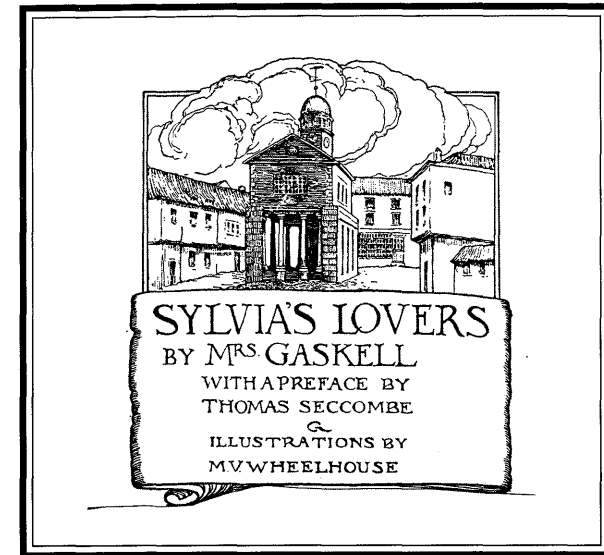


# The Gaskell Society



Tomb designed and sculpted by William Wetmore Storey for his wife, Emlyn, at the English Cemetery where Keats and Shelley are also buried.



THE GASKELL SOCIETY HOME PAGE has all the latest information on meetings.  
<http://gaskellsociety.users.btopenworld.com>

If you have any material or suggestions for future Newsletters, please contact Mrs. Joan Leach,  
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## NEWSLETTER

Spring 2007 - Number 43

## Editor's Letter

Joan Leach

We are looking forward to a lively programme for 2007 and especially to our conference at Canterbury, when we will have more than 100 members attending. Our groups, meeting in Knutsford, Manchester, London, Bath and York offer opportunities to share Gaskell lectures and social events.

We hope you will enjoy in this Newsletter reading about the trip to Rome following Gaskell footsteps and we are grateful to Peter Skrine for his account of our activities. We felt we were recapturing some of the pleasures Elizabeth Gaskell had found in Rome; she had some trouble getting there because a ship's boiler burst: we had problems at airports because of increased security measures but we felt that Rome welcomed us.

Some of you will have heard the news that BBC is starting to film *Cranford Chronicles* in April. We were disappointed when this was shelved a couple of years ago but now the funds have been secured to go ahead with this classic drama series of five one-hour episodes. The script has been carefully devised by combining *Cranford* with parts of *Mr Harrison's Confessions* and *My Lady Ludlow*. It will have humour, drama and pathos with Judi Dench playing the role of Miss Matty.

The idea for the series originated with Sue Birtwistle who also produced *Wives and Daughters*. Sue grew up in Northwich so knows the Knutsford and Gaskell setting. Sadly *Cranford* days cannot be reconstructed in Knutsford so filming will be in the Cotswolds and London. Even the Royal George with its old assembly rooms is no more. Only this week I had an e-mail from a couple in Australia planning to return there to celebrate their wedding night of 40 years ago and were puzzled as to why they could not find it on the web.

Sue Birtwistle tells me a great deal of trouble is being taken to be true to Gaskell's writing and that with Jenny Uglow on board as advisor they feel it as near as they can get to Gaskell's approval.

BBC will be filming for 14 weeks with a post-production schedule of 18 weeks.

You may like to get a copy of the Wordsworth edition of *Cranford and other Stories* with introduction and notes by John Chapple. This includes *Mr Harrison's Confessions* and other stories. Good value at £1.99. It will be available at meetings, Knutsford Heritage Centre and Plymouth Grove or you may order it from your bookshop.

This year is the 150th anniversary of the publication of Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë*. The Brontë Society will have linked events and our Autumn meeting on 29th September at Knutsford will retrace the Gaskells' year of 1857.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our Canterbury conference, July 27-30, or you may like to visit North Wales with us. Details are at the end of this Newsletter.

## John Geoffrey Sharps

### From Heather Sharps:

I, and my son and daughter, Paul and Rosalind, wish to thank all who wrote appreciative tributes (in the Spring 2006 *Newsletter*) to my late husband, John Geoffrey Sharps, who died on 6th January. Alan Shelston's tribute in the *Manchester Guardian* will also be remembered. They acknowledged, movingly, Geoffrey's scholarly work and devoted activity in the Gaskell Society, for the promotion of Gaskell studies and for the recognition of Elizabeth Gaskell as an important and influential novelist and biographer. Such appreciation has been a consolation to us who cannot adequately express how deeply he is missed. Finally, we shall always be grateful for the numerous letters of condolence which conveyed kind thoughts and wishes.

Geoffrey and I first met in 1963 at The Queen's University of Belfast shortly before Geoffrey graduated Master of Education and I, Bachelor of Arts in English (Honours). Two years later we were engaged, and in 1966 we married in Belfast. Our marriage lasted for thirty-nine years. Our interests and pastimes were the same: respectively, English Literature and Education, travel, the theatre and the cinema.

We assisted each other greatly in our careers: Geoffrey encouraged me in my teaching of English and Modern Languages (to adolescents and adults), as well as research on Sir James P. Kay-Shuttleworth. In fact it was Geoffrey who suggested that it would be worthwhile to carry out a study of Sir James' novels and some of his other works. Part of this research was ably supervised by Professor John Chapple of the University of Hull and part by Professor John Hordern and Dr. Frank Felsenstein of the University of Leeds. I helped Geoffrey in his career as lecturer in Psychology under the Leeds Institute of Education (in chauffeuring him to numerous schools where he had to supervise and inspect the quality of the students' teaching); in proof-reading the manuscript of his book on Mrs Gaskell, and assisting him to have

it published. Furthermore, we were hosts to a number of Gaskell scholars from the United Kingdom and abroad. In fact Geoffrey introduced me to Mrs Gaskell, and that is why I became a founder member of the Society and have written on the relationship between Mrs Gaskell and Kay-Shuttleworth as well as on the similarities and differences in their works of fiction. In my Hull dissertation I also compare his fictional works with Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*.

Geoffrey stipulated that I, as his sole executor, should donate most of his collection firstly to the John Rylands Library of Manchester where a large part of *Gaskelliana* already resided; secondly to the Brotherton Library at Leeds (which possesses the manuscript of *Sylvia's Lovers*), and thirdly to the Manchester Central Library, which specialises in foreign translations of works originally written in English. Christine Lingard, a staunch member of the Gaskell Society, welcomed this last donation with enthusiasm. I also gave a number of copies of Elizabeth Gaskell's books to Plymouth Grove (a gesture greatly appreciated by Janet Allan). I am sure Geoffrey would have wanted me to do this.

Finally I must convey my gratitude to the following for their advice and assistance in the administration of Geoffrey's collection: Walter Smith, friend and excellent bibliographer of Elizabeth Gaskell's works; and our long-standing archivist friends, Dr David Iredale and Alyne Slasor.

Last but certainly not least, I wish to thank Frances Baker for her infinite patience and thoroughness in finalising the organization and transportation of the material to the John Rylands Library. Of great importance to me too, is the gratitude of Chris Shepherd, the admirable archivist of the Brotherton Library at Leeds University, who regarded it a privilege to be able to choose important volumes of Elizabeth Gaskell's works which would add interest and value to the Library's collection. I thank also stalwart members of the Gaskell Society, Janet and Pauline Kennerley of the North West Branch, who last year transported copies of my husband's book, *Mrs Gaskell's Observation and Invention*, as well as a large number books designated for the Manchester Central Library and Plymouth Grove.

If, in the future, there is an Elizabeth Gaskell Exhibition in Manchester, part of the collection may be put on display. My family and I wish to keep, as well as some of the author's books, her Wedgwood teapot and copy of the Book of Common Prayer (dated 1865); but we would be willing to 'lend' these items for use at an exhibition.

Geoffrey was a family man too, a loving father and eventually grandfather. Unfortunately the last years of his life were dogged by ill-health - pulmonary fibrosis, heart failure and cellulitis. However he remained cheerful, despite having to be attached to an oxygen machine for fifteen months before he died. The following

tribute from the Book of Remembrance in Woodlands Crematorium in Scarborough expresses most fittingly his family's emotions:

*Sharps, John Geoffrey  
Worthy of Remembrance  
As a husband, father, grandfather, scholar and lecturer,  
also for his integrity, generosity and kindness.*

**Editor:** So many of us have continued to miss Geoffrey but are cheered by happy memories. In our next *Newsletter* Frances Baker, keeper of collections at John Rylands Library, will write about their work and the Gaskell collection.

Many of Geoffrey's books were bought by book dealer C.W.Hawley who has a large range of Gaskell and other 19th century writers. He offers our members a 10% discount. He can be contacted by email [clh@clhawley.co.uk](mailto:clh@clhawley.co.uk) or phone 01756 792380.

### *Garibaldi at Caprera* Alan Shelston

In 1862 Elizabeth Gaskell wrote a 'Preface' to the English translation of Colonel Candido Augusto Vecchj's memoir of Garibaldi, *Garibaldi at Caprera*. This was a piece of occasional journalism on her part, and presumably a commission by the publisher, Macmillan, for whom she published nothing else. Although she later referred to her 'editing' of the book this exaggerates; there is nothing of hers to the project except her short introduction. The copy of the work held in the Stanton Whitfield collection in Knutsford Public Library, however is a rather special one, since on one of its front end-papers, opposite Whitfield's elegant book plate, there has been fixed a letter from Vecchj himself, protesting about the inadequacy of the translation. The volume itself is a presentation copy, as this letter indicates. As well as Vecchj's letter, it has a few pencilled annotations, probably by Stanton Whitfield, identifying both the anonymous translators of the volume, and perhaps also the person to whom it has been sent. The letter is in Vecchj's Italian and his handwriting makes for some difficulties of transcription. The opening dedication 'Alla signora Roberts' and date, and the closing address, 'Villa Spinola' (Vecchj's house in Genoa) are in a different hand. My suggested transcription and translation are as follows:

Alla signora Roberts  
Ai 12 Marzo 1862

Vi offro la traduzione di un mio povero scritto. La penna inglese maltrattò la

italiana, in modo che io non vi riconosco più i miei pensieri. Interi periodi tolti. Frasi cancellati. Racconti spezzati. Spente le vampe dell'anima mia. Graditilo com' è.

Villa Spinola  
C Aug. Vecchj

[To signora Roberts

I offer you a translation of a poor work of mine. The English pen mistreated the Italian in such a way that I can no longer recognize my thoughts there. Complete sentences removed. Phrases taken out. Stories broken up. The flames of my inspiration extinguished. Be good enough to receive it as it is.

Villa Spinola  
C. Aug. Vecchj]

As I have indicated, the translators were not identified when the volume was published. However a pencilled annotation on the title-page under the words 'Translated from the Italian' identifies them as 'L. and M. Ellis', and this is confirmed by Allibone's *Dictionary of English Literature and British and American Authors* (1891). Vecchj is perhaps less than kind to their efforts, since the narrative reads fluently enough in English. The other significant annotation is on the inside back cover of the volume; it too is in pencil and it draws attention to a reference to a 'Captain Roberts' on page 49 of the volume - could he be the husband of the lady to whom Vecchj sent the volume, perhaps in recognition of his services to his hero?

*Garibaldi at Caprera* gives an account of the time when Garibaldi, exiled from the mainland of Italy during the Risorgimento, established a home on the island of Caprera off the north Sardinian coast. Garibaldi passes over his residence at Caprera in his autobiography saying only that 'during the period between my arrival in Genoa in May 1854 and my departure in February in 1859 for the Italian mainland from the island of Caprera - where I had acquired a small property - there is nothing of interest to relate.'<sup>1</sup> But it was here that he lived the simple life, before returning to conduct his successful campaigns in Sicily and on the mainland, in the struggle for Italian nationhood. Candido Augusto Vecchj (1830-1869) is described by Gaskell at the opening of her account as 'one of Garibaldi's closest companions in arms'.<sup>2</sup> For his part Garibaldi relates in the autobiography that the plans for the great expedition to Sicily, which initiated the final stages of the Italian struggle, were prepared 'in Augusto Vecchj's Villa Spinola [at Genoa]'. ( p.85) Prior to that, like Garibaldi himself, Vecchj had been living in exile in France. Vecchj later wrote two accounts of the Risorgimento, *La Italia: storia di due anni 1848-9 (1851)* and *La vita e le geste*

di Giuseppe Garibaldi, apparently published posthumously in 1910. Incidentally he should not be confused with his long-lived son, Augusto Vittorio Vecchj (1842-1932), who followed in his father's patriotic footsteps, and produced works of maritime strategy and naval history, sometimes under the pseudonym of Jack La Bolina.

Vecchj's account of life at Caprera fills in the gap left by Garibaldi's own account of his life. He tells with some pride of the place that he held in Garibaldi's affections, of the trust placed in him as his leader's secretary and amanuensis, and of the simplicity of life on Garibaldi's small estate. He offers examples of the generosity of his hero's behaviour, and of his affection for his children, and also of the evidence he receives of the admiration for Garibaldi that came from abroad. Amongst the correspondence he had to deal with were 'glowing pages from the fair-haired daughters of Albion, begging for autographs and locks of the hero's hair' (p.56) Gaskell, herself a keen collector of autographs, would not perhaps have gone so far. But the Italian struggle for independence from Austria raised considerable enthusiasm throughout Europe in the 1860s, and this she would seem to have shared. In her Preface she writes of how Garibaldi's 'valour and his patriotism' had 'opened out for [Italy] the prospect of a fresh career of glory' (p.ii), and *Garibaldi in Caprera* appeared contemporaneously in German and in Dutch translations as well as in English. Advertisements in the English translation refer to a number of similar works which celebrate the Italian cause, for example Henry Lushington's *The Italian War*, 1848-9, a work whose title anticipates Vecchj's own study of the same years. Mary Thwaite, who compiled a hand-list of the Stanton Whitfield collection, has associated the project with Gaskell's interest in Italian affairs, initiated by her visit in 1857.<sup>3</sup> This perhaps stretches a point, since in a letter to Henry Morley she would seem to disown her contribution: 'the task of editing the book was imposed on me by force, not adopted of my own free will.' But Vecchj's work, with her help, took its place amongst the many works at that time which promoted the Garibaldi legend and endorsed his place in the drive for Italian nationhood.

Notes:

1. Giuseppe Garibaldi, *My Life*, 1932, trans. Tim Parks (London 2004), p. 53. Further references in the text.
2. 'Preface' to *Garibaldi in Caprera*, 1862, p. i. Further references to this volume in the text.
3. Mary Thwaite, 'Gaskell in Italy (1)', *Gaskell Society Journal* 4, 1991, p. 61. Mary Thwaite was a founder member of the Gaskell Society and a distinguished librarian who took a particular interest in the Stanton Whitfield Collection.

*The collection of A Stanton Whitfield, one of the founders of modern Gaskell scholarship, is housed in Knutsford Public Library. It contains a number of first and early editions of Gaskell's works, together with important secondary material. A*

*handlist, prepared by Mary Thwaite, accompanies the collection, which can be consulted by arrangement with the librarian, Mrs Jackie Heaton. I should like to thank Mrs Heaton for her assistance in the preparation of this article, and on other occasions* AJS.

## The Gaskell Society Visit to Rome 18 September - 24 September 2006

Peter Skrine

It had poured with rain the day before, but the Gaskell party arrived in sunshine which lasted all week. Clearly Elizabeth Gaskell was smiling on our visit and ensuring that we, in 2006, would see the Rome she knew and loved 149 years ago, and where she was so happy. Our visit started on the morning of 18 September. By mid-afternoon we had all settled in at the Hotel Lancelot, a delightful, well-run hotel quietly tucked away in prime position close to the Colosseum; by dinner Anthony Coles, our expert cicerone throughout our visit, had already taken us on our first sight-seeing expedition to the basilica of San Clemente, close by, with a recently discovered temple of Mithras underneath it and splendid mosaics inside it; it has been entrusted to the Irish Dominicans since 1677, and the merry-making in our hotel soon told us that the Irish connection flourishes still; a charming young couple from Cork were getting married there next day and were promised a papal blessing at St. Peter's provided they still had on their wedding clothes. Their happiness and the champagne they kindly shared with us helped take a weight off Rosemary Marshall's mind: her suitcase had failed to arrive, and she had to make elegant do with her husband Tony's shirts until it was traced and returned thanks to the hotel manageress's help. By evening many of the group were ready to take an evening stroll to the Colosseum: for many these moonlit walks were the highlight of the visit.

For others Day 2 turned out to be the day to remember. The morning was spent visiting St Peter's, for which we had the benefit of Father Thomas Wood, a parish priest from Liverpool, as our mentor. His inspirational three-hour guided tour of the great church revealed the extraordinary craftsmanship which went into its construction, and the lessons, divine and human, which its stones can tell us. We didn't experience the pomp and circumstance that Elizabeth Gaskell and Catherine Winkworth witnessed in April 1857, but the sight of a new ambassador to the Holy See and his wife being solemnly escorted down the vast nave by Swiss guards in their blue, yellow and red Renaissance uniforms, gave us, too, something to remember. The afternoon took us even closer the Rome Elizabeth Gaskell knew: the Trevi Fountain and then Via San Isidoro, with its associations with her Roman friends, Emelyn and William Wetmore Story, the American sculptor whose very last

work, an angel weeping over his wife's grave, we were to come across in the Cimitero degli Stranieri along with those of Keats and Shelley on the last day of our visit. Such chance encounters brought home her intense fondness for the friends she made during those Roman holidays.

Nothing we did under Anthony's guidance was a waste of time or energy. On Day 3 many of us went to see the Sistine Chapel, while others chose to walk through Rome's ancient Roman centre, past the Forum of Trajan, to the church of San Pietro in Vincoli and Michelangelo's great statue of Moses. The afternoon added further dimensions to our experience of Elizabeth Gaskell's Rome: the Spanish Steps, the tiny room in which Keats died, and the famous Babington Tearooms close by, survivors from the late Victorian age, then on to the Pincio, the Victorians' favourite promenade, and thence, via the Via Babuino in which Catherine Winkworth stayed, to the Anglican Church, where the Rev. Jonathan Boardman, author of *Rome: A Literary and Cultural Companion* (2000), and his wife entertained us to refreshments in the cool green shade of its secluded garden.

Day 4 gave us the delightful opportunity of seeing two of Rome's finest churches: Bernini's masterly Sant' Andrea al Quirinale and Borromini's delightful San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, ideal preparation for our visit to the Palazzo Barberini - where the Storeys were living when Elizabeth Gaskell paid her second visit to Rome in 1863 - and where we had the rare delight of being almost the only people admiring its fine collection of paintings. The afternoon brought us to the end of our stay in Rome itself. Via the Protestant cemetery already mentioned, and the vast basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, we moved on to the second phase of our stay: Palazzola, a former monastery high up above Lake Albano, now run as a retreat by the venerable English College. No contrast could have been more delightful. The space, the silence, the light, and the views of hill and lake across towards Castel Gandolfo, where Pope Benedict XVI was residing, seemed like a painting. We recovered quickly from our physical and mental Roman exertions and on Friday happily set off for Castel Gandolfo and on to Frascati with its memorial to Cardinal Stuart, brother of Bonnie Prince Charlie, restored with money donated by our late Queen Mother; then followed by an evening enlivened by a lecture on Mrs Gaskell in Rome given by Dr. Enrichetta Soccio, who came all the way from Pescara to be with us, accompanied by her husband Paolo and her pretty baby, Larissa. On Saturday the Appian Way, a descent into the Catacomb of St. Calixtus, discovered in 1849, and a stroll along to the tomb of Cecilia Metella took us vividly back to the more distant past that had also attracted the attention of Elizabeth Gaskell and her Roman friends. Home again to Palazzola, a rest, dinner, and two interesting papers, one by Christine Lingard on the Wetmore Storys, the other a timely reminder by Janet Kennerley that it is in Gaskell's neglected yet fascinating *A Dark Night's Work* that we find her Roman experiences surfacing most vividly.

Sunday, 24 September, brought us to the end of our Roman holiday. It started with an optional Mass in "our" chapel at which Celia, my wife, was prevailed on to play the organ, and at which all present gratefully sang two of Catherine Winkworth's masterly hymn translations: "Praise to the Lord" and "Now thank we all our God" - a truly fitting conclusion to a week during which we had enjoyed so many beautiful and memorable sights sure in the knowledge that Elizabeth Gaskell had seen them too. Appropriately, our stay in Rome, so ably led by Anthony Coles, ended with a visit to the Villa Borghese and its sun-drenched gardens. It was to visit this very spot that she had invited Catherine Winkworth to join her and Mr. Norton for a drive on 4 April 1857. The day after, the heavens opened, the underground was flooded, and more rain fell in Rome than is normal for the entire month of September. Even the Trevi Fountain overflowed. As Madame de Pompadour observed, 'après nous le déluge'.



Charles Elliot Norton had an apartment near here



# Antonio Gallenga

Christine Lingard

With the Gaskell trip to Rome still fresh in our memory I thought I would take the opportunity to discuss another Italian of her acquaintance, the almost forgotten novelist, Antonio Gallenga (1812-1895). Though there is only one recorded meeting in July 1855 (*Letters* 251 and 252), Gaskell certainly knew his Manchester-born wife, Juliet Schunck, whose funeral William conducted in 1855, and they shared many friends and acquaintances.

Gallenga (also known as Luigi Marriotti) was an émigré from Parma, and a controversial character - a journalist (foreign correspondent on *The Times*) and author of lurid melodramatic novels and short stories, such as *The Blackgown Papers* of 1846, full of gothic sentimentality, though they did draw attention to the wretched conditions endured by Italian boys brought to Britain as professional beggars. He was a naturalised British subject. His *The Invasion of Denmark* (1864) is to be republished in June by Helion.

He had spent some time in America, where he knew Longfellow, and in London had courted the company of the intellectual society from the 1830s - the likes of Lord Lytton (who offered him the post of secretary), the Carlyles, Robert Browning (long before he became famous), Lady Byron and Mrs Jameson. He gave Dickens Italian lessons and when the latter went on a tour of Italy he took letters on Gallenga's behalf to his political friends there. In 1842 they were on the same ship crossing the Atlantic for America when they were hit by a hurricane. Dickens was confined to his cabin for four days with seasickness. He wrote:

[I] was long troubled with the idea that he [Gallenga] might be up, and well, and a hundred times a day expecting me to call upon him in his saloon.... I don't think I ever felt such perfect gratification and gratitude of heart, as I did when I heard from the ship's doctor that he had been obliged to put a large mustard poultice on this gentleman's stomach. I date my recovery from the receipt of that intelligence.

Gallenga was involved in the movement for the unification of Italy, having in his youth offered his services to murder the King. He publicly attacked the Italian patriot Joseph Mazzini after the Italian Wars. (Mazzini had been in London for a time in the 1840s, running a school at Hatton Garden). He met his wife when he came to Manchester in 1846, to lecture on Dante on the recommendation of Henry Crabb Robinson. (It is not recorded if Gaskell attended, despite her interest in the author, but possibly not, as in September of that year she was busy giving birth to her

daughter Julia). Juliet Schunck was 16 years her husband's junior when they married in 1847. Mazzini was convinced he had married her for her money (£500 a year with a prospect of £1,000). Gallenga zealously protected his private life and all references to her are tender, but he is not totally reliable - there is no firm evidence either way about their relationship. Juliet was only 39 when she died of scarlet fever. After her death he soon had another lady friend though it was three years before he married again (a different lady but also Protestant - the widow of a grandson of Robert Raikes of Sunday School fame). A lot of people found him untrustworthy, including Robinson: 'I succeeded in getting Gallenga into the Athenaeum Club by great exertion and was made ashamed of my success by the development of his character. Gallenga later secured a lectureship at London University. Juliet's son Romeo returned to Italy and her grandson gave the Palazzo Gallenga in Perugia to the nation to become the Italian University for Foreigners.

Juliet was the daughter of the Frankfurt-born businessman Martin Schunck (1789-1872), a member of the Cross Street congregation. His interests were in shipping and importing textiles. Martin was educated in Switzerland. He came to Manchester from Malta in 1808 after a military career, and opened his first office in George Street. He was a trustee of Cross Street Chapel, a share-holder of the Portico Library to which he regularly brought foreign visitors, chairman of the Schiller Anstalt (a German library), and on the committee of Manchester College, holding more important civic positions than Salis Schwabe (another German to whom he was related by marriage), principally because he was not Jewish.

His ancestors had originally been Dutch. He had travelled widely in Europe and met the foreign correspondent Henry Crabb Robinson, a friend of Wordsworth, whose diaries are full of anecdotes about celebrities of the time. They also appear to have known Geraldine Jewsbury and Tottie Fox well. His son Edward Schunck (1820-1903), who was a talented scientist with an interest in the chemical properties of dyes, was a friend of Jane Carlyle.

Further reading:

Toni Cerutti: *Antonio Gallenga. An Italian writer in Victorian England* (London: Oxford University Press for the University of Hull), 1974.

# *The Sorrows of Young Philip*

Ian M. Emberson

One aspect of literary criticism which has received too little attention in my opinion, is the problem of characters who have got into the wrong novels. Think of poor Philip Hepburn, and his courtship of the wayward Sylvia Robson. He gives her a copy of *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and how does she respond? He finds out on his next visit to Haytersbank, when he sees it shelved alongside *The Complete Farrier* - unread and upside-down. Now if only Philip could somehow have wriggled out of the pages of *Sylvia's Lovers*, and crept into *Cousin Phillis*. There he would present the book to Phillis Holman. Imagine how her beautiful thoughtful eyes would have devoured every word - prior to translating it into Greek, and reading it to her father at two o'clock in the morning - just before he got round to praying for his enemies.

Come to think of it, young Werther could have done with a bit of help himself. Supposing Emma Woodhouse had wandered into Goethe's novel, and, with more luck at match-making than she ever had in the Jane Austen version, had distracted the hero's gaze from the already-married Lotte, and fixed him up with some cute, bright-eyed, unattached young maiden? They could then have lived happily ever after, and the book renamed *The Joys of Young Werther*.

But there are snags to all this. Just consider what might have happened if Bertha Rochester, during one of Grace Poole's moments of inebriation, had slipped stealthily out of *Jane Eyre*, and slithered into the pages of *Pride and Prejudice*. Poor Elizabeth! Imagine her returning from the honeymoon, and waking up in the middle of the night to a sound of screaming from the room above, and a realization that Mr. Darcy had a mad wife in the attic! It doesn't bear thinking about. Really the characters are best left firmly imprisoned within their original covers. They cause enough trouble as it is.

## *84 Plymouth Grove*

Manchester Historic Buildings Trust, the owners of the building, are working hard towards getting a foot on the lottery ladder. This has meant the commissioning of an Options Appraisal, now nearly complete, which has looked at all possible uses of the building. It will be followed by a Project Planning Grant Application, which will hopefully give us £50,000 towards yet more studies which must be done before the main application is compiled. Meanwhile work continues on the house. At a working day in January, with both Trustees and Friends, the kitchen was reorganised, all the

ground floor windows were cleaned, inside and out, much unwanted material was cleared ready for dumping in a skip, and the partition round the staircase was removed revealing the entrance hall in its proper proportions.

Help is coming from many quarters, and we are specially pleased to have an international team of students from Manchester Business School who are at present masterminding the design of a Gaskell House website.

After a busy autumn the Friends of Plymouth Grove are now preparing for a busy Spring, with regular open days on the first of each month and special events, starting with **Ann O'Brien's talk on Meta Gaskell on 17 March** (£7.50 including an Italian meal), to be followed by a **Crimea Day School on Saturday 28 April** (£15 including lunch).

Hilda Holmes is taking the bookings for these on 0161 487 2593 and as space is limited this must be done in advance. The bookstall flourishes and we have just taken delivery of 10,000 new publicity leaflets! We are to be represented at the International Women's day event at Manchester Town Hall. Later events will include the popular plant sale in May.

## *BOOK NOTES*

Christine Lingard

*Ethics and the English Novel from Austen to Forster* by Valerie Wainwright, Ashgate, £50, due in March.

A study of ethical thought in the novels of Austen, Gaskell, Dickens, Hardy and Forster, and the influence of a number of leading philosophers such as Kant and John Stuart Mill. There is also mention of lesser-known figures such as the Unitarian minister Edward Tagart, who was a friend of the Gaskells.

Some notable reissues: In May, Hesperus are reissuing *Cousin Phillis* with an introduction by Jenny Uglow, at £6.99 (paperback).

The second edition of Patsy Stoneman's *Elizabeth Gaskell* is available from Manchester University Press at £15.99.

The audio publisher CSA world is releasing a four-CD set, *The Best of Elizabeth Gaskell: an abridgement of Mary Barton* read by Maggie Ollerenshaw, and *North and South* read by Jenny Agutter. Approximate running time 5 hours, due in July.



The same company has on its list two of Gaskell's short stories: 'The Half-brothers' on *Classic Women's Short Stories*, vol. 1 and 2, read by Harriet Walter (with stories by Winifred Holtby, Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, Edith Wharton and others); and 'Right at Last', read on a 4-CD set, *Best of Women's Short Stories*, and also on *Classic Women's Short Stories* vol. 3 (2 CDs).

## Manchester Regional History Review

Joan Leach

*The Manchester Regional History Review*, Volume 17.ii, follows a theme of the literary culture of nineteenth-century Manchester and its region.

This issue has four articles covering periodical publications. Terry Wyke and Michael Powell write of Leary's *History of the Manchester Periodical Press* which has been a major research resource. Leary's record was wide-ranging, from newspapers to magazines, trade publications and directories, beginning with *The Manchester Weekly Journal* of 1719. He also tried to identify proprietors, editors and contributors. This comprehensive work failed to find a publisher so is available only in two MS versions; plans are in hand to publish a complete version. Bradshaw's *Manchester Journal* had high aspirations to produce a quality, well-illustrated weekly magazine covering art, science and literature at a cost of a penny-ha'penny. Bradshaw, better known for his rail timetables, with his partner Blacklock, aimed to celebrate Manchester's achievements as a productive, dynamic town proud of its history. Mary Howitt was a contributor, but like Howitts' *Journal* it was doomed to financial failure. Other articles include *Ben Brierley's Journal*, the most long-lasting of the local magazines; *The Cotton Factory Times 1885-1937*; *Nineteenth-Century Theatre in Manchester* and *William Harrison Ainsworth*. Christine Lingard has contributed a useful account of The Language and Literature Library at Manchester Central Library.

For more details contact: [http:// www.mcrh.mmu.ac.uk/pubs/mrhr.htm](http://www.mcrh.mmu.ac.uk/pubs/mrhr.htm)

AGM Meeting on Saturday March 31st, 2007 at Cross Street Chapel, Manchester.

10.30am Coffee

11.00am AGM

11.45am approx. The Daphne Carrick Lecture by Dr Patsy Stoneman:

The Battle for Gaskell: Elizabeth Gaskell's Literary Reputation

Patsy Stoneman is an Emeritus Reader in English Literature at the University of Hull. The second edition of her critical biography of Gaskell has just been published and her talk will revolve around the afterword that she added to that volume.

1.00pm Buffet Lunch

2.15pm approx. A trans-atlantic friendship: Readings from the letters of Charles Eliot Norton, the Gaskell family and John Ruskin.

## London and South East Group

### Programme for 2007-8

**Saturday May 12th:** Dr Brenda McKay, 'Dramatising Mrs Gaskell: A presentation and discussion with clips from TV adaptations of North and South and Wives and Daughters.

Brenda has given similar presentations to other groups and has found the formula to be popular. We have been treated to adaptations of Gaskell's novels in the past few years and I know everyone has views about the BBC interpretation of her writing. This will be an opportunity to listen, watch the clips and offer opinions!!

**Saturday September 15th:** Jo Pryke

Jo is the immediate past editor of the *Gaskell Society Journal*. She will talk about parallels between Dorothy Whipple's writing and that of Gaskell. She is actively engaged in researching this idea and will present her thoughts at the meeting. The title of the talk is yet to be finalised. Homework will be set!! To read some of Dorothy Whipple's work - several of her novels are published by Persephone Books.

**Saturday November 10th:** Dudley Green, 'Always...at my post'. The letters of Patrick Brontë.

Dudley Green has been an active Gaskell Society Committee member and member of the Brontë Society and recently has edited Patrick Brontë's letters. (Published 2005). He will talk about the letters with particular reference to the relationship between Patrick Brontë and Gaskell over *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*.

**Saturday February 9th:** Dr Patsy Stoneman, 'The Battle for Gaskell': Elizabeth Gaskell's critical reputation'.

Patsy Stoneman is an Emeritus Reader in English Literature at the University of Hull. The second edition of her excellent critical biography of Gaskell has just been published and her talk will revolve around the afterword that she added to that volume.

**Saturday May 10th:** Dr Graham Handley, 'Mrs Gaskell and 'Scenes of Clerical Life'

Graham will talk on George Eliot's *Scenes of Clerical Life*, the warm response of Mrs Gaskell to them, and then go on to consider Gaskell's scenes of clerical life

in her own fiction both before and after George Eliot's were published.]  
Perhaps we should read the book before then.

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Fax: 020 8299 4088. Email [frantwinn@aflex.net](mailto:frantwinn@aflex.net)

## *North West Group*

Knutsford Meetings at St John's Church Rooms, 12.15 for buffet lunch:

**25th March:** Professor Angus Easson on Self Help in Mary Barton

**25th April:** Last session on Mary Barton

**21st May:** Visit to Capesthorpe Hall and Cousin Phillis country. Details to be confirmed.

**9th June:** We are planning a day to visit Samuel Bamford country around Middleton to discover his story. There will be a guided walk of Middleton and a visit to the church with Bamford grave and memorial, and lunch at the Old Boar's Head. Tour escorted by several Bamfordologists.

## *The Yorkshire Branch of the Society*

Future meetings:

**Saturday 23 June 2007:** "The Likeness of a Kingly Crown": John Milton's influence on Charlotte Brontë'.

Speaker: Ian Emberson

**Saturday 27 October:** 'Regionalism in the novels of Mrs Gaskell and Kay-Shuttleworth'.

Speaker: Heather.Sharps

Meetings are held at The Friends Meeting House, Friargate, York YO1 9RL and will commence at 2 p.m. The room will be available from 12.30 p.m. for those who wish to bring a picnic lunch. To cover expenses a contribution of £3 is requested from members of The Gaskell Society and £4 from non-members.

Enquiries to: Dudley J Barlow, 6 Kenlay Close, New Earswick, York YO32 4DW  
Tel: 01904 750366. Email: [dudleybarlow@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dudleybarlow@hotmail.co.uk)

## *South-West Branch*

Our next meeting will be on March 31st at the home of Mrs. Joan Chandler, 97, Sydney Place, Bath. 3.00p.m. - 5.00 p.m. Celia Skrine and Rosemary Marshall will be showing pictures of the Rome experience and discussing how it furthered our knowledge and understanding of Mrs. Gaskell's love of the city.

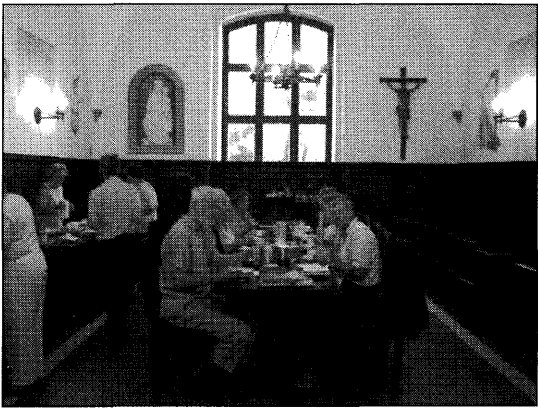
In the pipeline are visits to Tyntesfield and Bowood House where Joseph Priestley's study can be visited. There will again be a Summer Tea in August. Details will be sent to S-W members soon but anyone else is very welcome. Enquiries to Rosemary Marshall 01225 426732  
e-mail [rosemary\\_marshall@yahoo.com](mailto:rosemary_marshall@yahoo.com)

Alliance of Literary Societies AGM meeting is to be hosted by The Tolkien Society at St Hilda's College, Oxford on 19th and 20th May.

### **North Wales Autumn Visit.**

We thought of a day trip to Wales for our North West members but decided that we had so much to see that a two night/three day tour would be best. We plan to stay at Bangor University which has the single en-suite rooms we need. Elizabeth Gaskell spent her honeymoon in North Wales and went to Bangor Cathedral in 1853. We hope to follow the Gaskell's honeymoon route, family connections with the slate industry, Gaskell's Welsh stories etc.

The dates will probably be from 11th-13th September. The plan is for a coach to leave from Macclesfield, Knutsford but other members could be picked up at Chester station. Please let us know if you are interested either by sending an SAE or your email address to [joanleach@aol.com](mailto:joanleach@aol.com).



**The dining room at the Palazzola**