Winter Greetings, at Christmas or the New Year depending on the post.
Enjoy the read!
Write soon.
Editor.

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH EXTRA 21
WINTER 1996

The Landscape Research Group promotes interdisciplinary thought on landscape. It has members and subscribers in more than 40 countries



An unofficial view

I have just clambered up a concrete drainage channel to reach the top of a steep bank, and I'm sitting on a mound of sandy soil, partially colonised with grasses, ox-eye daisies, poppies, and a creeping yellow trefoil, overlooking a most extraordinary landscape. A little while ago I alighted from a stopping train at Calais Frethun, a sleek and shiny high-tech station 'in the middle of nowhere', so to speak (but everywhere is somewhere), and with virtually no facilities, which is why, with one and a half hours to wait for my Eurostar service back to England, I've come out to picnic with packets of biscuits and a bottle of Evian water obtained from a vending machine. Fortunately, the sun is shining, there's not a cloud in the sky, and it's exceptionally clear - not long ago I glimpsed the white cliffs of Dover as the train climbed away from Boulogne. From where I am now the sea is not visible; it's away to my left, and probably behind me as well, beyond rolling hills divided into large, open cornfields which could as easily be English as French. (Earlier this morning I sat on a tree stump gazing on a pattern of meadows, and trying to work out exactly why, fenced rather than hedged, but with lots of trees, including pollarded willow, growing along their boundaries, creating lovely intimate enclosures where cattle grazed contentedly, they seemed so very distinctively French).

Although the sea isn't visible, I can hear the noisome humming of a hovercraft, even at this distance an offence against stillness. The railway lines are directly in front of and below me, beyond a high metal fence; above them are their power lines, supported at intervals by gantries; to my right, beyond another unfriendly metal fence a line of electricity pylons marches across the landscape. Just beyond the railway is a traditional farm house with a red tiled roof. Calais lies on the horizon, left of centre; I can clearly see the tower of the hotel de ville. To its right, stretching as far as I can see, the horizon appears well wooded, though there are hints that the trees conceal farms and fields.

A much altered and recently disturbed landscape then, but by no means without interest and surprisingly peaceful: there's not a lot moving - a man shovelling gravel into a wheelbarrow just beyond the railway; a tractor among the fields beyond that; minute cars on distant roads. Apart from a light breeze rustling the grasses, distant sounds of traffic, a dog barking, and sounds which come and go - hovercraft, occasional passing trains, the shovelling up of another barrow load of gravel - it's quiet. Somewhere high above me a lark is singing.

Header photograph

Valley scene between Chagford and the editor's office. The early morning mist distances and romanticises the hills, doesn't it? Chinese painting style?

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and the editor and do not necessarily represent those of LRG as a whole. It is prepared by Rosemary and Bud Young for the Landscape Research Group and distributed to its world wide readership as a companion to its main journal Landscape Research. Enquiries to Bud Young, Airphoto Interpretation 26 Cross Street, Moretonhampstead Devon TQ13 8NL Tel 01647 440904. Fax 01647 440009. We are glad to print letters, written pieces, pictures and notices of landscape events. We accept advertising fliers for which a small charge is made.

Two things strike me. First, that although I'm moved to make these notes of what I can see, I'm not tempted to take a photograph; the landscape doesn't gather itself into a picture: it's too vast and multi-everything to focus on, too overwhelmingly all around me to step out of. Second, while I don't know whether I'm actually trespassing or not, I *do* know that neither I nor anyone else is supposed to be here and that this prospect, from this particular spot, is one of countless 'unofficial' views which are only seen by small boys, trainspotters, vagabonds, or by nobody at all; the very opposite of those approved viewpoints which have been marked on maps and otherwise promoted since the 18th century. Sometimes it's worth stepping off 'the beaten track'; the unofficial views which reveal themselves may not be picturesque but one can be sure of their authenticity.

Philip Pacey
University of Central Lancashire

THE BICYCLE LANDSCAPE

What we take in - and what we appreciate - about landscape is intimately related to the speed with which we pass through it.

From a train or car, particularly on a motorway, one can appreciate the aggregate colour and texture of the landscape, and take in some details about the degree of human influence. But at the speed of the train or car, particularly the former, one is "distant" from the landscape, and elements get hidden, not least by cuttings and tunnels. One cannot stop to view or review, only speed on one's way. The foreground is fast and blurred but sometimes exciting for that, whereas the background is slower but lacks detail. Therefore there is confusion in both geographical arenas, and perhaps only the middle ground is clear, but that is quickly gone.

At the speed of walking, there is the possibility for instant stopping. But the amount of landscape 'consumed' in any hour or day is small, and even in Britain the amount of variety is therefore low. A lowland walk of 20miles is quite a feat, and even then the number of distinct landscapes covered can be quite small. An upland walk of similar length can remain within a single landscape type, although views from such areas can dimly see greater variety at some distance.

But the bicycle is ideal, and indeed the landscape of bicycling is gaining increasing appreciation. There is greater variety than with walking, because twice the distance is covered or more, and downhill "breaks" provide time for concentration that remains difficult for the cross-country walker. There can be limits to visibility, if drop handlebars are used, and here the old-fashioned "sit up and beg' bicycle is to be preferred. Of course one has to keep to roads and tracks, but in many landscapes this presents no problem, and indeed makes for an easier ride. From the bicycle, with its slower pace than driving and greater pace than walking, one has a great appreciation of topography, resonating with gear changes, given that one spends more time on hills than on flatter areas.

Exposure to the elements reminds one of the sky within landscapes, particularly threatening clouds, and the smells from hedgerows, farmyards and cornfields adds an olfactory dimension to landscape appreciation. Also, the exploration of villages and rural countryside scenes, at the pace of the bicycle, allows interpretation of the changing social and geographical scene, such as with dying villages in France, changing agricultural landscapes, and the deteriorating road infrastructure of rural Britain. The disappearing cafes and boulangeries of rural France remind us of population migration to urban centres, and visiting scores of these in one day emphasises the pattern rather than the individual case.

Of course the avid landscape bicyclist needs skills. Particularly important are the skills of map interpretation, seeking white roads rather than motorways, greenways rather than bypasses, valleys rather than hills, and forests rather than bare mountains. This is a new discipline, finding the attractive and easy route, rather than the boring and arduous. No doubt soon we will see degree courses develop modularly mixing cycling with science, geography, landscape aesthetics and rubber technology (for the inevitable punctures).

In summary, the speed of modern travel in cars and trains defies landscape appreciation. Walking gives detail but covers too little territory. The bicycle is the new landscape appreciation medium.

Edmund Penning-Rowsell
Middlesex University, Enfield

THE COAST PHOTOGRAPHED

A picture now hanging in the Geography Department at University College London is from the series "Island" exhibited by Kate Mellor at the Impressions Gallery York in 1996. The series consists of 48 photographs looking towards the horizon taken at preset points 50 kms apart around the British coast. The Widelux camera used was designed for survey work and stand points were chosen on the basis of the NGR system. The print was acquired with the assistance of Peter Warn a former student of the Department. Also see Mansil Miller (LRG DoE Belfast) and the French project?

THE TEIGN ESTUARY AS SEASCAPE



yardstick. And so it was that when I took the train from London and headed out west to Teignmouth (Devon) for a brief break with friends, I stayed.

As a painter I was immediately struck by the beauty of the area. The sandstone coastlines, Dartmoor as benevolent as it is hostile, crowned by its mischievious craggy outcrops, the rivers, but in particular the Teign estuary.

In the evenings when the sun drops down over Dartmoor, the massive skies seem to me to bring out the best in the river, showing off its lines and shapes to dazzling effect. The gentle inclines of the adjacent hills although diametrically opposed, reveal a beautifully aesthetic symmetry; the landscape at one with the river is canopied by towering skies. Needless to say this magical jewel with its constantly changing tides, seasons and hues is the perfect place to lose oneself and paint, I sometimes wonder if it was, in fact, created for this specific purpose. Paradoxically it is this constantly altering state which reminds us of the constancy of both nature and art, and the small part we humans play.

So it is with these thoughts in mind that I paint the rivers the moors and the coastlines with a warm gratitude, and I can only hope that I do its natural beauty some small humble justice.

Local craft fairs rarely inspire me to purchase, but this time I could not resist the stall of John Skinner who having been a successful artist in the commercial realm (illustrating for Guiness and British Airways) had turned his attention to the landscape of south Devon. As a person who loves detail I found his miniature seascapes a delight. They appealed to me for their handling of light and clouds, for their saltmarshes and sand flats, for the intricate detail - some were no larger than postage stamps. All were affordable and for me something to cherish. I explained to him that LRE hoped to publish something about seascapes (my photo of Dawlish in LRE 20) and asked him to tell me about himself, short and simple. He wrote as follows, from the heart I think.

"Living and working in the city, makes it very easy to become cocooned in 20th century life. One even begins to believe that it is indeed we humans who shape the planet, hold its destiny in our hands, in short we begin to lose the plot. Such audacity becomes the norm - a



John Skinner
Tel 01626 776345 Teignmouth, Devon,

CONTENTS OF OUR MAIN JOURNAL LANDSCAPE RESEARCH

Volume 21/3 November 1996

The final volume of Landscape Research in 1996 is fortunate to carry papers representing the outputs of some major research projects. Varied in character, they aptly mirror the diverse nature of the subject matter of landscape. The 'lead' paper is a distillation of **Hugh Clout's** authoritative investigations into the devastated areas of northern France following the 1914-1919 War. *(Restoring the ruins: the social context of reconstruction in the countrysides of northern France in the aftermath of the Great War).* His meticulous research shows how the extensive reconstruction was largely undertaken, not by direct government action, but by the mobilisation of different segments of French society. Sadly, the dream of international labour solidarity through reconstruction was not realised, and the work was often undertaken by private construction companies. The copiously illustrated article provides graphic insights into the magnitude and challenge of this historic period of landscape restoration.

Two papers then take us on an agricultural theme: *Human sources of landscape stewardship - the re-emergence of private farming in the Czech Republic,* by **Miloslav Lapka and Eva Cudlinova;** and *Landwise or Land foolish? Free conservation advice for farmers in the wider English countryside,* by Michael Winter. As the state collective farms of eastern Europe, which have long dominated the landscapes of the centrally planned economies, are broken up, so a strikingly different countryside might emerge. One of the determinants of future landscapes will be the extent to which the new generation of private farmers possesses a sense of environmental stewardship, or whether this has been supplanted by the philosophy of maximum mechanisation and productivity. Lapka and Cudlinova report on a major research project which, encouragingly, indicates that the stewardship ethic has at least partly re-emerged intact from the pre-communist era. The land use changes taking place in the former centrally-planned states are of critical importance, and *Landscape Research* is fortunate to be publishing results from one of the first major studies. **Michael Winter** reports on a sizable research contract undertaken for MAFF on the nature, extent and effectiveness of free conservation advice for farmers. Given that so many claims are made by politicians and farmers' representatives about the growing environment-friendliness of modern agriculture, it is useful to see some firm evidence of the quality and uptake of professional advice. Whilst Winter is able to report some encouraging results, he also identifies significant shortcomings in the organisation and delivery of advice, and the implementation of recommended conservation measures on the ground.

Bill Adams, in *Creative conservation, landscapes and loss,* draws on his work for various governmental and non-governmental conservation agencies, which provided a searching look at some traditionally held values and policies. Central to Adams' argument is that most of our landscapes are not 'natural'. and so it is reasonable to expect 'creative' conservation to feature more prominently on the future agenda. However, there are also dangers inherent in shifting attention too far away from traditional protectionist strategies. These include: appearing to justify the destruction of valued semi-natural habitats, and cutting off the cultural engine of concern that drives conservation forwards. Adams is, however, able to advance some interesting arguments which strike a balance between protection of existing ecological resources and the creation of new ones, and these will certainly feature prominently in future conservation policies.

Landscape classification using GIS and national digital databases, by **Lars Brabyn,** uses digital methods to produce an automated landscape classification of a transect of the South Island of New Zealand. The paper provides an overview of general criteria which must be used in classification procedures, and then extends these to specific criteria which must be observed in relation to landscapes. The approach is a hierarchical one which, it is argued, accommodates the different levels of perception which people experience. Brabyn demonstrates how complex information can be simplified to produce acceptably informative landscape maps within an area showing many variations of relief, vegetation and coastline. The resultant maps can evidently be produced rapidly and cost-effectively where databases are already available, and landscape planners will doubtless wish to consider these benefits carefully.

BOOK REVIEWS include *Landscape and Power in Vienna* (Rotenberg), *The Avebury Circle* (Dames), *Landscapes of Settlement: prehistory to the present* (Roberts), and *The Body Language of Trees: a handbook of failure analysis* (Mattheck and Breloer). The volume concludes with an extended review, by David Crouch, of Peter Lanyon's exhibition of murals at Gimpel Fils earlier this year.

AN EVIL CRADLING: *LANDSCAPE OF CONTROL*



I like my landscapes to be 'touchy-feely' multisensory places - because that is how we experience them - with our bodies. Not solely as scenery or vehicles of cultural meaning, but as places where the body *is*.

An example that comes to mind which highlights the importance of all the senses is one in which the landscape or environment prohibits this multisensory experience of place - the landscape of incarceration.

Some years ago I read Brian Keenan's book An Evil Cradling, an epic account of his four and a half years as a hostage in the Lebanon. It is a *'reflective symphony of incidents, feelings, words, thoughts'* and echoes the inside/outside theme of Bob Webster's recent article (LRE Summer 96) though from a slightly different standpoint. Rather than the inside/outside of the built environment, Keenan's initial solitary confinement is concerned more with the mental and the physical, the subjective and objective experience of environment. The relationship between them is underpinned by the need to control.

In poetry the subjective response to environment or landscape is given free rein, as in Sylvia Plath's poem, Soliloquy of the Solipist where:

I
When in good humour
Give grass its green
Blazon sky blue, and endow the sun
With gold;
Yet, in my wintriest moods, I hold
Absolute power
To boycott colour and forbid any flower
To be.

Here Plath mentally appropriates or controls her environment from within. The material becomes immaterial.

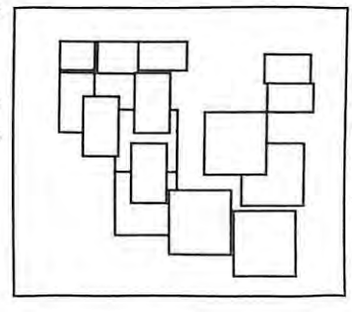
In descriptive prose, such as in landscape evaluation texts, the 'reality' of landscape is stressed. The observer is apparently detached, objective. Yet, the interaction in both cases is dialectical in that what is 'outside' affects and is affected by what is experienced 'inside' and vice versa - which is one reason for the fascination of Keenan's haunting story. Keenan's subjectivity or 'inside' struggles to come to terms with the objectivity or 'outside' of his prison cell - which *almost* becomes his whole world, his reality.The sands shift. Nothing is straightforward. For Keenan or the reader.

Whereas we normally inhabit two interacting worlds, that of inside/outside; mental/physical - Keenan inhabits three. Keenan's third which we are beguiled into sharing is his cell, the container of his body. This represents a vacuum. It signifies nothing but enclosed space from which there is no escape except inside his head. But it is also material and cannot be ignored.

Anyone wishing for a factual account from which they can remain an aloof observer of events may choose to put the book down at the boundary between the 'outside' of the text and the 'inside' of the text, a boundary which is clearly demarcated. A decision must be made..... *'Come now into the cell with me and stay here and feel if you can and if you will that time, whatever time it is, for however long, for time means nothing in this cell. Come, come in.'*

It is a seductive invitation, Sirenesque in its possibilities.

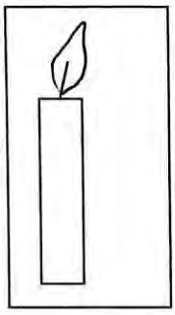
The reader is asked to leave the everyday taken-for-granted 'wide world' of diversity of form, of colour, of texture, of the senses, and join Keenan in his cell which was *'built very shoddily of rough-cut concrete blocks haphazardly put together and joined by crude slapdash cement-work. Inside, and only on the inside, the walls were plastered over with that same dull grey cement. There was no paint. There was no colour, just the constant monotony of rough grey concrete. The cell was six feet long and four feet wide. I could stand up and touch those walls with my outstretched hands and walk those six feet in no more than four paces.'*



Deprived of all sensory stimuli, Keenan's only remaining contact with the wider world outside his cell is through the memory of other experienced landscapes which rely solely on the past, negating the present. Control becomes of critical importance to him - control of his personal past and memory; control of his presently experienced cell where..... *'my imagination gave me images, some beautiful, some disturbing and unendurably ever-present..... At times I felt the compensation of this gift and at other times cursed my imagination that it could bring me sensations so contorted, so strange and so incoherent that I screamed.'* Future time from within his cell is unknowable.

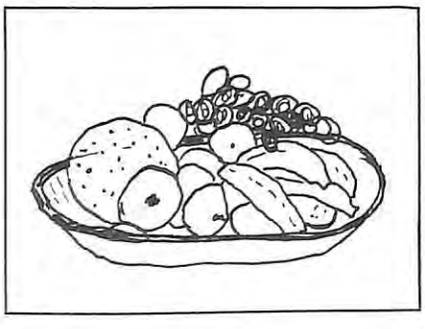
In order to exercise control over his immediate world,

Keenan hoards candles - *'They have given me candles...I will not light them. I fear the dark so I save the candles... I hate the dark and cannot abide its thick palpable blackness. I feel it against my skin.'* To see is to be outside, to take control, to create some possibility of appropriation. But the bare grey walls are non-negotiable.



One particularly memorable incident in the cell is the unexpected appearance of a bowl of fruit.....

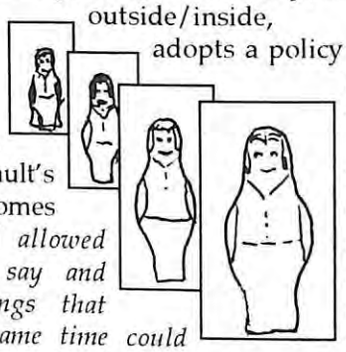
'My eyes are burned by what I see.... A brown button bowl and in it some apricots, some small oranges, some nuts, cherries, a banana. The fruits, the colours, mesmerize me in a quiet rapture that spins through my head. I am entranced by colour. I lift an orange in to the flat filthy palm of my hand and feel and smell and lick it.... Before me is a feast of colour. I feel myself begin to dance slowly, I am intoxicated by colour. I feel the colour in a quiet somnambulant rage. Such wonder, such absolute wonder in such an insignificant fruit. I cannot, I will not eat this fruit... My soul finds its own completeness in that bowl of colour... It is there in that tiny bowl, the world recreated in that broken bowl... my containment does not oppress me. I sit and look at the walls but now this room seems so expansive, it seems I can push the walls away.' While the bowl of fruit remains, the cell and Keenan himself remain linked to the wider world; it has meaning. He needs to see it, to feel it....*'I focus all my attention on that bowl of fruit. At times I lift and fondle the fruits, at times I rearrange them, but I cannot eat them'.*

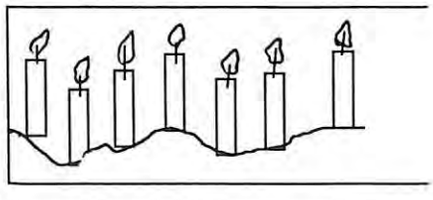


Of course this only provides a temporary euphoria - mentally it transports him outside, to the wider world of the present, whilst simultaneously giving a harder edge to his third world, within which is his body. The cell door slams shut for a second time. And from inside he is tempted by his lack, the Lacanian desire for maternal security - the *evil cradling*.

If Keenan desires the freedom of the wider world, he also paradoxically desires fulfilment of the lack. The barrier works both ways. Cell... womb..... tomb..... His position becomes relative and negotiable - *'In my corner I sit enclosed in the womb of light from my candle-flame. I lift my eyes and see a dead insect held in a cocoon made by a spider and I know that I too am cocooned here. Nothing can touch me or harm me. I am a coccon which enfolds me like a mother cradling a child.'* It is this *evil cradling* which Keenan fears most of all because it reflects a rejection of the wider world, an abdication of control, a passive acceptance of *insideness* and insanity. The poets's subjectivity rendered undialectical and unchanging.

In an attempt to survive, and to resolve the dialectic between past/present, memory/imagination, outside/inside, Keenan deliberately adopts a policy of 'letting go', precisely in order to regain an element of control. Embracing Foucault's 'wise madness', he becomes his own 'self-observer' - *'I allowed myself to do and be and say and think and feel all the things that were in me, but at the same time could stand outside observing and attempting to understand.'* The control he craves comes from a detachment, an outsideness created within his head. As I write this I have in mind an infinite set of Russian dolls where insides are transformed to outsides in perpetuity. His new strategy takes practice however.....





Suddenly fearful during an imaginary *'aural feast'* when *'all the music of the world was there'*, he desperately lights all his stored candles - *'I lit another and another candle until I had filled the cell with candlelight, bright, dazzling, soft, alluring light. But still the music played around me.'* He decides to let go, to go with the music his mind has created. He dances..... and through dance regains control - *'I was a dancing dervish. I was the master of this music and I danced and danced.....I was the pied piper who was calling the tune..... I had seen myself go with this moment of ecstatic madness and had come back from it, unmarked.'*

He has successfully created an *outside* standpoint within himself. The control is mental, not visual - he has appropriated his cell.

Control for Keenan is a learned skill and it becomes his weapon for the duration of his confinement, both alone and with others. He wields it in love and anger and survives. It is with both profound admiration and some relief that the reader turns the final page and journeys back to the familiar landscapes of the wider world.

Mary Knowles
University of Central Lancashire

THE ENCHANTED CASTLE

Walk on past the church in the Pembrokeshire village of Robeston Wathen, leave the last houses behind, and suddenly you're descending a steep sunken lane - Robeston Wathen is set just beneath the crown of a hill in a landscape which, though without big hills with challenging summits (excepting the Prescellis, visible in the distance), is all up and down with gradients which stretch muscles in the front of your legs which you had forgotten were there. At the bottom, the lane takes a right turn and, leaving two farms behind, becomes a track, hidden from the sun and muddy even in this dry summer. In the fields on the right the hedged banks of older boundaries are plain to see.

Foliage forms a roof overhead, and suddenly we come to a most magical place. The track arrives at and fords a stream, just before the stream joins a river, the existence of which (for once, without a map to hand) we had not suspected - a confluence of track and waterways, all secretively hedged about. For the ill shod, a stile leads to a hidden bridge over the stream, from which one enters a meadow. It's dusk; looking up, I'm unprepared for the sight of a castle, perhaps three quarters of a mile away, brooding - there's no better word - over the surrounding landscape. Were a mounted knight to come galloping across the meadow, it would hardly be surprising.

Although I'm anxious to be getting back, my sons are keen to go on, to reach the castle if we can, and we go down again to the track which is now a tunnel of darkness in which a bat flies up and down with an audible whirring of wings, almost brushing our faces. We finally emerge where a road crosses the river on an old bridge at the foot of a cliff. On the bridge stands the first person we have set eyes on since we left the village; not a knight in shining armour, but a lad balancing on a mountain bike. Such is the spell which has taken hold of me, that there seems to be something enigmatic even about this thoroughly contemporary personage. Of course, of the castle there is nothing to be seen. We find a likely footpath striking up through a wood, and follow it a little way until, with the light failing, even the boys are willing to admit defeat. Returning across the meadow, we look back; the castle has reappeared, a looming presence in the deepening twilight. Perhaps we will come back another day.

But as our holiday comes to an end, I'm almost glad that we didn't go back, didn't allow the glare of broad daylight to chase away this memory of a shadowy, mysterious, enchanted castle which might or might not have really been there.

Philip Pacey

SHOULD YOU READ?

Landscape meaning

Greg Ringer **Wilderness images of tourism and community** Annals of tourism research 1996 23/4 p950

Kevin E McHugh & Robert C Mings **The circle of migration: attachment to place in aging** Annals of the Assoc of Amer Geographers Sept 1996 86/3 p530

George Hughes **Tourism and the environment; a sustainable parternership (sustainable tourism as another part of the touristic portfolio of myths)** Scottish Geographical Magazine 112/2 1996 p107-113

David T Herbert **The promotion and consumption of artistic places in France** Tijdschrift voor Economische en Social Geografie 87/5 1996 p431-441

Denis Cosgrove, Barbara Roscoe and Simon Rycroft **Landscape and identity at Ladybower Reservoir and Rutland Water** Trans. Inst. of British Geographers 21/3 1996 p534-551

Landscape design and management

B Vivian **Development on 'shaky' ground: a review of PPG14 (Annex 1)**Mineral Planning No 68 Sept 1996 pp21-23

G Kerr et al **Demonstrating woodland creation on colliery spoil at Desford Lakes in the National Forest** Mineral Planning No 68 (Sept 1996) pp35-36

L Addisonb & S Webber **Beyond the boulevards - the early reality of Hounslow. An analysis of the role of local authorities in seeking to improve environmental quality** Landscape and Urban Planning August 1996 35/2/3 p123

K Painter **The influence of street lighting improvements on crime, fear and pedestrian street use after dark** Landscape and Urban Planning August 1996 35/2/3 p193

Social landscapes

Malcolm J Moseley, James G Derounian & Philip J Allies **Parish appraisals - a spur to local action? A review of the Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire experience 1990-1994** The Town Planning Review July 1996 67/3 p309

Paul Cloke, Paul Melbourne and Chris Thomas **The English National Forest: local reactions to plans for renegotiated nature society relationships in the countryside** Trans. Inst. British Geographers 21/3 1996 p552-571

Towns, urban form and urban history

P R Proudfoot **The symbolism of the crystal in the planning and geometry of the design for Canberra** Journal of Rural Studies July 1996 11/3 p225

Dona J Stewart **Cities in the desert: The Egyptian New-Town** Program Annals of the Assoc of Amer Geographers Sept 1996 86/3 p459

Planning

Dan Shrubsole **Ontario conservation authorities: principles, practice and challenges 50years later** Applied Geography October 1996 16/4 p319

Paul Cloke **Housing in the open countryside: windows on 'irresponsible' planning in rural Wales** The Town Planning Review July 1996 67/3 p291

R J Johnston, D J Rossiter C J Pattie **A change in the rules and a change in the outcomes? An evaluation of the work of the Boundary Commission for England in its Third and Fourth Periodic Reviews** Environment and Planning 1996 14/3 p325

S Owens & R Cowell **Rocks and hard places** CPRE 1996 [Research report/discussion paper examining the implications of sustainable development concepts for minerals (aggregates) planning, including an analysis of the lessons of two case study public inquiries (Berkshire Minerals Local Plan and the Rodel (Lingerbay) "superquarry" planning application)].

Technique

G Van Huylenbroeck, J Castro Coelho, P A Pinto **Evaluation of land consolidation projects (LCPs): a multi-disciplinary approach** Journal of Rural Studies July 196 12/3 p297

Musisi Nkambwe & Wolter Arnnberg **Monitoring land use change in an African tribal village on the rural-urban fringe** Applied Geography October 1996 16/4 p305

Policy, future, sustainability

Peter Mason **Technology and change in tourism Gilbert Archdale; Developing guidelines for Arctic Tourism** Tourism management September 1996 17/6 p463

John T Pierce **The conservation challenge in sustaining rural environments** Journal of Rural Studies July 1996 12/3 p215

Landscape areas & regions

Alexander S Mather **The inter relationships of afforestation and agriculture in Scotland** Scottish Geographical Magazine 112/2 1996 p83-91

Ecology and nature

J Box et al **Natural legacies: Mineral workings and nature conservation** Mineral Planning No 68 Sept 1996 pp24-27

Arthur W L Veen , Wim Klaasen et al **Forest edges and the soil vegetation atmospheric interaction at the landscape scale: the state of affairs** Progress in Physical Geography 20/3 1996 pp292-310

Cultural landscapes

David Matless **Visual culture and geographical citizenship: England in the 1940s** Journal of Historical Geography 22/4 1996 p424-439

Yossi Ben-Artzi **Imitation or original? Shaping the cultural landscape of pioneer Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel (1882-1914)** Journal Historical Geography 22/3 1996 308-326

Landscapes in education

P Gruffudd **The countryside as educator: schools, rurality and citizenship in inter-war Wales** Journal of Historical Geography October 1996 22/4 p412

Dan Hermann **Developing a spatial perspective using the local landscape to teach students to think geographically (secondary school level)** Journal of Geography 95/4 1996 162-167

Landscape History

This, the journal of the Society for Landscape Studies, is an annual publicationand membership of the Society costs £15 with some concessions. Its articles are listed elsewhere in this issue and deal with the history and archeology of places, also with antique practices and inter alia with habitat. Its editor is Della Hooke, at the Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Further Education (home of our editor Paul Selman).

Protection of Important Hedgerows

A Department of the Environment, the Welsh Office, MAFF **joint consultation paper** October 1996. This report is linked to a draft statutory instrument 199 Countryside. The interest for those involved is how to recognise an important hedgerow. ADAS the advisory service out of MAFF lists and explains 13 criteria seven to do with the historic origin or association of the hedge, four to do with the species content (including faunal associates), the spatial connections and tree content, and two which have regard to closeness to rights of way. Should provide a lot of food for dispute.

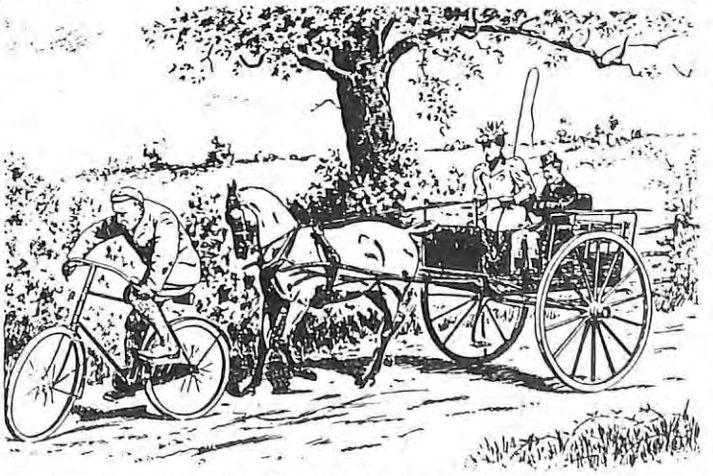
DRIVING COUNTRY LANES

I am grateful to Brian Eaton of Coventry Business School for pointing out that around 1970 a D.M. Brancher was writing in planning journals about his research on the driver/road relationship on country lanes. I do not know where he his now but his work bears on the issue of tranquillity in the countryside. Here he his on how road character is perceived by the public:

* "There is slight evidence of a transformation of driving behaviour when people on holiday are confronted by roads of medieval narrowness and alignment."
* "Such roads are highly valued as part of the recreational experience by some users but are a source of anxiety to others."
* "There is nevertheless a majority in favour of leaving them as they are. 69% disagreed with the statement 'country lanes should be brought up to modern standards" And his conclusion:
* "It seems reasonable to suggest... that resource conversion at any scale should reflect considered intent and our present lack of understanding"

All this is most pertinent to some work I have been doing on how driving patterns on minor roads affect the tranquil character of the countryside. What is the level of traffic on a minor road which makes it conducive to pleasurable cycling or walking? At what point do 'improvements' and traffic management measures start to intrude on character? How many of our minor roads are still in the state where both drivers and walkers can enjoy the experience of using them?

So far I have come to no firm conclusions on these questions but I have enjoyed myself collecting traffic counts on minor roads this spring (it does not take long to discover that county information is woefully inadequate on unclassified roads). This has given me some insights: under average conditions one vehicle a minute is about as much as a pedestrian can tolerate without having to devote most of his/her concentration to the problem of approaching traffic. About one vehicle every 5 minutes is really comfortable. These thresholds will vary according to the speed of the traffic. Indeed if one could rely on all vehicles travelling at 20mph or less a greater flow of traffic could be tolerated comfortably.



GREAT SELF-RESTRAINT.—*Lady in pony-cart (who has made several unsuccessful attempts to pass persevering beginner occupying the whole road).* "Unless you soon fall off, I'm afraid I shall miss my train!"

So, ultimately it is speed which matters - both from the point of view of comfort of users (motorised and non-motorised) and from that of noise and emissions: slower cars brake and accelerate less. As speed does little for time savings on minor roads would it be possible to set up an education programme initially directed towards the concerned driver? Here is my manifesto:

* I can feel the better quality of life. As a passenger I know when I am comfortable - it is only when driving that I ignore my own comfort.
* I want to drive more calmly. I will be sanguine about other drivers speeding - they will learn one day. I am not in competition with those who want to drive fast.
* I will normally drive 'gently' because I want to enjoy the sensation of not being in a hurry.
* When trapped behind a slow driver I will enjoy the opportunity to appreciate the countryside.
* Having experienced my change in lifestyle, I will campaign for calm driving and for the observance of really low speed limits on minor roads ie 20mph wherever possible.

Is this cloud cuckoo land? It certainly would have been 25 years ago when C M Brancher first thought about user perception of country lanes. Are you out there somewhere?

Simon Rendell
Millbrook Cottage Blewbury

Dear Simon

I think you folk up east ought to know that down here in Devon it can sometimes get a bit too quiet. Mind you I live in one of your tranquil areas and just north of us in Mid Devon is the Forgotten Interior. Funnily enough I see you've got it down on yore map. Up there's one of those places where you park in the road for twenty minutes and the only person asks you to move over, stops and talks to you for another twenty, and in such an accent, my dearrrr.

T'other day just before nine in the morning I was luking for transport back along our main B-road to Exeter and I walked two miles before I got picked up. Mind you that were only five cars and four of 'em were strangers. Instead of you writing your manifestos, me dear, why don't you muve down yer?

Alter Editor

PAINTING THE LANDSCAPE

On either side of the Scottish-English Border we have had examples of large scale images. A few years ago a market gardener in Berwickshire created a version of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* in vibrant colours. Using bedding out plants over a canvas of perhaps an acre. This image was best seen from the air.

This year in Northumberland a farmer planted both rape and flax in the same field. They flowered at the same time. The pattern was minimalist, a multi-stemmed M over a rectilinear W. Flax over rape. Misty blue over vibrant yellow. This over an acreage of, say, ten acres on a hillside clearly visible from the A697. A response to the plea to use land for aesthetic purposes? A resurrected art form? Are there other examples?

Barry Woodward, 22 Monks Crescent, Durham DH1 1HD

FLAX AS LAND USE

Seen more and more, flax attracts something like £250 per hectare of agricultural grant. I am no expert in this but have seen fields of delicate white flowers and others of a light blue. Carried on long straight delicate but tough stems set against their light green leaves the crop is a delight to look at. At a distance the white flowers can be mistaken for the shininess of long ryegrass. At the foot of this page is a photocopy of the top parts of the actual plant reduced in size. The stems can be sixty cms to a metre or more long, the longer varieties typical of flax, the shorter of linseed. The seeds are small and slippery and farmers are advised to make sure their trailers are "watertight" before transporting them. Linseed is used in paints and other products. Seen from the air or from neighbouring hillsides the ripe crop is a patchy mixture of burnt siena and gold, very smooth and velvety. Old linen mills form part of the industrial landscape heritage of Ulster which dominated flax production earlier this century.
Editor

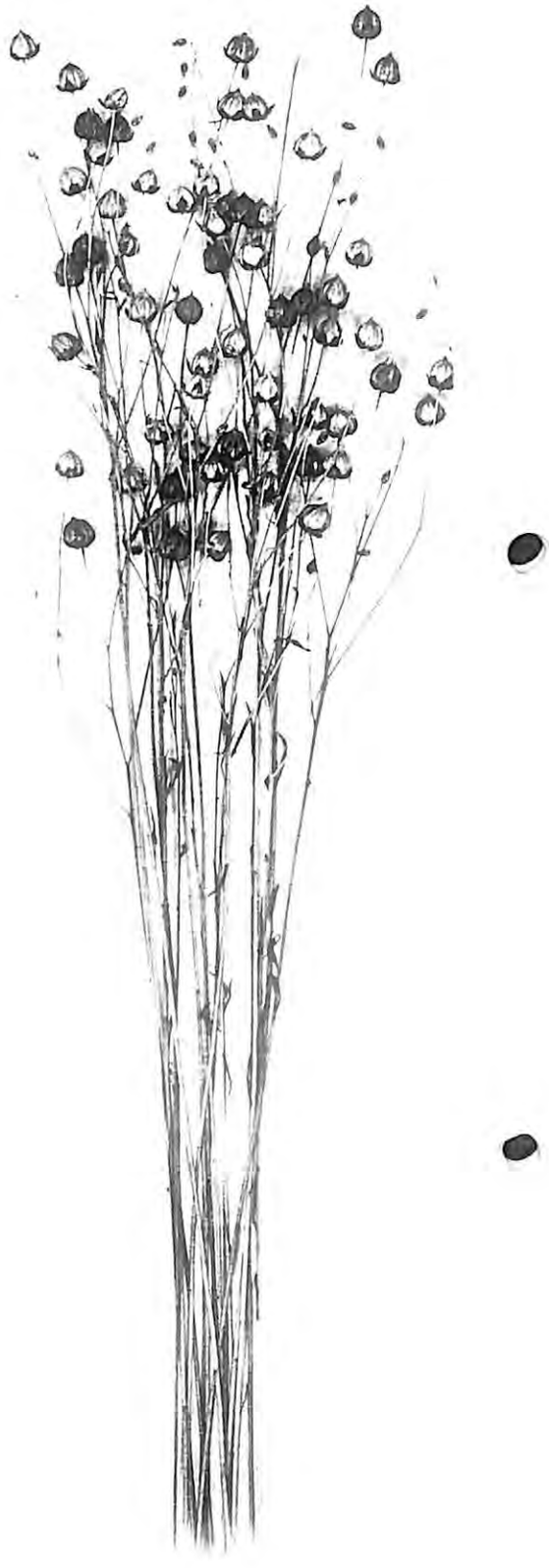
HEATHER, BLUEBELLS

School children are back at school, the heather is in full bloom on Dartmoor attended by those older less child burdened vacationers who afford better hotels and enjoy quieter pleasures: people who value beauty, tranquillity, the soft movement of the seasons, heather tweeds and autumnal feelings. I took myself out to grab the action, view the oldies sitting with their thermos flasks in their contemplation of loveliness. It was stunningly beautiful and, 57 and middle class, I forgot my detachment and cynicism.

It's a matter, you see, of colour in the landscape but more than that. The sun had broken through the September morning softness; it was midday, the whole moorland was the wrong colour and the blue sky had been wrong footed. Little puffs of wind showed us that the air smelled of honey. Sheep and ponies moved very slowly in this great expanse and there were little knots of cars and a coach at the Warren House Inn.

Looking for the right way to portray this surpassing beauty and trying desparately to avoid cliches, I felt deeply moved by the different intensities of purple from pale flowers of lings through darker ones to the deep purple of bell heather. I had a camera and focussed in on detail, the intricacy of each woody spray of flowers, in each plant purple contrasting with green. In the middle ground the paint box green of bracken against the soft unreal purples triggered a childhood moment where the exact same experience at the Horseshoe Pass Llangollen may have crystallised my love of green against purple as favourite colours.

We sat on sheep cropped grass and swore that we would like to stay there for hours. But beauty, that intense emotion seemed best snatched and remembered for its moment of near pain, and we returned to the office. There should be an analytical sequel to this picture but it seems wrong to pursue it. I have the same feelings about bluebells, the colour, the scent, the momentary vision, the joy. What's it all about?
Editor



IALE CONFERENCE:

Spatial dynamics of biodiversity: patterns and processes in the landscape. The closing discussion

Biodiversity is described at the species level and conceptually as a snapshot of the ecological processes which govern their diversity. The pattern of habitats and habitat fragmentation has an important impact on the population viability of species contributing to overall biodiversity, second only to the area occupied by habitats. The meeting took this as its topic and Peter Dennis reports here in the closing discussion.....had there been progress? This report is abbreviated from the UK IALE News with permission. Enquiries to Peter Dennis at the Macauley Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen AB15 8QH if you need a list of speakers'. addresses, or information about IALE.

Chris Quine suggested there hadn't been any input on ecological processes. However, **Geoffrey Griffiths** responded by saying that there had been clear examples in the papers by Petit et al., Marshall et al., Boothby and Swan, and Gordon and Dennis. At the landscape scale, different species-centred approaches were an over simplification and the complexity of data on a range of species could be contradictory in terms of landscape ecological function. **Jonathan Beecham** felt that there were certainly processes that could be modelled such as the mechanistic data on grazing at small scales which had the potential to be scaled up to determine landscape effects. The activity and success of frog and toad populations could also be modelled in relation both to number and aggregations of ponds in pondscapes. However, he expressed doubt over the application of general indices, already illustrated by **Gary Fry** (fragmentation and landscape metrics) and **Richard Aspinall** (species and habitat indices). His general impression was that there were appropriate data available at small spatial scales but they were not scaled up to landscape scales.

Instead, there was a shift to the use of value judgments. **Peter Dennis** replied that many models were implied by speakers at larger spatial scales but the cross-disciplinary nature of this forum restricted the amount of technical detail that could be communicated.

Simon Hodge felt that the use of the term biodiversity was interchangeable between species diversity and species number. The impression was given that a longer species list was synonymous with greater biodiversity. He felt that the interpretations used must be defined in relation to naturalness. **Ian Simpson** agreed but added that naturalness must be defined in the context of historical/cultural influences. **Gary Fry** stated that it was of course naive to use species lists alone; for instance, disturbed habitats have higher species counts because of the invasion of common, opportunistic species. This illustrated that all species were not equal, because we put a greater value on the rarer, more vulnerable species than common opportunist species. Choices have to be made as to which species demand resources for protection.

Ian Simpson suggested that models must also reflect the socio-economic context of the ecosystem, which in some cases, as already demonstrated, required a knowledge of the cultural history of the landscape.

Roy Haines-Young felt that the original discussion points read like an exam question. Maybe we had started in the wrong place? Analysis of pattern may not necessarily lead to an understanding of underlying ecological processes. Hypotheses were required to test some of the assumptions drawn from predominantly pattern based studies. There was definitely a need to focus on process so that a functional classification of landscape could be developed.

Colin Barr recalled several examples where the "cranking up" of species numbers was regarded as a legitimate objective in the improvement of landscape quality. Since a wide number of disciplines were represented at this meeting, each species would be given a different value according to taxonomic, ecological or landscape planning interests.

Peter Dennis stressed the importance of typicalness, although this was tempered with the comment that typicalness is harder to define in cultural landscapes because of the extent of human influence, the amount of human disturbance and the plagio-climax nature of many apparently natural communities. Many of the typical species of these habitats had been lost through historic activities. In landscapes such as the pondscapes of Cheshire, we heard that the thousands of ponds were a recent, human-made feature of the landscape, but that they were both essential for a large number of wildlife species and regarded by residents as an intrinsic part of the identity of their county's landscape.

Ian Simpson suggested the strength of landscape ecology is the ability to model the consequences of growth and economics and offer them as scenarios to decision makers and planners, whilst not getting embroiled in a debate about what should be the state of a given landscape. **Jala Makhzoumi** suggested a measure of ecodiversity, a combination of habitat and landscape diversity should be used in these definitions.

Bob Bunce expressed his view that diversity measures could be applied at each level of a classification from species to landscape; some measures could be independent of one another. Therefore, a number of these measures would be appropriate. The drawback was that the use of these relative values could create

different assessments for the same landscape. The emphasis should therefore be on the inter-dependence of landscape structures which we had heard about in the lectures on the ground beetles of hedgerows and woodlands, and amphibian dispersal in pondscapes. Other papers demonstrated ecological inter-dependence in different situations. In many instances, landscape management by humans, defined by cultural criteria, clearly determined the types and pattern of habitats present.

Alan Cooper felt the main value of the meeting was the bringing together of those concerned on one hand with cultural and social factors and on the other, with ecological ones. Ecologists are learning that an appreciation of cultural history and socio-economic options are essential to the understanding of ecological dynamics.

Bob Bunce illustrated ecological dynamics by describing that the abandonment of the riparian zone led to different outcomes dependent on the context and process of colonisation by plants. Twenty different processes were identified which operated in grasslands to determine the apparent biodiversity. In response **Douglas Macmillan** suggested that the holistic nature of the discipline should be emphasised, not the narrow views of traditional nature conservation. **Bob Bunce** acknowledged this and added that many ecological processes operated in situations that were not recognised by nature conservationists: an example was given of thistle beds as habitats for a diverse number of insects dependent on pollen and nectar resources. Populations of many insect species would be enhanced by the presence of thistle beds in the landscape although nature conservationists would consider the thistles as weed monocultures. In contrast, bryophyte communities were being maintained in some remnant habitats by intense human management where processes of successional change were very strong. This nature preservation was very costly and artificial because it opposed ecological processes.

Peter Dennis added in defence of that type of nature conservation that there were frequently too few remnants of any particular habitat in the landscape to allow natural dynamics to proceed. Hence, nature conservationists felt the need to use their resources maintaining the status quo against natural processes - this as an alternative to securing further habitats which would allow species dynamics to proceed at the landscape scale. In this preferred situation with enough patches, examples of all the valued successional stages could be maintained. The discussion came to an end with expressions of resolve, hope and commitment.

Peter Dennis
Macaulay Land Use Research Institute
Aberdeen

OTHER JOURNALS

For some as yet unknown administrative reason a number of journals have not arrived for inclusion here. If we can find out their whereabouts we will list them in the next issue. They include Garten und Landschaft, Paysage y Amenagement, The Arboricultural Journal, Landscape Architecture and Places.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN 252
July/August 1996
Month's theme: **Urban waterfront regeneration**
Clive McWilliam **Studies after nature** 8-10
Gerald Cary-Elwes **A precious asset** 11-12
David Buck **Reclaiming the front line** 14-16
Bill Gasser **Top marque** 17-20
Ian Couch **Creative catalyst** 21-23
Doug Jackson **From the rivers of belief** 24-26
Landscape Design **Urban waterfront regeneration** 42-52

LANDSCAPE DESIGN 253
September 1996
Sara Parkin & Ken Fieldhouse **Geoffrey Jellicoe** 7-11
Kevin Thwaites **In search of the designer's new mind** 13-18
Jon Etchells **EA today, gone tomorrow** 19-22
Nigel Rudd **Stumbling towards monitoring** 23-25
Richard Stiles & Thomas Fesst **Where public views count** 26-29
Karl Fuller & Andrew Stacey **What might have been** 30-32
Frank Broughton **Fringe issues** 34-36
Henry Steed **Pioneers of change** 41-43
David Jarvis **A little less planning....and a lot more design** 49-51
European Landscape Architecture Students' Association **The future from Istanbul** 52-53

LANDSCAPE DESIGN 254
October 1996
Rupert Kempley **La Grande Jatte, and all that** 8-9
Angus Parker **The beast breathes again** 10-13
Jennuy Coe & Eelco Hooftman **Potsdamer Platz Berlin** 14-15
Tom Turner **From no way to greenway** 17-20
Dr Norfried Pobl **The park is dead...long live the park** 22-24
Catharine Ward Thompson **Updating Olmsted** 26-31
Dee Stamp **Parks are us** 34-37
Alan Barber **The battle goes on** 48-50
Ian Richardson & Mary Balhatchet **Positive feedback** 51-52

LANDSCAPE DESIGN 255
November 1996
Jacques Leenhardt **Utopian renaissance** 9-12
James Hitchmough **A native revolution** 14-16
Ephrat Yovel **River of no return** 18-20
Mary McHugh **Soil and sea** 21-22

Gillian Mobbs **Translating tradition** 23-25
Rosemary Coyne **Eco-lessons** 26-28
Craig Downer **Tame or reclaim?** 29-32
Landscape Design **A note to the Millennium Fund judges** 41-45

JOURNAL OF GARDEN HISTORY 16/3 Autumn 1996
Mark Laird **Corbeille, Parterre and Treillage: the case of Humphry Repton's penchant for the French style of planting** 153
Stephen Daniels **On the road with Humphry Repton** 170
Edward S Hanwood **Humphry Repton and the idea of association** 192
John Dixon Hunt **Humphry Repton and garden history** 215

GARDEN HISTORY VOL 24(1) Summer 1996
Essays in honour of Mavis Batey by the following authors:
Edward Fawcett, John Anthony, Margaret Campbell, Jane Crawley, Ray Desmond, Peter Goodchild, Keith Goodway, John H Harvey, Peter Hayden, Virginia Hinze, David Jacques, Harriet Jordan, Mark Laird, David Lambert, Kay N Sanecki, Dmitri Shvidovosky, Eileen Stamers-Smith, William Stearn, Michael Syme, Nigel Temple, Christopher Thacker,
Kate Tiller, Elisabeth Whittle, Kim Wilkie. AND
A list of **publications by Mavis Batey**

LANDSCAPE AUSTRALIA 18/3 August 1996
LA report **The Australian Garden Masterplan for part of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, Victoria** 204-212
Ed.Tree book praised - but raises questions 214
Glenn S Thomas **Working with community groups in managing the cultural landscape** 216-222
Diana Snape **The importance of Australian indigenous plants** 234-236
Ralph Neale **Trompe l'oeil in the garden** 239-241
Richard Weller **Ogni Pensiero Vola - wandering through Vladimir Sitta's sketchbook** 242-249
Florence Jaquet & Paul Laycock **Lighting in parks and gardens** - Part 1 250-252
New water management system 263
Ralph Neale **Garden shows - Melbourne and Chelsea** 283-286

LANDSCAPE HISTORY Volume 17 1995
Journal of the Society for Landscape Studies
Robert Young & Trevor Simmonds **Marginality and the nature of later prehistoric upland settlement in the north of England** 5-16
Edwina Proudfoot & Christopher Aliaga-Kelly **Place-names and other evidence for anglian settlement in south-east Scotland** 17-26
Christopher Taylor **Dispersed settlement in nucleated areas** 27-34
Charles W J Withers **Conceptions of cultural landscape change in upland North Wales: a case study of Llanbedr-y-Cennin and Caerhun parishes c1560-c1891** 35-47
Colin Hayfield and Pat Wagner **From Dolines to dewponds: a study of water supplies on the Yorkshire Wolds** 49-64
Graham Brown **Salisbury Plain training area (the management of an ancient landscape)** 65-76

AARGnews 13 September 1996
The newsletter of the Aerial Archeology Research Group. Contains among other material:
Cathy Stoertz **Air archaeology training project in Hungary 1996: statistics** 5-6
Kevin L Jones **The development of aerial photography in New Zealand archaeology** 7-13
Martin Gojda **Aerial archaeology in Japan: a personally-experienced overview** 36-41
David R Wilson **Ring ditches and fungus rings in the 17th century** 42-48

THE IRISH NATIONAL LANDSCAPE FORUM

Terry O'Regan LRG member in Cork has asked me to announce the Landscape Alliance Ireland meeting for 1997. It will take place at St Patricks College Maynooth on 18th-19th June. In addition to the interactive forum of previous years there will be a world landscape lecture by a speaker of international stature and a landscape management exhibition.
Details from himself at Landscape Alliance Ireland, Old Abbey Gardens Waterfall Cork Phone international+021-871460 fax 872503

CONFERENCES IN OR OUT?

Although the above conference is alive and kicking, it is now very difficult to put on conferences at the intermediate size level. LRG Board debated whether it is due to lack of time by academics and professionals, lack of money by participants, or the wide general availability of information through other means. We conclude that what's needed is time out away from the telephone, department and office; mental stimulus with people who interest you. It was widely agreed that seminars would be an attractive option, and these could bring together leading figures in landscape many of whom are in LRD with others of like mind. Set in good landscape (with good food and drink) - a convivial and stimulating day. What Ho! out there.

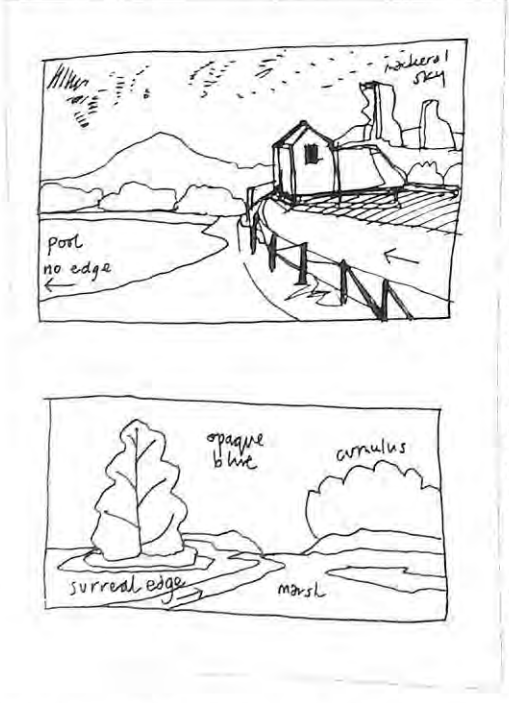
PERPETUATION OF THE PICTURESQUE

In the sales blurb for the massive three volume survey of "The Picturesque" Graham Clarke suggested that despite the fixed dates of the survey - 1700-1870 - the Picturesque was far from a dead form: it has he writes a 'remarkable tenacity and adaptability' which informs and guides our attitudes and responses to the natural landscape today. In many artistic quarters it is a quite crucial guiding principle, informing compositional and colour sensibilities and providing the staple language of tree formations, building shape and related *staffage*. It might also be argued that it still determines our popular notions of 'beautiful' scenery, and is the preferred choice for calendars, jigsaw puzzles and cushion covers.

As if to test this proposition two American artists Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid set out to define 'popular taste' in the United States. Throughout 1994 they, and a huge team of assistants, conducted 1001 interviews - each lasting an average of 24 minutes - across 48 States in an attempt to measure and then paint by consensus 'America's Most Wanted Picture'. It was not an easy task, as one of them related: 'Popular taste is easy to paint. It is the combining of contending lobbies that is difficult....' In one sense the pair were trying to achieve what the redoubtable William Gilpin had attempted two hundred years ago and whose picturesque method - the fusing together of separately satisfying parts - was encoded into those remarkable pseudo-scientific guide books for the Wye, Wales and elsewhere.

We should not be surprised then that their final version - painted after twenty failures -describes a mellow hillside, a pool of clear water in the middle distance and a group of children in the left foreground accompanied (somewhat incongruously) by several deer and the proud figure of George Washington. By contrast the image found to be the least liked by the US public was a harsh angular abstract, all nasty ochres and stippled texture - a little like cheap linoleum.

As one might guess, the unadulterated landscape figured highly in the interviews: only 3% of those asked wanted an urban exterior in their ideal picture. Soft curves were favoured over hard edges; clothed figures were preferred to nudes; recently deceased celebrities such as Elvis or JFK scored low against major historic figures. The artists' real problem lay in capturing the mood of the landscape: blue was by far the most popular colour (44% in favour) but the seasonal preference was for autumn; the solution was to paint an evening sunlight streaming in from the left and lighting the bushes and foliage. So much of this smacks of Gilpin's complex treatises - with its 'off-skips' and 'side screens' - but it also seems redolent of the observations made so often about contemporary landscape painting, especially the vast body of amateur and semi-professional work annually submitted to the Royal Academy and its sister institutions in London and the regions. So often the landscape submissions are decried as formulaic, producing a type that guarantees mediocrity and limited pictorial invention. Such criticisms imply that a set of immutable guidelines, perhaps even a theory, exists and is passed like a virus from generation to generation, academy to academy.



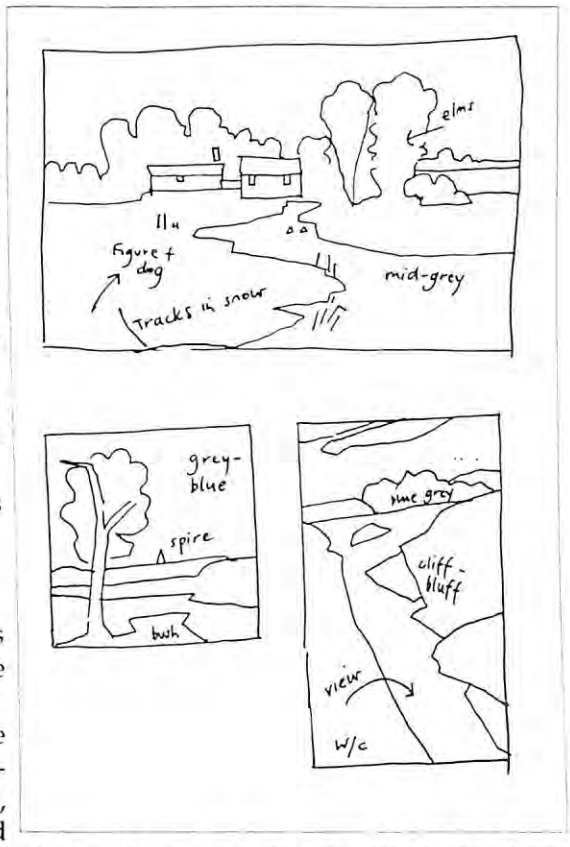
So to test out this notion I spent several long days in November 1994 studying the paintings hanging in the autumn open show at the Royal West of England Academy in Bristol. The RWA is one of four Royal Academies in the UK, but the only one outside London to have nurtured a school of art. Its Autumn Open is hugely popular in the West Country, is graced by many senior artistic figures and competition for wall space is fierce.

With the help of a post-graduate student I made thumbnail copies of every picture that qualified as landscape, noting colour schemes, composition, location and the painter's viewpoint. I also made a record of the subject matter, the season and the time of day the painting was made.

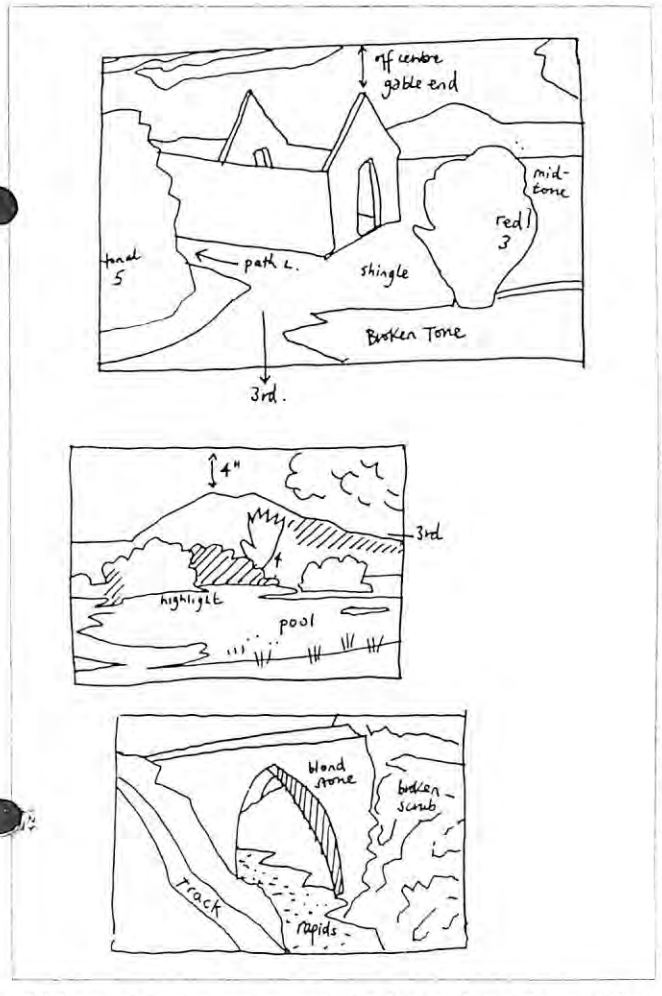
What would a 20th century Gilpin deduce from the RWA open? First of all he might be surprised that, in this urban age, there was such an interest in landscape at all. In fact, 47% of all the pictures in the show were landscape based, an extraordinarily high proportion. Even my rudimentary statistical analysis showed that certain conventions held: a horizontal format was nearly always preferred to a vertical one; short, unmodulated brushstrokes *a la Impressionisme* are favoured over long, heavily glazed ones. The

impressionist idiom is especially popular for the surfeit of cumulus-filled cloudscapes and subtle atmospheric effects that seem to be extremely popular with today's *plein air* painter.

Regarding season, autumn ranked more frequently than winter, winter more often than summer (except for numerous breezy beach scenes). Spring, though, is much too vibrant in colour and is avoided altogether. Accordingly there was a proliferation of cool greys, light blues, and the subtle tones of aerial perspective. High key colour appeared only occasionally, and often the most daring chromatic displays are preserved for the wild auburns and russets of autumnal scenes.



Possibly the easiest elements to enumerate in this particular show were the key compositional devices - for example, a dominant pathway is always preferred, especially where it leads the eye effortlessly towards the main subject - a farmhouse, an isolated building or cottage (never a South West Electricity generating sub-station or derelict train shed). The track or road, preferably unmetalled, invariably starts at the bottom edge of the canvas and leads in a gentle arc to the motif.



Only those especially skilled in one-point perspective seem to attempt to describe olive groves, vineyards or hop fields. Perhaps mastery of perspective can easily be mistaken by a selection committee for gratuitous dexterity and is usually ameliorated by decorative colour schemes. Clearly, there are a core of motifs that lend themselves to this level of linguistic skill: shimmering reflections of water are popular, whether it be the Grand Canal in Venice or the reflected mill buildings of Gloucester docks. Surprisingly, though, amongst water subjects streams and rivers are poorly represented while pools, lochs and corries are *de rigeur*, bubblings brooks are *passe*. And incidentally, unlike our American duo, most British painters in this show empty their landscapes of ramblers and roamers, except for summery beach scenes which are always teeming with people, strolling though not surfing.

While mountains, moors and marshes are all well represented in the 1994 show, ruined buildings - once the *leitmotif* of the Picturesque - are almost non-existent. Similarly excluded is virtually any representation of the industrial landscape - cars, pylons and telegraph wires are edited out, tarmacadam and breezeblock simply do not exist, and the habitual clutter and mess of the land is invariably tidied and pictorialised.

The usual result is a synthetic landscape, a benign frozen nature trapped between a veneer of English impressionism and story-book 'England'. Their charisma and appeal is obvious, though judging by my many conversations with Academicians and other exhibitors, any suggestion of a guiding catechism or rule-book would be a serious misrepresention of their ambitions as painters of the 20th century refrain of the 'Picturesque'.

Dr Paul Gough, Head of Fine Art, University of the West of England, Bristol

THE CORFU LANDSCAPES OF GERALD DURRELL

Gerald Durrell died in 1995, at the age of 70. Shortly before his death, he asked British writer Douglas Botting, whose life story of Gavin Maxwell (of "Ring of Bright Water" fame) he had so much admired, to write his official biography; and this will be published in September 1997.

Gerald was born in 1925 in British-ruled India, where his father was employed. At the age of three his father died, and his mother found herself back in England, a widow with four young children all under the age of eighteen: Lawrence, Leslie, Margaret, and Gerald, who was the youngest by some years.

In 1933 the family decided to move to Corfu. Corfu in the 1930s was still a society of peasant farmers. Here the pension paid to Mrs Durrell in British pounds once again made the Durrell family comparatively rich. Lawrence, who arrived first, set up home with his young wife, Nancy in a seaside villa in Kalami Bay in NE Corfu. The rest of the family soon followed, and they lived in a succession of villas within reach of Corfu Town, in the regions of Perama, Kontokali, and Criseda.

In Gerald Durrell's subsequent books on Corfu, these villas became the Strawberry-Pink Villa, the Daffodil-Yellow Villa, and the Snow-White Villa. As he was a child aged between eight and thirteen during these years, he naturally spent most of his time in and around his homes, and the landscapes drawn in his three Corfu books ("My Family and Other Animals"; "Birds, Beasts and Relatives"; and "The Garden of the Gods") remain recognisable to this day, sixty years later, when one visits their locations.



The Strawberry-Pink Villa sits on a hill-top in Perama, just above the Aegli Hotel. It has been so enlarged since the 1930s that it no longer resembles the descriptions in the books, and its Victorian-style garden and fucshia hedges have been replaced by concrete fences and a terrace with a swimming pool. The old pathways still remain, and slope in one direction down to Lake Halikiopoulou, and in the other down to the coast opposite Kanoni and Pondikonissi. Although subsequent developments along the Perama coastline have done away with the silent olive groves that Gerald describes as lying between his home and the sea, it is still an area of great natural beauty. Its small beaches, however, now attract an increasing number of people where once Gerald played alone, or had outdoor lessons with his tutors.

From Perama, the family moved to a huge Venetian villa at Kontokali. Sitting on the hillside overlooking the bay where the road turns right into Kontokali village, this villa and its grounds seem almost unchanged from the days the Durrells lived there. Reached through an old stone gateway, a long drive winds through groves of olive and of orange and lemon trees, passes the cottage where Lugaretzia the maid lived, and finally sweeps to a halt in front of a large terrace. Standing four-stories high, and resplendent in its surroundings, the villa so closely mirrors, even today, the descriptions Gerald gives in the various stories set there that one can almost imagine Theo, or Donald and Max, clopping their way to the front door in their horse-drawn carriages, or Spiro honking his way up in his ancient dodge.

The shore-line below is now lined by the main roadway heading northwards from Corfu Town. The wooden jetty used by the Durrells is gone, as are, of course, those good ships the Sea Cow and Bootle-Bumtrinket which tied up there. But the sea remains the same, and the islands off-shore still form an "enchanted" area of crystal-clear waters in which to swim, sail, and explore.

From Kontokali, the family returned to the Perama region, south of Corfu Town, Here stands a villa called Criseda; the Snow-White Villa which was probably the most distinguished of their three semi-permanent homes on the Island between 1933 and 1939. A most beautiful Georgian building that was once a weekend retreat for the British High Commissioners during the years Britain ruled Corfu (1817-1864), it stands on a prominent rise overlooking Lake Halikiopoulou, with its own acres of olive trees, and its own small church. Still owned by the Palatiano family, who rented it to Mrs Durrell (and to the British High Commissioners), its current tenant deliberately keeps the grounds in a state of nature, where the concerns of wildlife are pre-eminent.

All of these "Durrell" villas are now, of course, privately owned, well-guarded, and closed to the public. Only Lawrence Durrell's villa at Kalami may be approached, as that has become a taverna and hotel. If, however, anyone wishes to be immersed in the Corfu landscapes of Gerald Durrell, outside these villas, then they should stay in the Perama region, swim and sail along its coastline, visit Pondikonissi, and view, from a vantage point on the Kanoni Peninsular, Lake Halikiopoulou, which was Gerald's main childhood playing area.

Although Corfu's airport now crosses one side of the lake, the "chessboard fields" he so often describes still fringe its banks. Here the Venetians dug a network of ditches originally intended to funnel the salty waters (of what is actually a lagoon) into salt pans; and the same ditches now remain a haven for marine life and a shield for nesting birds. On the landward side, where the salt is kept at bay by winter rains, a patchwork of fields still yield their owners vegetables, grapes and figs every summer; and these owners were also, in many cases, children running about the same fields when Gerald Durrell foraged the and chatted to their parents sixty years ago.

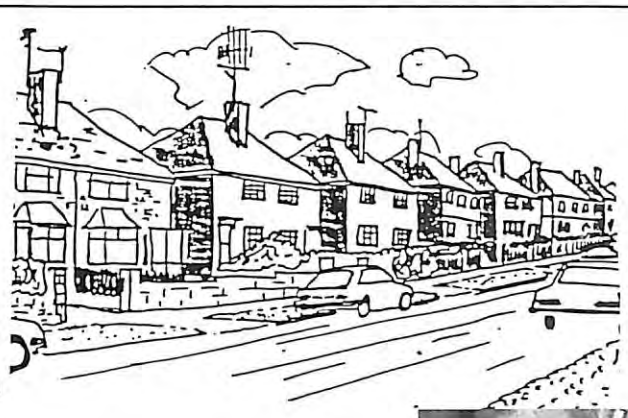
Further afield lies Lake Scottini. Inland from Kontokali, it is an area of shallow reedy waters several acres in extent. Now a major freshwater habitat in Corfu, it was here that Gerald and Theo spent many long days observing and collecting its wildlife.

Never visit any of these areas, however, expecting to see and to experience exactly what Gerald Durrell describes in his books, The physical landscapes may be largely unchanged, although much built over, and two of the villas might still be, outwardly, identical. However, the essential element in all of Gerald Durrell's landscapes is that they describe what was seen by a child. Indeed, his brilliance as a writer was his capacity to retain these childhood images and to reproduce them with all of the magic with which a child invests his surroundings.

Peter Harrison
Bloomsbury Place
London WC1N 3XX

HOUSING, ORDINARY STREETS AND THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Am I being perverse to suggest that landscape architects who revel in the restoration of parks, the creation of Dockland landscapes, the remoulding of northern coal tips and the design of prestige urban spaces, could do civilisation a favour and take the professional high ground, if they would put their stamp on some of the incredibly dull residential landscapes of England and Wales (Scotland and Ireland).



I have recent experience of acute urban residential dullness in the unrelieved broad low terraces of Roath, Cardiff where my daughter lived as a student, and the line drawing which offers a completely different urban form is a dull part of interior Reading.

Yes I know... and here I could append a list of reasons why this work is never requested, never available how there is no money, how the householders severally and personally create their suburb in the fullness of time, how ordinariness is the name of the game and on and on.... But tell me the good news.....dull old suburbs revitalised under the direction of the LI professional.

Meanwhile may I ask you landscape architects, and others, to consider this new housing area near Kildare in Ireland and suggest to fellow members how, and at what stage, it might have been or could be made better. Alternatively cheer me with what it will naturally evolve into. LRG have twice tried to find the time to consider suburban landscapes in a conference, but failed for want of organising time in what is a fascinating subject. Your letters of comment or example would be most welcome.



The airphoto by courtesy of BKS Surveys Ltd, Coleraine.

SOME CHANGES TO THE LANDSCAPE PROGRAMME AT NEWCASTLE

Readers may be interested to hear of some developments in the way that landscape architecture is being taught at postgraduate level at Newcastle University. The Master of Landscape Design programme has been relaunched as Master of Landscape Architecture. The name change is more than cosmetic because it allows us to give equal emphasis to *landscape design* and to *landscape planning* under the umbrella title of *landscape architecture*.

This reflects a change of emphasis. For many years Newcastle was known for an ecological slant towards landscape design teaching, although this, in effect, often involved our students being taught large chunks of natural science in other departments of the university. We have redesigned the programme to make far better use of the knowledge and skills available in the Department of Town and Country Planning, within which landscape architecture is taught. This in turn reflects the closeness of the two professions and the extent to which landscape architects are now involved in development issues. A completely modularised programme now gives students far greater opportunities to specialise. Many new optional choices, including CAD, GIS, EIA, landscape planning, urban regeneration and environmental art, are offered in the second year.

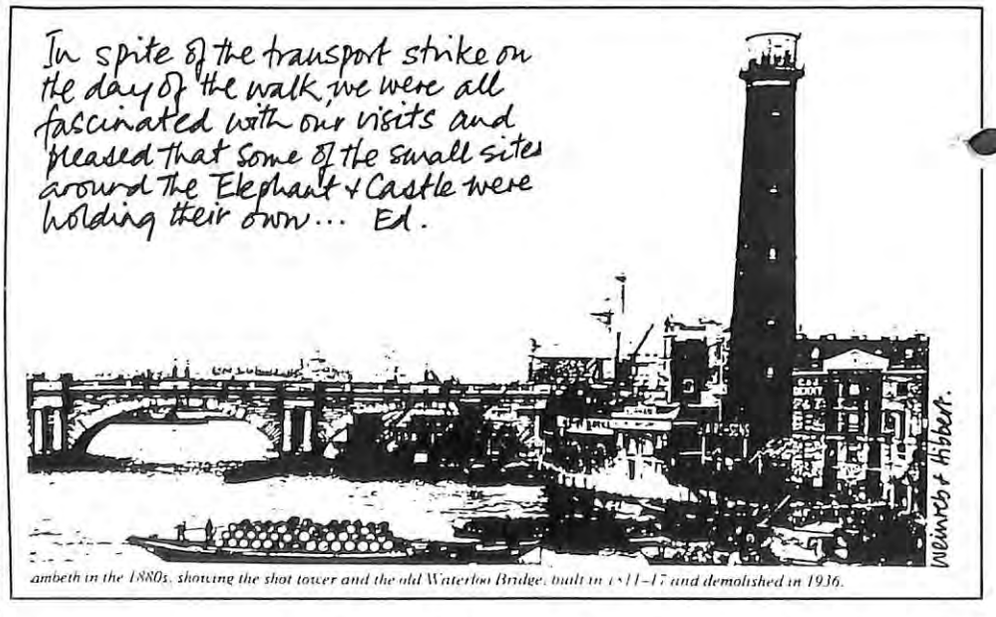
The restructured programme has already found favour with the Landscape Institute. When the Accreditation Panel visited in May of this year they commented on the "quality of work produced by the obviously highly motivated students", noting the improvements that had been made since their previous visit in 1990. They felt that modularisation had contributed to this process by providing a "much more organised framework within which students and staff could operates."

The curriculum changes have been complemented by some personnel changes. Mike Downing, Reader in Landscape Design, steps down as Programme Director, and moves to a half-time appointment. Dr John Benson becomes the new Programme Director, and Maggie Roe, who has been on a half-time, temporary contract, becomes both full-time and permanent. She assumes responsibility for the second year of the programme, while I continue as Co-ordinator for the first year.

Ian Thompson, Lecturer in Landscape Architecture, University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

AA GARDEN CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER 17

"This issue starts with good news for Painshill. AA students have visited it many times over the years and watched Janie Burford and her team gradually restoring the landscape. We commiserated with them over the storm damage in 1987 and now we can congratulate them that finally, full opening to the public is assured through the generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Not such good news from Scotland: where we follow with a sad story from Christopher Dingwall, Garden History Conservation Officer in Scotland, on the plight of many of Scotland's glasshouses. He shows elegant, crumbling, decaying examples which surely should be saved for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. We then move to descriptions of the 'Twilight Gardens' south of the Thames which are a particular interest (but she describes them as her *'somewhat eccentric taste in historic gardens'*) of Joyce Bellamy. She is pleased that some of the small sites around the Elephant and Castle look less derelict than they did a while ago, although, this has been at the expense of some of their original features - their original small ornamental bothies for instance. There are the usual list of events, books, news and cuttings and the issue finishes with the story behind the fifteen years of the writing of *The Kitchen Garden* by Susan Campbell, published in September. It was a difficult task to pick from her book which of her many lovely drawings to illustrate her article".



Lambeth in the 1880s, showing the shot tower and the old Waterloo Bridge, built in 1811–17 and demolished in 1936.

Pamela Paterson
25 Jermyn Street London SW1 6HP



BALES

Some time ago, it was probably several years, I kept referring to bales, of straw and hay and silage in the landscape. No issue was without its comment and they became increasingly whimsical until I found myself inadvertently advertising a successful tour operator of the same name. There and then I called a halt to the business.

Now however the old obsession has broken through as a fever and I feel that I have to see bales and bring them to your notice. But with the fever at its height, the season was nearly over, and extended journeys around the West of England revealed only two bale fields. Thinking geographically I took myself north and in the cold heaths of far north Shropshire I found what I had been seeking. As I took the necessary photos the wind blew cold and chilled my fevered brow.



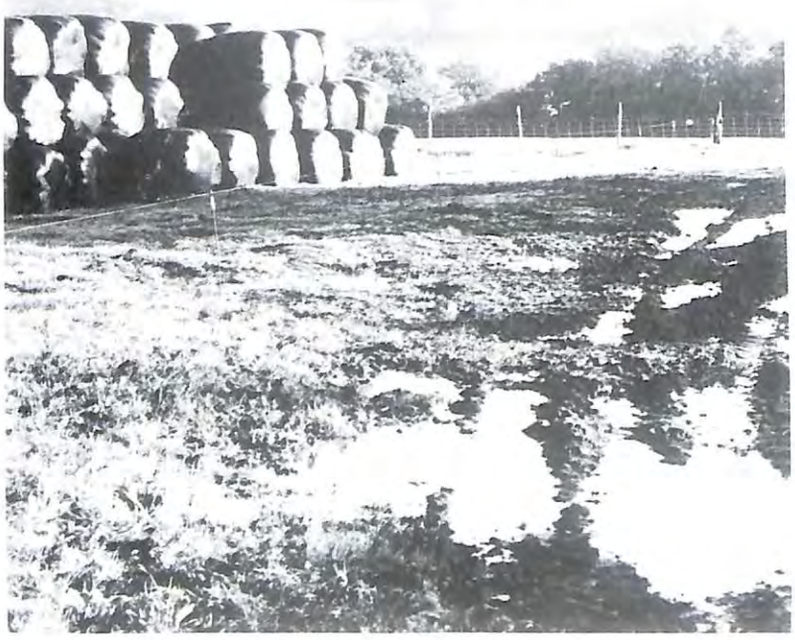
Bales seem to have three claims on the landscape observer's senses:

*they represent fields populated, like animals, like peasants, like small cabins dotted on a plain, like pig arks,

*they also measure out the middle ground the foreground and the background, offer a focus and create for us when we travel at speed a set of changing arrangements,

patterns and perspectives revealing sudden alleys and bafflingly random crowds of 'bales playing Queenie', motionless until one looks again then 'all change!'.
*They mark out the season and speak of harvest gathered in, but this perversely seems their least arresting landscape characteristic.

I enclose a variety of arrangements including bales sheltering like elephants beneath the trees.









LANDSCAPE RESEARCH GROUP

Bud Young

PRINTED BY MOOR PRINT MANATON (01647) 221229