/pink wooden huts that carry faded adverts. for tobacco, newspapers and soft drinks but with no evidence of the betting and other opportunities that may have lain within. When the adjoining factory behind the gates and railings has closed, and been reduced to rubble, some still persisted as the popular gatehouse to the daily grind. Here I think, particularly, of Coventry where I carried out a street-by-street survey in the 1990's and where all physical memories of the major industrial employers were being swept away.

Together with workingmen's clubs, an array of redundant bus stops, and a few dedicated pubs, these little wooden huts remained the only popular evidence of clock-in daily lives that dominated our towns and cities until the post-industrial revolution hit. Nobody expects such huts to survive, their purpose gone, but the fragile urban landscape of workingmen's lives, reference point for the retired or discarded to show their grandchildren, did not require the bulldozer to eradicate them.

That a town or city WORKS requires evidence in the landscape, the urban motivation for coming together needs daily, lively, evidence that there are people behind the engraved nameplate to endorse the sense of an urban place. All too subtle or ephemeral for those responsible (who? you may ask) for the daily decisions that compose our urban spaces. Who cares how a new office occupier announces itself; who cares if the only public statement is a few lost souls grabbing a quick fag in a blustery cove? We all know, or should



know, that corporate identity is a matter of web sites, enigmatic truck messages, and media advertising.

If we go this route, then the urban landscape is doomed. Towns and cities are merely places with security-conscious offices and headquarters: it's all introverted, the place may look good on the web 'Home' page, but in reality it is a car-parked bastion on the edge of town.

Years ago I picked up a print by David Gentleman (he is the doyen of postage stamp designers) of Postman's Park in the City of London. Why Postman's Park?

Postman's Park still exists in the City of London, a memorial garden between King Edward Street, Little

Britain and Angel Street in the shadow of St Paul's. It was the focus of a range of postal buildings that once dominated this area of the City and it was where postmen – women, administrators, operators and others – might take their lunch break. It was a postal world, a mixture of fleeting figures from delivery and sorting, from administration, from what are now BT functions, gathering and distributing to a range of

buildings that now betray the ownership of financial institutions. The Post Office departed, to faceless buildings further north at Old Street and Mount Pleasant leaving a hidden landscape of postal vitality.

Today, Postman's Park remains concealed in several layers of London's history. St. Botolph's church, with its links to John Wesley, survives by its former churchyard. Look closely and the postal connection is still there. But what now attracts visitors is the brainchild of Victorian artist G.F. Watts (1817-1904) who superimposed on this former graveyard a gallery to the popular heroes of Victorian London who are commemorated in tiled tributes to their heroism.

In a covered arcade are the carefully designed tributes to

popular heroes who lost their lives saving lives – no postmen here, but public servants who merited a popular press headline and then might be forgotten. Great that the Watts Gallery has added an explanation and a contemporary Doulton tile. It is a peaceful park, with a ready supply of tourists dipping into a forgotten encounter between postal industry employees, past heroes, and an urban green space. Users cannot help but be stimulated by the chance of an hour's freedom, a chance to chat, a backdrop of nature and those strange Victorian tiles.

\*\*\*\*\*

Switch now to Royal Mail in London 2009. I spend some of my time at Mount Pleasant, the main London sorting office in Clerkenwell. Located almost over the Fleet River, it is a massive maze of a building with extensive yards behind; adjacent Royal Mail property and the inevitable secure bastion presentation of modern urban space. Pubs mark two corners, one tarted up for office worker presentation, the other still retaining some Royal Mail employees. Exmouth Market to the east has lost its cheap and cheerful café, but retains a pub near a betting shop, which, I am advised, has some Royal Mail clientele. Yes, there are strikes and fag breaks outside of one entrance to Mount Pleasant, but very few of the surrounding facilities suggest a postal clientele. Regardless of the very wide ethnic mix of the Mount Pleasant population, **there is little that would tell the casual observer that here is a major employer whose role spreads beyond the defended building.**

I am aware that community relations and group involvement are key to Royal Mail's policies, but evidence in the landscape is slim. Mount Pleasant is the major London postal centre, but there is no evidence as to its role, to the presence, below ground, of the postal underground network, or of the site's survival in war.

My great fear is that we are producing generations that no longer know how to read the urban landscape. Is this a problem? Yes, if future generations cannot understand how towns and cities have evolved, and how they might relate to the places in which we live.

The presence of postal structures — mail boxes, post offices records a time when the mail, prior to the e-mail, was king. We can discard this evidence, conserve or destroy, but at our peril. If urban places are severed from their

history then the licence for placeless developments is open for ill-informed planners and profit-taking developers.

I am not out for the conservation of everything or retreating to the past. But if sense of place is

recognised as a key factor in the development of our environment — as most policy guidance suggests — then we must retain sufficient of the past that resonates with the population to ensure that oral history carries past places into the future.

Postman's Park will be fine, it is City of London and on the tourist routes. But for most industrially related places there's very little public consciousness of the worlds we have inhabited. Aged former workers moan at home, young planning staff has no link with their interests and concerns.

**Places represent a living history for people of 15 – 75, yet planning officers consider**

**a time-span of 25 – 40 and members largely to the next election. A broader time perspective is desperately needed. BG**

*The author, an LRG member, is Chair of the Postal Heritage Trust and has worked extensively in urban landscape interpretation*



## A 1950s HARVEST LANDSCAPE

I come back endlessly to the subject of bales. They seem to me to inhabit otherwise empty fields. This year and indeed last (though I was too lazy to get out of the car and take the photograph) I came across sheaves of corn, wheat actually, in a Devon field at Winkleigh. I once helped stack sheaves into stooks (satisfying word, tricky work) and something older people use as a banner of their long experience of English agriculture. Nowadays to me as the owner of



a thatched house it comes as pleasure rather than surprise to see them, for I know that this is long straw wheat grown for thatching. On listed buildings you are paid 25% grant if you thatch with wheat but the economics don't work. By contrast water reed, strong and thick, will outlast wheat straw by a considerable factor (like 5-10 years). So my house is thatched with water reed from the Ukraine. How incorrect is that! I will report on water reed longevity and my own when I get to one hundred years. It will by then be looking tatty and coming up for renewal ... and myself?

BY

## DISSERTATION PRIZES

Annually LRG offers awards and cash prizes for dissertations submitted by Masters and Doctoral students in a wide range of landscape related topics. I include a short write up of three of those awarded in this issue. Others will follow.

### The morphological expression of rapid 'paraglacial' slope modification

by Georgia Bennett

The recent retreat of the glacier of Sandfellsjökull after 1945 has exposed steep slopes mantled in unconsolidated glacial sediment along the length

of the southern marginal foreland. This research assesses the morphological expression of rapid 'paraglacial' (for definition see below) modification of these slopes with the aims of:

- identifying the spatial pattern and conditioning factors of slope adjustment;
- modelling the temporal pattern of adjustment;
- and assessing the rate of modification and the length of the 'paraglacial period'.

In addition the research aims to identify the paraglacial landform succession within the debris-mantled slope system and the wider glacier foreland. *Paraglacial modification* operates primarily through the development of gully systems, which have incised slope deposits and redeposited sediment downslope in debris cones, and affected slope gradient and form. The dominant agent of sediment reworking is debris flow activity, conditioned primarily by a large intermittent water supply from the overlying ice lobe. Gullies develop through a cycle of deepening, widening and collapse, at rates as high as 297mm per annum attaining their maximum dimensions within about 37yr of deglaciation, implying an even shorter 'paraglacial period' related to gully incision than has been previously proposed.

Gully collapse and infilling represents the completion of paraglacial slope adjustment and a stage in the landform succession within the slope system that terminates in vegetated talus slopes. A time series of 'paraglacial landsystem maps' of the glacier of Sandfellsjökull illustrate the progressive and extensive increase in paraglacial landforms, notably debris cones, alluvial fans and glacial fluvial landforms from 1945 to 2007, and the paraglacial landscape evolution of the marginal foreland.

GB

### An investigation into the wind generation potential of the industrial areas of England.

by Hamish Reid Bsc.

Peaking fossil fuel production, and a consensus on the negative effects of their use has led to social and political demand for increased renewable energy. In the UK wind energy is widely perceived as the most technically advanced form of renewable energy with the best mid-term potential. The Government, through the Renewables Obligation has guaranteed the price of renewably generated electricity for the foreseeable future; this has generated a wealth of

wind farm planning applications. Research suggests that in the UK these meet with much local resistance, resulting in a large backlog of applications and appeals. Objections focus mainly on the visual impact of large grid-connected turbines, and on perceived audio impact. Some research and planning documents have hinted this opposition could be avoided by locating turbines in industrial rather than rural areas (TAN8 2005). This dissertation investigates the potential of such a strategy.

A GIS was developed to assess overall prospects of industrial areas in England, before studying, in detail, application of the strategy at a case study site. The social theory underlying this strategy was tested via two surveys, first of a community living near turbines, and then of organisations opposed to wind developments. The project concluded by investigating whether previous similar developments support this strategy.

Results estimated the potential capacity of industrial sites at 1245MW, with expected annual output of 2850GWh. This threefold increase in current onshore capacity could contribute 70% to government wind generation targets for 2010. Industrial buildings did not affect wind quality due to shape and scale differences between them and turbines. With respect to noise, findings suggest modern turbines 300m from residential and 150m from industrial properties are without negative impacts. Visual impact is difficult to mitigate, however results indicate it is more socially acceptable in industrial surroundings. Experience shows speed of planning and development are accelerated for such sites, without compromising production output.

The study concludes that the wind potential in industrial rather than rural areas may be preferable for developers and communities and thus more quickly realised, providing the kick-start needed to meet renewable targets for 2010.

HR

### Banksy in the City: Re-placing Street Art

by Evelyn Owen

Living and studying in the East End of London during 2008, it was hard to avoid Banksy. The elusive street artist and his work were everywhere – on the walls of buildings, at market stalls and galleries, in the pages of newspapers, and on the Tee-shirts of passers-by. Who was he? What was his message? Where was he going to strike next? With my mind on matters both urban and artistic, and as part of my studies for my MA in Cities and Cultures, I decided to investigate.

It quickly became clear that attempting to approach

Banksy directly would be futile – his policy of anonymity combined with his growing fame means that he very rarely gives interviews. Equally, it was not up to me to interpret Banksy's images – central to his philosophy is the idea that his work speaks for itself. Instead, as I began to think about street art and graffiti more generally, some more interesting issues emerged. Drawing on past and present geographical work on urban inscription, I found that although much current street art potentially gestures towards the idea of cities as spaces of emancipation, research has yet to fully investigate the ways in which this potential is



negotiated. Ideas about graffiti being seen as 'out of place' in the city clearly needed to be updated in the light of the new street art's popularity. Moreover, thanks to the emphasis on practitioners of street art, there seemed to be a significant gap in research regarding the

responses that it generates.

Banksy's ubiquity and controversial status made him an ideal focus in addressing some of these issues, by considering the question: what might responses to Banksy's work tell us about the politics of urban landscapes? Methodologically, I decided to approach the topic by analysing the media discourses surrounding Banksy and his activities. A simple glance at newspaper coverage of street art shows that Banksy has become a figure who is seen to embody the genre, and yet still inspires much heated debate. I examined material from a variety of national and London-based newspapers and magazines, looking for common rhetorical devices, themes and opinions, and the ways in which they were expressed and defended.

My initial findings were rather unexpected: on the surface, it seemed that it was not the question of *what Banksy does* that grabs people, but rather, *who he is*. The media use a wide variety of well-known characters – from the Artful Dodger to the Scarlet Pimpernel – in order to pin Banksy down to a knowable personality. However, on closer inspection, it became apparent that such characterisations, together with more direct references to the city itself, work together to offer a means of negotiating the contested meanings of urban spaces. Banksy acts as a kind of pressure point in discussions of the tensions produced by street art in the urban landscape, particularly with reference to the increasingly poorly defined line dividing the gallery from the street. The confusion about whether or not his practice is acceptable artistic and political expression, or simply

vandalism, reflects wider uncertainties about the status of art and rights to public space. But in general, despite the wide variety of perspectives and the anxious tone of much of the coverage, I found that Banksy was generally seen as being ‘in his rightful place’ on the streets of London – and this surely offers an encouraging starting point for those interested in exploring positive, alternative visions of the urban landscape.

EO

## A TALE TO TELL: TRAINING THE IMAGINATION

by Martin Spray

1

A recent conversation I enjoyed with *Extra's* editor briefly touched on the need to ‘loosen-up’ students’ thinking, before they could be expected to get to grips with such complicated matters as landscape design. It reminded me of an exercise I occasionally used when I taught landscape architecture students at the University of Gloucestershire.

“Places become meaningful when there is a story”, states Jules Pretty in *The earth only endures*. [1] This might be the motto of the Landscape Institute or R.T.P.I. - but that’s a different [er...] story. In *Ecologies of the heart*, E.N. Anderson [2] discusses the roles of myths and folktales in the transmission of environmental information. In both Australia and California, he notes that these “function as, among other things, devices to teach the young about the environment. [...] Children learn myths that include the travels of culture heroes around the water-holes in the territory. For these desert people, [...] a list of water holes is a great deal easier to memorize if it is embedded in a racy story with lots of sex, violence, and religion.”

I suspect that interpreting landscape is, like much else humans do, a game of storymaking and telling. Curiously, the example of landscape as story most familiar [i.e. still slightly so] to many in the West is the ‘songline’ of native Australians. Readers of the Welsh *Mabinogion* wonder tales [3] can [I’m told] still – as it were – follow some of the action on the ground, and such experience is probably widespread around the world. However, closer to what I’m thinking of here is more like the unsophisticated and un-literary storymaking of a child – or an adult – at play.

Professionals and academics tend not to tell stories. Such serious folk have put play aside: or, if you agree with Johan Huizinga [4] that we are *Homo ludens*, the

ape that plays, think they have, but really *haven't*. Studying landscape is a serious matter. So is planning and designing it. But could it be that [to use Donald Winnicott’s title [5]] playing and reality have become a bit too separated? Maybe landscape has been drawn too far into the scientific discourse that is much more suitable for the study of *land* as geographical, environmental, ecological, economic, etc., processes and events?



The above composite image, not a stone, Martin, but two irresistible details of landscape. First correct answer on a post card for £10 please to the Editor. What and where — the more detail the better! (I have just been listening to a BBC radio 4 programme “Round Britain Quiz” which poses the same style of mental cross overs!)

2

I used to keep a box of stones handy for ice-breaking at the starts of some of the modules I taught, by an exercise in [possibly] interpretation, and in [certainly] fantasizing. Each pair of students was asked to examine a stone for a few minutes. They were then told it was not a stone, but a model of a piece of landscape somewhere on Earth / in the universe. They were asked to reexamine their object, for a quarter hour or so, and then be ready to describe it: its

topography, climate, vegetation [if any], landuse and settlement pattern [if any]. They were asked the scale of the model, and where in the world / universe such a landscape was to be found; and lastly, what it was like to live there, and if they would take a holiday there. With a bit of prompting by ‘silly’ questions, the exercise worked well.

I’m not pretending this is an especially good way to break ice, but when I was later able to play the game [which I admit it was] with other types of student, feedback was encouraging. I think it helped some of them into the deep ends of their imaginations – waters often left undisturbed. I asked for descriptions and rationales to be as ‘realistic’ as possible. They were usually very sensible. I sought, of course, a show of 21st. century imagination, not [say] of the imagination of Anton van Leeuwenhoek, who looked down his microscope at a grain of sand, and drew “a ruined Temple [...] and two images of humane shape, kneeling and extending their arms to an Altar”. [6]

Chunks of eroded limestone and sandstone were fairly easy, once imaginary colour was added. The ‘easiest’ stone to tell a story about was a piece of North Wales slate, patterned by pale lines, some at right angles. This was field patterns, city blocks, road networks, Nazca lines [or Richard Long gone wild!]; it was a few metres or hundreds of kilometres long. A map-lichened pebble was variously a moss garden, patch of rainforest, exotic veg patch, or [once] a coral reef [living there was tricky]. Our conversation was especially effective when members of a pair saw very different landscapes, as in these lichens.

Of course it was mischievous. And I should have specified learning outcomes and made a risk assessment [stones+feet=!], and the rest of the edugarbage. But that is the main point: such correctness would probably have negated the purpose. Of course it was supposed to be fun even if it was also to be ‘real’. Isn’t education [both teaching and learning] supposed to be enjoyable?...

Any legacy of The Stones is unknown. Maybe some children had more interesting bedtime stories as a result....

3

Writing that has reminded me of the grumbles I shared with a colleague, when [yes: a long time ago] we interviewed prospective students. These were mostly at the A-level stage: when, for many, ‘education’ had wilted both imagination and conversation. Their thoughts were kept within close horizons. “*Pour inventir il faut penser à côté*”, said Étienne Souriau. Kids are innocent de Bonos, their thoughts always jumping sideways. “If only”, said my designer friend, “we could recruit straight from the

Primary Schools!” [7]

Notes

- 1 J.Pretty [2007] *The earth only endures. On reconnecting with nature and our place in it*. Earthscan.
- 2 E.N. Anderson [1996] *Ecologies of the heart. Emotion, belief and the environment*. O.U.P.
- 3 *The Mabinogion*, e.g. the translation by G. & T. Jones in ‘Everyman’ edition.
- 4 J. Huizinga [1944, 1955] *Homo ludens. A study of the play element in culture*. Beacon Press, Boston.
- 5 D.W. Winnicott [1971] *Playing and reality*. Later ed. Penguin.
- 6 Michael Welland includes the drawing from *Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc.* 1703 in the fascinating *Sand. A journey through science and the imagination*, O.U.P. 2009.
- 7 I think the quotation is from French aesthetic philosopher Étienne Souriau [1892-1979], though it is commonly quoted as by Enistein. While trying to check that, I found this reassuring comment: “*Le storytelling permet de penser à côté.... Quelle sont les histoires qui changant une vie?*”

MS

## MR BLAKE’S GARDEN & TENNYSON ON EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

by Philip Pacey

Tennyson’s *The Princess* is a poem of seven sections sandwiched between the lengthy Prologue and a shorter Conclusion. The Prologue sets the scene: the owner of a great house, Sir Walter Vivian, opens his ‘broad lawns...to the people’ —

*his tenants  
and half the neighbouring borough with their  
Institute,  
of which he was the patron.*

The narrator is staying as a guest of Sir Walter’s son, also Walter; young Walter shows off the house to his guest in the morning, and then they wander into the park and meet up with five other university friends, Walter’s sister Lilia, Aunt Elizabeth, and various ladies. After surveying the activities, they settle down in a quiet corner amidst some ruins and make up a story, a ‘summer’s tale,’ to which each of the seven young men contributes one part.

Before the story-telling begins, Lilia complains

against male domination and yearns to be a princess who —

*Would build  
Far off from men a college like a man's,  
And I would teach them all that men are  
taught;  
We are twice as quick!*

It is decided that Lilia is to be the heroine of the story, and, in gratification of her wish, to 'make her some great princess, six feet high, Grand, epic, homicidal', and the founder and Head of a women's college such as she has dreamt of. Thus, there can be no doubt that the scene described in the Prologue commended itself to Tennyson not only as a spectacle but because it represented, however briefly, an opening of the doors of the Mechanics' Institute and a bringing out into the open — and into the presence of women and children — education normally restricted to men.

I'm all for this; but if I am honest I have to admit that what the scene excites in me is a (probably boyish?) delight in its depiction of 'The Machine in the Garden'. And I recall once again 'Mr. Blake's Garden', a full page illustration in my father's copy of *Highroads of Geography: Book I. – Sunshine and Showers*, published in 1914. The picture, from a drawing by E.H.Fitchew, is of a large garden; a house is visible in the far distance; beside a lake runs a steam train on a model railway; also visible are a waterfall, a working model watermill, and high up on a pole a wooden soldier with long arms which revolved in the wind. The watermill and the wooden soldier are also illustrated by line drawings in the text. Two children can be seen in the larger picture — a boy and a girl — and both feature in the text, in which Mr. Blake shows them around his garden ('Come and see my garden'... 'Most boys and girls like to see my garden. I made it many years ago for my little grandson'). And it becomes apparent that he had designed these features into the garden in order to demonstrate the powers of water, wind, and steam.

'Mr. Blake's Garden' is an image which has been lodged in my brain through almost all of my life; the scene conjured up by Tennyson transfixed me when I first read it, close to retirement, at the onset of old age. Both envisage a harmony, of Nature and Industry, which I have yearned for, delighted in when I have caught glimpses of it, tried to create, and mourned the absence of. But also, both depict the *opposite* of a Garden of Eden, not as a Wasteland, but as a Garden in which boys and girls, men and women, are positively bidden to eat from the Tree of Knowledge; as in Botanic and Zoological Gardens, but with a broader curriculum. A pastoral polytechnic; landscape as university.

PP

## INTERESTING LAND AROUND VILLAGES

It is well known (isn't it?) that each generation has to rediscover the findings of its predecessors. Any work or mapping of an area has within 30 years become lost in some or other authority's archive as they moved office or were dissolved and reconstituted, restaffed



and down sized. So it is with information in LRExtra. How many readers will remember (still less lay their hands on) issue 20 of summer 1996 in which the editor made a neat, even pleasing little discovery which his predecessors in the 60s had almost certainly also discovered. Here to remind you is the horse trodden slope terracettes even anastomosing (as if plaited) terraces, that immediately identify overstocking of horses. Widely seen on steepish fields at the edge of villages this kind of ground has a pleasing historic quality and in some places may reflect the keeping of trade based drays and cobs. Since 1996, these little terraces have developed from line based contour terraces to strings of linear mounds (with a net of anastomosing horse tracks). Of course if this information appeared in an academic journal it would never be lost (though it might never be found).

BY

The views and opinions in this publication are those of the authors and the senior editor individually and do not necessarily agree with those of the Group. It is prepared by Rosemary and Bud Young for the Landscape Research Group and distributed periodically to members worldwide as companion to its refereed main journal *Landscape Research*.

Editorial enquiries:

**Bud Young**

**Airphoto Interpretation,**

26 Cross Street Moretonhampstead Devon

TQ13 8NL

or emails to

young@airphotointerpretation.com



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*Nice at Exeter University Library to come across copies (the last issue?) of the publication, The Landscape Journal, and there find Ken Taylor's 1992 paper A Symbolic Australian Landscape: images in writing and painting. Who can tell me what happened to this pleasing journal?*