

THE NEW GLADSTONE REVIEW

an occasional e-journal

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

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Editorial

The fact that the last Issue of the Review was dated October 2022, nine months ago, might have led some readers to assume it had succumbed to unremitting economic and social pressures and permanently ceased publication. Not so: I run this project at a financial loss anyhow. The hiatus in publication has been largely due to poor health, which medication has partly ameliorated, but will I hope soon be addressed more effectively by a form of 'keyhole surgery.' The NHS strikes have doubtless contributed to the delay in the latter - but *hope springs eternal in the human breast*.

In my last editorial I wrote '*The currently unrelenting turmoil of life – from crises of political, economic and constitutional nature, and from environmental, international military and cost of living challenges – leave many throughout the world utterly perplexed.*' If anything, matters have got worse both globally and in Britain, leaving most of us feeling utterly impotent to change matters at the political level, although one's conscience might be eased by responding to the many local needs.

I am most grateful for two contributions to this issue: firstly that by Penny Young, who has always donated regular, much appreciated, book reviews – this time of one by Julian Barnes. Then, Margaret Barker has kindly given me permission to reproduce an article by her late husband, David, which I came across in his beautifully self-published (2014) collection of essays and poems. Despite several recent changes (Brexit, war in Ukraine, cost of living etc), his pithy, provocative style (and underlying humour) makes this an effective piece of polemic.

I hope to maintain a higher frequency of publication of this Review in future. But I would also welcome more visitors to the book room, which is much appreciated by my 'regulars,' e.g. see Recommendations at www.gladstonebooks.co.uk. It is surely worth a visit from all genuine browsers in traditional second-hand shops, with its hand-picked collection of classical, stimulating, unusual and rare (including antiquarian) books –all at modest prices, and with no pressure to make purchases.

BM

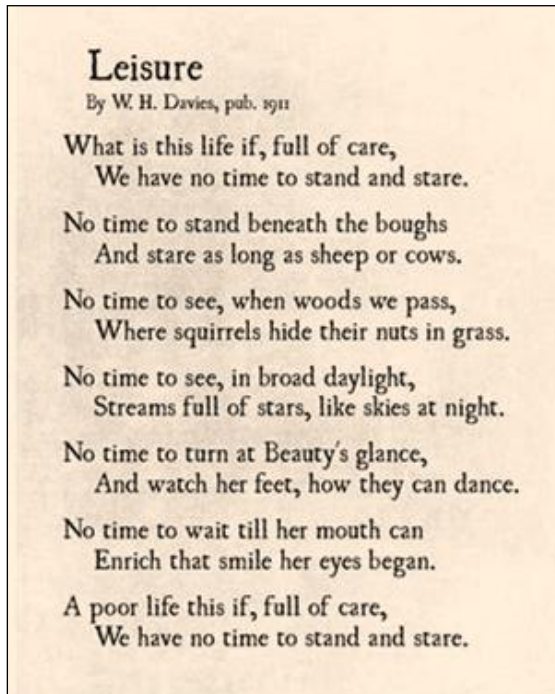
W H Davies: the Super-tramp

Even people who would claim no knowledge or interest in poetry might well recall the lines:

What is life, if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?

Assuming this to be mere doggerel, they might even find themselves uttering them if caught slacking when resentful colleagues are getting on dutifully with their allocated tasks. Yet William Henry Davies's poetry in its totality earned him the plaudits of many distinguished writers, such as George Bernard Shaw. In fact, with the title *Leisure* (1911), the full poem became one of his best examples of 'nature poetry,' revealing a sense of his identity with the natural world and, it strikes me, a simple joy

in his immersion in its timeless beauty. Some might regard it as naive and sentimental, but even so a merit of that kind can unlock suppressed deeper-feelings to a wide readership.



Unlike most leading contemporary poets, such as T S Eliot, Siegfried Sassoon and W H Auden, he was born into poverty and deprivation. His father kept a pub in Newport's docklands (a notably unruly district) but he died when Davies was just three, and when his mother remarried he was left in the care of grandparents. But he was often in trouble (involving fighting and robbery), which led to the police birching him, a punishment his grandmother endorsed, describing him as *a good for nothing tramp*.¹

His only close school friend, a studious boy called Dave, stood out from others – and the two of them spent hours staring out to sea, dreaming that it might be the way to escape their oppressive life styles. The friendship was cut short when Dave moved on, but not before he had encouraged Davies to read poems by Byron, Shelley, Marlowe and Shakespeare – which clearly had a profound effect on him.¹

After a brief spell as an apprentice to a picture-frame-maker, and the death of his grandmother, at age 22 years and with only a few pounds to his name, he decided to begin a new life in the USA. But that ambition was not realised because the experience seemed to have no influence on his future success. *He lived and travelled with hobos, and did no work worthy of the name. He was cut off from home and every human responsibility, read no books, met no people of character or consequence, nor did the scenery of the United States find any reflection in (this) poet of nature.*¹

But he befell an even worse fate, when *en route* to the gold-diggings at the Klondike, he accidentally fell under a moving train, severing his right foot so that his leg had to be amputated below the knee.⁴



Although the troubled time he spent in America would surely leave many people intent thereafter on pursuing a more settled life, W H Davies was an exception, for while he had talent for poetry he remained for long unaware of this within himself through lack of education and association.

Davies eventually returned to Newport, and then moved to London, where he lived in common lodging-houses, pedalling wares and preaching on street corners. But at last, gaining in confidence, he found a publisher, Jonathan Cape, for his poems and, between 1905 and 1939, published several slim volumes of poetry. It was during this period also that Davies was befriended by the poet Edward Thomas and also got to know George Bernard Shaw, the distinguished playwright who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1925.³ In 1923, he married Helen, after their meeting at bus stop in a poor part of London: they had no children.

Davies' reputation had by this time become established, but realising his lack of financial security, Shaw urged Davies to write his autobiography, and to call it the *Autobiography of a Super-tramp*, doubtless echoing his own play *Man and Superman* (1903). In his Preface to the book, Shaw wrote: *I do not know whether I should describe our super-tramp as a lucky man or an unlucky one. In making him a poet, Fortune gave him her supremest gifts: but such high gifts are hardly personal assets: they are often terrible destinies and crushing burdens. ... (Even so) Mr Davies is now a poet of established reputation. He no longer prints his verses and hawks them: he is regularly published and reviewed.*³

He also produced a sequel to his autobiography, *A Poet's Pilgrimage*, four novels and numerous other prose works. The publication of his *Selected Poems* in 1985 revived much interest in the poet.⁴ It seems to me that his poetry is characterised by the realisation that perception of the world we experience is not just a matter of recording received data, like a camera, but interpreting it through the prisms of memory and reflection.

My own interest in his poetry, apart from a fascination by the way that from such humble and inauspicious beginnings he achieved such wide recognition among the literati as well as the casual reader, is that I spent my early childhood years, from 1940 until 1953, in Newport. My father, who had served in the 1914-18 world war, was drafted to the town to work at a flour mill, where he was a 'roller man' who maintained the heavy rollers that crushed wheat to flour.

Davies' and my lives just overlapped, and most of the local places he refers to near the town were those I frequented in my early teens. Many villages then retained airs of rural calm and revealed a pervading sense of continuity with the past. But the town itself had a reputation as a 'tough place,' and to this day, with its high rates of deprivation and crime, it has not been able to shake off that image. It has always been compared unfavourably with neighbouring Cardiff: and yet, although I have since invariably lived in much more pleasant and salubrious places, it is still 'home' to me.

Sluggard

A jar of cider and my pipe,
In summer, under shady tree;
A book of one that made his mind
Live by its sweet simplicity:
Then must I laugh at kings who sit
In richest chambers signing scrolls;
And princes cheered in public ways
And stared at by a thousand fools

Let me be free to wear my dreams
Like weeds in some maiden's hair,
When she believes the earth has not
Another maid so rich and fair;
And proudly smiles on rich and poor,
The queen of all fair women then;
So I, dressed in my idle dreams
Will think myself the king of men

The following are some verses of one of his poems referring to Gwent - the name of the ancient Kingdom of Gwent, now virtually synonymous with the county of Monmouthshire, of which Newport is the major city.

Although such poems may have little appeal to those unfamiliar with Gwent, all the named villages evoke images of halcyon days for me: some when I camped with the boy scouts, went to Whitsun outings with the Sunday School or accompanied my father when, as a lay preacher, he gave sermons at nonconformist chapels in the neighbourhood.

Caerleon was particularly interesting, being the site of a Roman amphitheatre, which is acknowledged as the best preserved example in Britain.' *Twm Barlum*, mentioned in several of his poems, is a well-known local landmark visible on the skyline for many miles, and is often seen as an ionic symbol of Gwent countryside.

But perhaps most distinctly memorable for me is the friendliness and gentle lilting accent of Newportonians – which some people say, even after my long absence from there and English parentage, is still detectable in my speech.

Below is a view of Twm Barlum, surmounted by the remains of a hill fort (the twm) built by the Silures, Celtic people before the arrival of the Romans.



Days that have been

Can I forget the sweet days that have been,
When poetry first began to warm my blood
When from the hills of Gwent I saw the earth
Burned into two by Severn's silver flood

.....
Can I forget the sweet days that have been,
The villages so green I have been in:
Llantarnam, Magor, Malpas and Llanwern,
Liswery, old Caerleon and Alteryyn?

Can I forget the banks of Malpas brook
Or Ebbw's voice in such a wild delight
As on he dashed with pebbles in his throat
Gurgling towards the sea with all his might?

.....
Thy water, Alteryyn,
Shines brighter through my tears
With childhood on my mind:
So will it chime when age
Has made me almost blind.

Sources of reference

Superscript numbers in the text refer to these.

1. *The Essential W H Davies (1923) selected by B Walters. J Cape*

2. *The autobiography of a Super-tramp (1908) WHD, J Cape*

3. *Collected Poems WHD (1921) J Cape*

4. *The National Library of Wales. (accessed 2023)*

<https://www.library.wales/catalogues>

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The Man in the Red Coat by Penny Young

During the lockdown of recent memory, the media became full of ideas for keeping ourselves entertained. Celebrities and others talked or wrote about the interests they were taking up to make use of the extra hours we'd been given – things they had never had time for before. Which set me thinking. And I remembered that years ago – maybe 50 years – I'd started reading Proust's *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* and got as far as volume 10 in the Chatto & Windus 12-volume paperback edition. I'd always intended finishing the last two volumes, but you know how it is. So now, here was my chance. And, of course, the inevitable happened: when I picked up volume 11, I realised I couldn't remember a thing. Nothing for it but to begin again at the beginning. Which I did. Some of it was heavy-going – oh, the endless introspections! – but a good deal of it (when he forgets about himself) enjoyable. So I now consider myself part of – dare I say it – an elite band for whom the mention of Proust gives a lift to the spirits.

I was pleased, therefore, when at Christmas I was given Julian Barnes' book *The Man in the Red Coat*, in which Marcel Proust puts in an appearance here and there, along with a cast of thousands. The book isn't about Proust, but it sets him in the milieu of his time, the Belle Epoque era in France, which Julian Barnes describes in one place as 'frenetic, rancorous, bitchy', and in another as 'decadent, hectic, violent, narcissistic and neurotic'. So who is the book about? It's about Dr Samuel Jean Pozzi, a Frenchman of Italian descent and the subject of a famous painting by John Singer Sargent (see next page), *Dr Pozzi at Home (1881)*, whose elusive character is symbolised in the portrait. Is it a coat, or is it a dressing-gown? Is he 'at home' (an ambiguous phrase), or is he within a staged theatrical setting?

Other hints or clues as to his life and character are contained within the portrait. Dr Pozzi was aged 35 at the time of the painting and was forging a career as a society doctor to the great and wealthy, building up a fashionable private practice, while at the same time pursuing an academic study of surgery (in particular gynaecology) and pioneering life-saving surgical techniques – adopting the aseptic and antiseptic methods of Pasteur and Lister, who he had met at a conference in Edinburgh, considerably reducing the death rate following surgical interventions; this at a time when one surgeon (an American at that) was horrified when requested to wash his hands prior to operating, exclaiming in outrage, 'Doctors are gentlemen, and gentlemen's hands are clean.'

It was Pozzi who wrote the first textbook on his subject, the two-volume *Treatise on Gynaecology*, which earned him international renown and remained the standard textbook in France into the 1930s and was translated into English, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian – and soon recognised worldwide as the standard text. He came to be recognised as 'the most eminent surgeon in France' – as he was described in the *New York Herald Tribune* – and received numerous awards and honours.

Four years after having his portrait painted, we find Pozzi on a visit to London in the company of two aristocratic companions, Prince Edmond de Polignac and Count Robert de

Montesquieu-Fezensac, for the purpose of ‘intellectual and decorative shopping’, and bearing a letter of introduction to Henry James from John Singer Sargent.

Two thoughts present themselves. First, what is a member of the French provincial bourgeoisie, brilliant doctor though he may be, doing in such exalted (and snobbish – and



expensive) company? And secondly, why leave Paris for such a purpose? To answer the second first: hard though it may be to believe now, London was regarded then as a cultural mecca for aesthetically inclined Parisians.

Pozzi was not only a medical man but a collector of paintings, objets d’art, books, coins and medals, tapestries and fine fabrics (from Liberty’s in London). And the fortune to pursue these interests was provided by his fortuitous marriage six years earlier to a young and very rich woman – Thérèse Loth-Cazalis – enabling him to live in grand quarters in central Paris and maintain his own

private consulting rooms there. The marriage turns out to be not happy, but Thérèse’s religious faith (she is Roman Catholic) does not allow for divorce and they continue to maintain appearances within their social circle, while Pozzi (as was not unusual at that time) conducted a number of affairs – indeed, became known as ‘an incorrigible seducer’, which may or may not have been aided by his professional life. Who can say. Different times!

How does Proust fit into all this? Pozzi was a friend of the Proust family, and Marcel’s younger brother Robert, pursuing a career in medicine, became Pozzi’s assistant (from 1904 to 1914). He was a brilliant surgeon too, and had the distinction of carrying out the first successful prostatectomy in France, in consequence of which the operation became known in medical circles as a proustectomy.

And what about the cast of thousands, whose lives are interwoven with that of Samuel Pozzi? Paris during the Belle Epoque was awash with artists, writers, poets, actors, opera singers, art lovers and collectors, socialites, aesthetes, dandies, aristocrats and would-be aristocrats – a list which includes Sarah Bernhardt (with whom Pozzi may or may not have had an affair), Oscar Wilde, Edmond and Jules de Goncourt (famous for their journal, ‘one of the great documents of the age’ – which, when shown to the young Marcel Proust, so he relates in his novel, depressed him so much he almost gave up writing). It’s the milieu of *A La Recherche*, its social whirl the blueprint for its unforgettable characters – the Guermantes, the Verdurins, the Cottards, M. Swann, Baron de Charlus et al.

Samuel Pozzi died in 1918, not from overwork or other exertions, but from gunshot wounds. France, like America, had enshrined in its constitution the right of citizens to carry firearms, but what was not taken into account was how much more murderously effective they would become. Ironically, Pozzi had become a leading expert in the treatment of gunshot and war wounds – both during the First World War and earlier (this was the age of duelling), when his own patients had been shot by their dissatisfied or mentally disturbed patients. Which was to be the fate of Dr Pozzi.

How to sum up such a complex character? Julian Barnes describes him as ‘rational, scientific, progressive, international and constantly inquisitive, who greeted each new day with enthusiasm and curiosity, who filled his life with medicine, art, books, travel, society, politics and as much sex as possible. Perhaps one could say, a man who exemplified the spirit of his times.’ Yet he remains something of an enigma: a family man with three children but a serial womanizer; a professional medical man who dedicated himself to improving surgical techniques and working to alleviate the suffering of the poor, treating anybody who needed his services, but also a society doctor and socialite benefiting from the acquaintance of the rich; a man of science and also a lover of art and beautiful objects, fine décor and fine living; a self-centred man yet a philanthropist; a man both full of charm yet perhaps a little repellent. A man of contradictions.

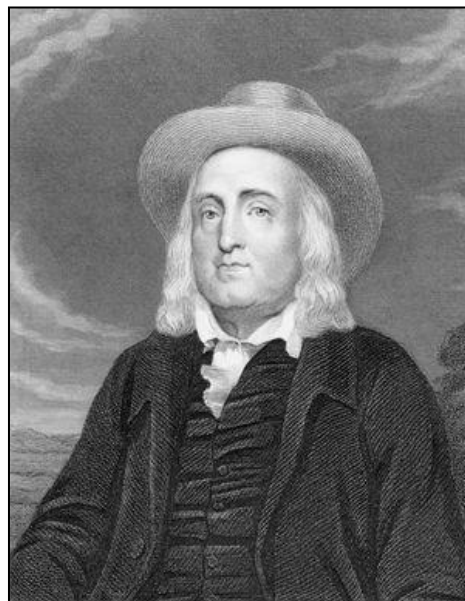
Julian Barnes describes biography as ‘a collection of holes tied together with string’. No one is completely knowable. But Julian Barnes and, superbly, Marcel Proust are recording angels, bringing to life the inhabitants and social mores of the time. Proust had his moment of revelation that time is not just linear, moving ever forward and the past lost forever; past times can live on, ever present through memory, through art, and through the printed page.

I am most grateful to Penny Young for producing another of her typically enlightening – and amusing – reviews. Penny is the former editor of 'Folio', the quarterly arts magazine produced in Southwell, and a regular contributor to the Gladstone Review.



Bentham's example of *Common Delusions*: review and a personal opinion

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) is often credited with formulating the ethical principles of utilitarianism, which were published in his *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789) and other books. In these he defined the principle of utility as *any activity or property of any object whereby they tend to produce pleasure, good or happiness, or to prevent the happening of mischief, i.e. pain, evil or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered*. Subsequently, utilitarianism as a fundamental ethical theory was developed by the philosopher John Stuart Mill and others, while Bentham's primary concerns turned to *the reform of existing laws by means of a science of law*.¹



Arguably, utilitarianism (expressed snappily as the aim of producing the *greatest good for the greatest number*) is the most commonly-used form of ethical reasoning, even though many whose actions seem to be motivated primarily by it are quite unaware of the arguments advanced by philosophers in its support. But many philosophers claim it is flawed and pays little attention to other criteria, such as human rights.

But several other of Bentham's works are less-often cited, despite their continuing, or increasing, relevance today. Here is one, under the title *Personification of Fictions*, quoted verbatim in *italics*.

Amongst the instruments of delusion employed for reconciling the people to the dominion of the one and the few, is a device employed for the designation of a person, and classes of persons, instead of ordinary and appropriate designations. Consequently, the names of many fictitious entities have been contrived for the purpose. For example:.

Instead of Kings or the King – the Crown and the Throne

Instead of Judges, or a Judge – the Court

Instead of Rich men, or the Rich – Property

Of this device, the object and effect is, that any unpleasant idea that in the mind of the hearer or reader might happen to stand associated with the idea of the person or the class, is disengaged from it. ...Instead of ... more or less obnoxious individuals, the object presented is a creature of fancy, by which, as in poetry, the imagination is tickled, (thus creating) a phantom which, by means of the power with which the individual or class is clothed, is constituted an object of respect and veneration.

In the first two (above) cases, the nature of the device is comparatively obvious. In the (third) case, it seems scarcely to have been (noticed, because) the motive and proficient cause of its prodigious importance is attached by so many (people) to the term property. It's as though the value of it were intrinsic, and nothing else had any value; as if a man were made for property, not property for man.

¹ Harrison W (1948) (Ed) *A Fragment of Government and An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. Oxford, Blackwell.

*Many indeed have gravely asserted that the maintenance of property was the only end of government.*²

For today's tastes, the language (which I have tried here to clarify) is rather archaic and pedantic, but his meaning now is surely even more appropriate to subsequent developments in national and global politics than it was 200 years ago. For example, in the world we now inhabit the majority of people's welfare and rights are at the mercy of the whims of a few people whose enormous wealth and power is based on playing the markets effectively for their own benefit and/or by inheritance. But the common assumption that 'that's the way the world works,' reflects Bentham's claim that such *phantoms* (like his example of the personification of *property*) have become the object of *respect and veneration*, i.e. rich people are admired for being freely able to exploit others – including most who are themselves the victims of this exploitation.

Although Bentham's first (two) *obvious examples* have taken new forms, the habit of attempting to attribute *any unpleasant idea in the mind of the hearer or reader* to an object of *respect and veneration* has grown in parallel with the number people and organisations seeking anonymity.' Some examples are:

UK politics

Number 10 and Downing Street – instead of The Prime Minister
The Treasury – instead of The Chancellor of the Exchequer

Overseas politics

The White House – instead of the USA President
The Confederation of British Industry – instead of the Governor
The Bank of England – instead of the Governor of the Bank

The Press

The Mail – instead of the Editor of this newspaper
The Daily Telegraph - instead of the Editor of this newspaper
The BBC – instead of the Director General

The Monarchy

Buckingham Palace – instead of the Monarch

In summary, Bentham's alleged delusions have two important consequences. Firstly, presenting individual's names as synonyms of supposedly neutral terms, which are claimed subject to random influences beyond their human beneficiaries' power to control, is effectively a form of brain-washing. Consequently, billionaires' greed and/or luck have become subjects of popular congratulation. Secondly, when major crises occur (financial, medical or environmental) the delusive devices are used to escape criticism for failure to use their power wisely or proportionately.

All powerful institutions (such as national governments, the popular media and inheritors of great wealth and privilege) are ultimately answerable to a nominated person or persons, so that, as Bentham averred, the increasing resort to using *phantom* titles seems to be a disturbing tendency to hide under their protective cloak: Two hundred years of 'progress' do not seem to have had much effect in reducing the extent of injustice.

BM

² Bentham J (1815) Constitutional Code. (included in *Works* (ed) J Bowring (1843), chapter on *Delusion*.)

Food Ethics Council celebrates its first 25 years

The Food Ethics Council (FEC) was established in 1998 to address the rapidly emerging ethical issues concerning food production, marketing and public health. It's about the principles dictating what counts as acceptable treatment of others in relation to food – from humane treatment of farm animals to looking after the environment, from human health to fair treatment of people in the food system.

FEC's stated aims were to;

- Review developments in food and agriculture within a sound framework of practical ethics, which addresses the principles of wellbeing, autonomy and justice with respect to consumers, producers, farm animals and the living environment
- Promote the incorporation of ethical thinking into decision-making in agriculture, food manufacturing and retailing.
- Produce authoritative, well-researched reports which highlight ethical concerns and make recommendations for action.



It was initially funded by a grant of £100,000 over three years from The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. With my academic background in the biological sciences and later in bioethics (represented e.g. by the establishment of Nottingham University's Centre for Applied Bioethics) I was appointed Executive Director. I ran the Council for its first five years from an office in Minster Chambers, Southwell (a mere stone's throw from my home and overlooking the 12th century Cathedral), during which I was responsible for writing and producing several detailed reports, which were all launched at the House of Commons, and gave the Council a significant public role on the political scene. For example, Lord Whitty, then Minister of Food and Farming wrote to me: *Your report is wide ranging and relevant to a number of colleagues in (my department), as well as other departments and agencies such as the Food Standards Agency. I am arranging for copies to be made to key officials here.*

Since my retirement as Director, Tom Macmillan and Dan Crossley have taken on that role, and continued to attract funding, address the constantly emerging developments which demand ethical assessment, and broaden contacts with those organisations with whom productive cooperation has been forged. Not surprisingly, when FEC reached its 20th anniversary it merited a large international conference in central London to celebrate its achievements and to support our efforts to address the ever-more complex issues that constantly arise.

This year, befitting an era of austerity, the celebration was downsized (limited to about fifty people) and concentrated on the processes of raising awareness of ethical concerns by individuals, organisations and governments. It did this principally by listening to, and then discussing, the presentations of three speakers, all under 25 years, namely, Christina (co-director of the campaigning organisation, BiteBack), Paige (sustainability executive at Sainsbury's) and Lucy (dairy farmer). On

that beautiful day, the main event was held outside at this fascinating eco-garden in Highgate, in a clearing that served as an arboreal auditorium, protected from too much sun by the canopy of gently swaying trees. As the Founder Director, I was allocated a front row seat – and was here (snapped unawares) looking up at the speakers on a platform appropriately built of sawn logs:

I was most impressed by the three speakers, all of whom presented their visions in an articulate, non-partisan and broadly-based manner. Now, reflecting on the last 25 years, it is gratifying to learn that our early efforts are being amplified by younger people who have the enthusiasm, energy and commitment to engage effectively with those who recognise the defects of the current food system but feel helpless to change it for the better. Experience suggests that seeing many of the problems through an *ethical prism* is a fruitful, and practical, strategy to bring about a kinder food system.

Of course, there have been many changes over the past quarter-century. The original emphasis on reports and recommendations, with working party meetings entailing face-to face meetings, meant that the detailed discussions involved much travelling. For example, I recall several key meetings in London, Birmingham, Oxford and Lancaster. These were conducive to deep discussion and debate. Now, most meetings are on-line, with obvious advantages, but also some significant disadvantages.



**WE'RE NURTURING
FAIR, RESILIENT
FOOD SYSTEMS
THAT RESPECT
PEOPLE, ANIMALS
AND THE PLANET**

Decisions about our food system are often made without sufficient **ethical consideration**, meaning they are likely to be short-term, single issue and not placed within the wider context.

At the Food Ethics Council, we consider things 'in the round'. We look at the **food system as a whole** and unpick the impacts of decisions on people, animals and the planet.

What we do:


- CONVENE AND NURTURE**
safe spaces for stakeholders to come together and engage in honest, productive dialogue.
- CHALLENGE**
'business as usual' by asking the hard questions and illuminating ethical tensions.
- INSPIRE AND SHARE**
thoughtful decision-making processes and positive, long-term solutions that tackle root causes.

Food matters.
From soil to stomach, food is deeply embedded in many of the biggest challenges we face today, from ecological and climate breakdown, to inequality and social justice. So, if we change the food system, we change everything.

Listening and collaborating are central to our work. For the past **25 years**, we have been working with **civil society, farmers, businesses and government** to build a better food system that works for everyone.

 Food Ethics Council




 Food Ethics Council

Our current projects:

FOSTERING BETTER BUSINESS PRACTICE	SUPPORTING A TRANSITION TO FAIRER FARMING	CULTIVATING THE FOOD CITIZENSHIP MINDSET
Our Business Forum is a trusted space for people in food and farming businesses to come together and learn from each other . By bringing together peers from across the sector and expert speakers in an inviting yet challenging space, we encourage frank sharing of insights and opinions. This gives executives the confidence to take positive action and shift to fairer, more ethical business practice.	Our current focus is on dairy . We're working with farmers, buyers and retailers to identify the key changes needed for fairer dairy systems, and are supporting people to implement these changes. Importantly, in order to make dairy better for animals and the planet, we first need to ensure that farmers themselves have a fair deal . Farmers are currently stuck on a treadmill , which is impacting their wellbeing and ability to make changes.	Current injustices in our food system mean that many people can't afford to eat well and have limited opportunities to participate beyond their wallets. But what happens when society shifts from a consumerist to a citizenship mindset ? We're building a world of food citizens, where people are empowered to make a difference and are able to access nutritious, sustainable, affordable food. Everyone has a role to play - we work with progressive businesses, food charities, community groups and citizens to build a food citizen world.

GET INVOLVED
www.foodethicscouncil.org
info@foodethicscouncil.org
[@FoodEthicsNews](#)
[@ukfoodcitizens](#)





For more information, see. www.foodethicscouncil.org

BM

The Pursuit of Wealth and Power

by David Barker

Every day of the week, month and year, without exception, enormous multi-wheeled trucks bomb round the M25 in both directions, up and down the M1, M5 and M6, east and west on the M4 and M62 and the same on the other motorways which escape my memory. It is certain that the same can be said of every major road on the European continent.

Everyone must have seen the trucks of Eddie Stobart, Norbert Dentressangle, Christian Salversen and many more with unpronounceable names from Eastern Europe and other foreign parts. What are they carrying? The answer is LOGISTICS, clearly marked on each truck. There must be billions of these trucks being transported up and down our country. Where do they go?

Go into Tesco's, Sainsbury's, Morrison's, Asda and even Waitrose and you will never find a single logistic on their shelves. What are logistics then? They aren't anything specific, they're just STUFF. That is, some commercial genius has coined this name for any type of good which can be carried around the country for one specific purpose, PROFIT! The implied humour ends here!

All these trucks consume an incredible amount of fuel. At various levels of commerce, retail, wholesale, distributor and producer, profit is made on fuel, progressively increasing from the retailer to the producer. However there are unseen forces that make more profit than most out of these strange activities. The investors! Why strange activities? Simply because the goods exported by one country at one geographical end of the chain are also imported by the exporter from elsewhere. This might sound stupid but it is a method of avoiding certain taxes or duties, depending on the countries involved and the situation. It also maintains the use of fuel. It is also possible that those who profit most from this commercial cunning are the decision-makers in the countries taking part.

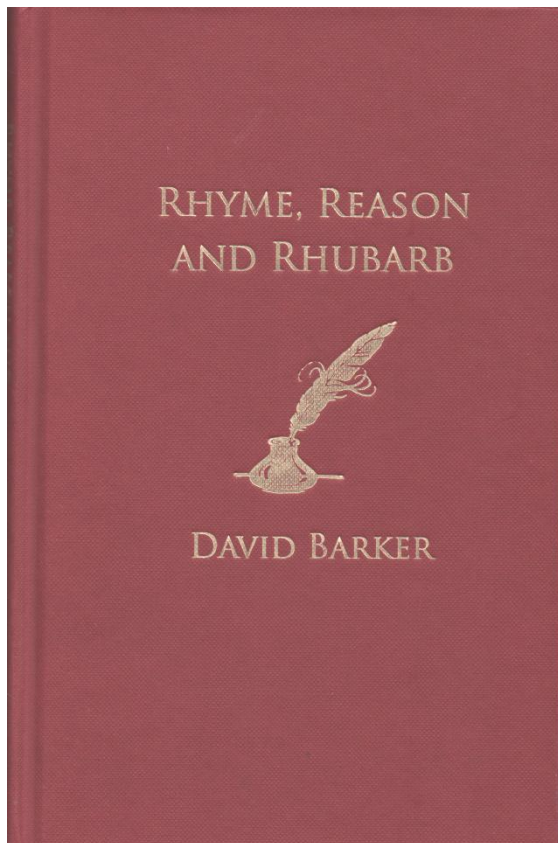
The unceasing progression of these vehicles on our roads and motorways is continually wearing them out. This results in most of them having several sections under repair at any given time. Apart from the inconvenience for those who could be called 'normal road users,' these repairs cost an enormous amount of money and consequently create an enormous amount of profit for the organisations repairing them, and in turn, for the investors, both known and secret.

These decision-makers, changing in each country with the progress of time, found another lucrative way of lining their pockets. This was not to the benefit of the majority of, not only their own countrymen, and consequently their responsibility, but also the responsibility of other countries which became involved in the game. The name of the game. WAR!

Throughout history, war has been one of the most profitable activities ever invented. Profitable to whom? Those who had the power to create situations of political and social strife, both in their own country or internationally.

How were these profits realised? Initially from the weapons of war, munitions, which, as they have gradually become more sophisticated, have become more profitable, not only to their manufacturers, but also those with the power to bring about these profitable situations, and with foresight invest in them. It is impossible to imagine the mentality of such people, who were, and are, prepared to sacrifice millions of lives, destruction of cities, homes and buildings of beauty historical value.

Money is a powerful motivator and destroyer of principles and values.



Another industry that can be considered at best unnecessary and at worst immoral is advertising. Through the various media, and particularly television, it makes its gullible audience want to purchase items which they don't need but are persuaded that they must have, either to increase their pleasure or their standing in society. This is supported by the various financial institutions who are delighted to loan people, who cannot afford these materialistic 'needs,' the money to purchase them, charging interest which increases the price of the items considerably. This frequently leaves the borrower unable to maintain the repayments of the loan, often resulting in the confiscating of the item originally coveted.

This being the case, it can be hypothesised that all wars, the transportation of unnecessary imports and exports, the advertising of lusted-after, non-essential items, and the financial

backing to purchase them, could be controlled and mostly eliminated by those with the power and responsibility to do so. It can also be hypothesised that it would not be in the financial interests of those in power to enforce such controls.

I came across this book in a second-hand shop, and was impressed by its no-nonsense style. I am sure David would have welcomed challenges to his opinions. This article is representative of several other essays, and complements the over-fifty poems, which encompass a wide range of personal (and sometimes humorous) reflections on old age

Cockney Slang

The article adds to the series published in this e-journal that presents language in amusing or baffling forms. Previous articles were on: Clerihews, Spoonerisms, Limericks and numerous Meanings of the Letter X.

The precise origins and motivations of Cockney rhyming slang are uncertain. Perhaps it was a device invented by crafty criminals to guard against people overhearing their words, or a play on language popularised by tradesmen. At the outset, it's useful to define the word Cockney. The term can now be said to apply casually to all people who have grown up in



London - especially those from the East End, but it originally referred exclusively to people who lived within earshot of the bells of St Mary-le-bow Church in Cheapside. Historically, the term signified working-class status, and many lines of research identify the 1840s as the most likely period for the inception of Cockney rhyming slang. But it's a notoriously difficult dialect to trace.

One theory suggests that it emerged as a consequence of the disbanding in 1839 of the Bow Street Runners, Britain's first professional police force. They were replaced by the more formal, centralised Metropolitan Police. Before then, criminals had often been free to run amok, but suddenly it was realised that discretion was required - a situation that provided the impetus for inventing this new (secret) language. But that explanation for Cockney rhyming slang's emergence may just be a romanticised account of folklore. Moreover, it is doubtful that criminals would discuss their deeds in the presence of police officers, or that many of the words were associated with crime. Arguably, private communication seems far more likely than coded public communication.

An alternative theory suggests Cockney rhyming slang came about as a playful take on the language used by costermongers (selling fruit and veg), other street vendors and dock workers. This use certainly seems to have a closer relationship with the general joviality and lightness of the rhyming slang. Of course, both explanations might be valid, or perhaps one informed the other. Either way, the formula is quite distinct.

Here are some examples, with the word that the slang phrase refers to shown in brackets:

Adam and Eve (believe): As in *I don't Adam and Eve it.*

Apples and pears: (stairs): The Cockney costermonger has skill in displaying the front of his stall, with selected samples of fruit and vegetables expertly graded in "steps and stairs".

Army and navy (gravy): Gravy was plentiful at mealtimes in both services.

Bees and honey (money): Bees, busy exemplars of work, produce money, an activity which is sweet.

Borrow and beg: (egg): Enjoying a fresh lease of life at the end of WW2 and of food-rationing .

Can't keep still (treadmill): Refers to the 19th century punishment, which entailed the need to keep 'walking.'

Coals and coke (broke): Coal and coke were supplied in large blocks and had to be broken down before use.

Cop a flower pot (cop it hot): To get into serious trouble. Suggested by the effect of a flower pot dropped from a window above onto someone below.

Crowded space (suitcase): Often stolen during very busy railway stations in the holiday season.

Cut and carried (married): Applying only to a wife who is cut off from the parental support and carried (provided for) by her husband.

Do me good/s (wood/s): Short for the cigarettes *Woodbines*, which indirectly played their part in the WW1.victory.

Duck and dive (hide): A duck when diving is hidden beneath the pond's surface and to duck is to avoid a blow by a quick dropping movement.

Early hours (flowers): Flower buyers have to keep very early hours to buy fresh produce at Covent Garden flower market.

Helter-skelter (an air-raid shelter): Refers to the speed needed to run to such a refuge

Light and dark (park): Refers to the London County Council's notice to the effect that a bell was rung and the gates locked at dusk.

Lion's lair (chair): Refers to the risk caused in disturbing the father of the household when he was taking his afternoon nap in an armchair, often *of a Sunday*.

Lump of lead (the head): Refers to a headache on the *morning after the night before*.

Lump of school (fool): Market stall holders felt that the sooner the boy stopped reading books and gained practical experience the better.

Merry-go-round (pound): In the monetary sense, refers to the saying that *money was made round to go round*.

Oily rag (a fag): Refers to a cigarette and to its soiled state when smokers are employed in jobs which inevitably leave them in grimy clothes.

Pig and roast (toast): Cynical reference to the bog-standard menus of the average mess for the "other ranks."

Rattle and clank (bank): Suggestive of the busy handling of coins.

Stand to attention: (pension): Refers to respect due to a long-serving, retired soldier.

Satin and silk: (milk): Suggestive of an object or activity's smoothness.

Short of a sheet (in the street): Implying a situation of penury and hence the lack of a bed.

(Information drawn from several websites)

BM

A tranquil scene at Gonalston, Nottinghamshire in June 2023



Walt Whitman in his *Song of Myself* (1855) empathised with animals and suggested we could learn from them. Surely, as in these lines, he could only have been thinking of *placid and self-contained* cows.

*I think I could turn and live with animals, they're so
placid and self-contain'd
I stand and look at them, long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
They do not lie awake in the dark, and weep for their sins
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the
mania of owning things
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands
of years ago
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth*