The Heron-Allen Society

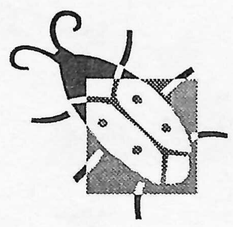
Newsletter
no. 13

Autumn 2008

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

'Who is this Edward Henry Allen?', quizzed my boyfriend, just one week before this year's symposium. He posed the question in the right company since, at the time, we were enjoying dinner with Tim and Alison McCann. Admittedly, it was a question I'd found myself asking every now again over the past five years , ever since I first met Tim at West Sussex Record Office. I'd heard his name several times around the Office, usually with the understanding that, as a member of staff and a local girl, I would know who he was. However, it was not until my career path took me to the Royal Society earlier this year that I began to unravel the answer. Armed with the knowledge that Heron-Allen was a Fellow of the Society, and with a newly-acquired copy of his 'Journal of the Great War' to keep me company on my commute, I boldly told my new boss – who himself admits something of a liking for the great polymath – that I knew something of the man; to which he responded that there's a nice collection of 'foramanifera stuff' lurking in the archives which needs cataloguing. My appreciation – if not my understanding – of foraminifera increased slightly after an afternoon spent at the Natural History Museum with Tim and John Whittaker but, at that point, I was still on the periphery of Heron-Allen's diverse universe.

All that was to change, however, a month or so later, when I received an invitation from Tim to attend the 8th Annual Symposium, via an e-mail. 'Would I like to come along?' asked Tim. 'Well, why not?' I thought, 'the programme certainly sounds interesting.' I experienced a brief moment of hesitation when I realised that lunch was to be taken at the infamous Pierino's - in addition to hearing references to Heron-Allen over the years, I'd also heard the odd reference to lunch at Pierno's: but, with my curiosity stimulated by reading Heron-Allen's 'Journal', I decided to throw caution to the wind, and attend the Symposium.

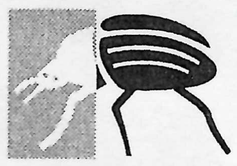


As one might expect from the first Saturday of July, the morning of the Symposium dawned fresh, cool, cloudy and slightly damp, after a night of heavy rain. On arrival at a busy Natural History Museum – full of families avoiding the weather – I was met by the genial Giles, and taken to the Dorothea Bates room, where the Society was gathering. Since I recognised a few faces from West Sussex Record Office, I didn't feel too much of a newcomer, and it was nice to be able to put names to faces and vice versa, after hearing or seeing them so often.

Tim welcomed us all, and then introduced the first speaker: Lucy Wood, from the Victoria and Albert Museum, who gave an interesting talk about the provenance and history of the Westminster Fire Chairs, which somehow found their way into Heron-Allen's possession during his time at the Natural History Museum. Several minutes into the talk it dawned on me that the slightly ornate, comfortable-looking and vacant chair at the front of the room was not a special seat reserved for the Chairman at the later AGM, but a fine example of one of Heron-Allen's chairs.

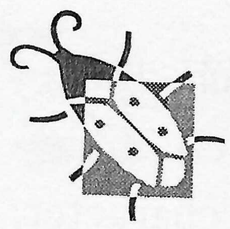
Lucy spoke of her team's initial attempts to trace the history of the chairs, most-likely made by Mayhew and Ince, or Hurley and Grant; and the audience pondered how they came to be in Heron-Allen's possession. In a rare mistake, it seems Heron-Allen believed the chairs to be much older, and likely to have been made by Hepplewhite: Lucy explained that this was a not-uncommon assumption in the early twentieth century.

Our second talk, given by Pam Thompson, from the Royal College of Music, provided a fascinating glimpse into Heron-Allen's collection of violin-related ephemera and miscellanea. So zealous was he in his collecting that he managed to trace and amass articles and illustrations from such illustrious and well-read publications as 'The Railway Supplies Journal', amongst many others. Pam lamented the fact that she and her team had not been able to expand and continue the collection with equal dedication and single-mindedness, but such is modern life that time simply would not allow it; moreover, it is difficult to imagine that such an array of articles and illustrations, in such a diverse range of publications, touching on what could now be considered a specialist-interest, would be as prevalent as they were in Heron-Allen's day. There is clearly much scope within the collection for a variety of research projects, and its uses are far-ranging: certainly, it deserves a devoted study.



Our third talk heralded the arrival of Joann Fletcher, a lady whose reputation somewhat preceded her! And Joann most certainly did not disappoint, treating the audience to a passionate and highly-diverting presentation on Heron-Allen's collection of Egyptian scarabs, his mummy ('Fred'), and the influence and history of Egyptology within Heron-Allen's contemporary society - all of which was delivered within in a whirlwind 45 minutes! Joann spoke about the special influence of the scarab (or, to give it its more humble name, the dung beetle) held within ancient Egyptian society, and we were lucky enough to be able to view Heron-Allen's beautiful collection of scarabs: these have since passed to his granddaughter, Liza Wood, who was kind enough to bring them along for the day so that we could have a close look at them.

Our programme of talks was drawn to its conclusion with a less-effusive but no-less interesting presentation by Peter Scott on the activities of the little-known MI7b, who occupied the De Keyser Hotel, near Blackfriars Bridge in Lon-



don, during World War One. It was here that Heron-Allen was finally able to put his array of skills to use as part of his 'war-effort', something he had longed to be able to do, as is evident from his 'Journal'. It was fascinating to learn of the hotel's history and its Belgian founder – the first Roman Catholic Lord Mayor of London - and how it came to be requisitioned by the Ministry of War. I think we were a l l rather disappointed to learn the eventual fate of the once-splendid hotel after it was sold, at the end of the war.

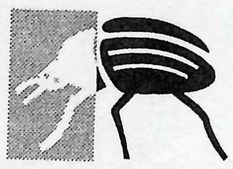
And so, to lunch. John Whittaker masterfully led the way to Pierino's, where it seemed the Society would occupy almost the entire restaurant. The morning's talks having run a little late, and with the AGM still to follow, lunch was something of a rushed affair, with no time for coffee, let alone pudding! Nonetheless, several bottles of wine were polished off, and the conversation flowed as easily as the wine. It was quite something to dine with members of Heron-Allen's own family, and people who had lived in his house at Selsey; and the atmosphere was certainly convivial.

Lunch having been gulped down, we headed back to the Natural History Museum, marshalled once again by John Whittaker who, if he ever decides to give up on the foraminifera, could find himself a successful second career as a School Crossing Patrol Offer (or a Lollipop Man for the traditionalists amongst us!). There was time for a quick look inside the Gavin de Beer Room, where it is believed Heron-Allen worked during his time at the Natural History Museum, and then it was back to business with the AGM, at which point I parted company with the Society, to head back home and reflect on an unique and fascinating day.

So, having attended my first Heron-Allen symposium, am I able to provide an answer to my boyfriend's original question? Of course, I've managed to put him right about his name: but ultimately, I still don't know; and I wonder, so diverse and wide-ranging were his interests, do any of us really know who Heron-Allen was? One thing I do know is that I'm enjoying finding out - and I'm intent on spreading the word about this curious and singular man. See you all next July!

Nichola Court

A FATAL KISS OF THE PRINCESS: WHO DID MARMADUKE SCOTT MARRY?

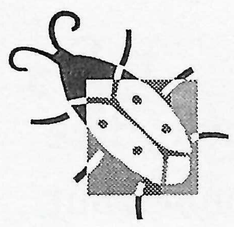


For true bibliophiles, the terms " obsessive, driven, single-minded" indeed "quirky" are not denigrations but words of adulation from the uninitiated. These toilers after the arcanum of their passion are occasionally rewarded by the discovery of the unique, the unknown bit of information. For me, this obsession includes Edward Heron-Allen, his ever-elusive body of work and the thrill of the hunt.

As preface: In 1995, I missed the purchase of "A Fatal Fiddle" from a New York dealer by 5 minutes. I convinced this dealer to contact the buyer about a possible re-sale. The California purchaser declined the sale despite quite a hefty offer. I had always wondered why he said the book was published in New York, not in Chicago, (where the first edition was published.). There were no known early reprints. By the way, he got "A Fatal Fiddle" for $35.

Fast forward 13 years.

I was contacted by a "picker" source in the Midwest about a copy of "Princess Daphne" he found in the basement of a small book store in a very small town in Iowa. The book was unusual in that it had a two-toned red and white



cloth cover with a paper-like label plastered to the spine with the title: "Princess Daphne - Edward Heron-Allen." The red cloth had a blind stamped simple design. The hard cover appeared original but bore no resemblance to the typical highly illustrated Belford Clarke style of book covers. The copyright page stated this was "Belford Clarke & Co. Copyright 1888", but the title page itself listed a New York publisher. I bought the book.

This purchase was followed by a cascade of readings about book piracy, crooks, bankruptcies, fires and the early shady history of paper-backed reprints in the late 1800s. John W Lovell, a colorful Canadian book titan of the late 19th C, made his fortune selling cheap paper backed books. He is variously described as a crook and a pirate by contemporaries, as he regularly ignored copyrights and published from books around the world. (Lovell sold many of his books to Belford Clarke in 1886)

In 1890, Lovell organized The United States Book Company as a huge book trust. It bought up cheap reprint libraries and established satellite distribution companies; one of these companies was THE NATIONAL BOOK COMPANY, New York. He was known to have published many cheap novels from numerous "former publishers", including Belford Clarke. The National Book Company was run by John Lovell's brother, Edward (at least in 1890). The Company was in existence prior to 1887, but I am unable to confirm that it was run by the Lovell family.

Alexander Belford was a Canadian contemporary and competitor of John Lovell. Some period reviewers claimed he was a persuasive voice against book piracy, but, simultaneously, he was a major book pirate himself. [Samuel Clemens, outraged by Belford's pre-American publication of "Tom Sawyer" (which drastically reduced his anticipated profits) introduced Jack Belford, as a desperate character in at least two of his works describing him as "...the black-souled pirate himself" and the "..human miscreant...his crime-blackened soul sent to that place unmentionable.]"

Belford's more honorable intentions, however influenced, were a moving force in the passage of the early anti-piracy laws of the 1890s. It is of interest that Belford published Omar Khayyam's "Rubaiyat" which is believed to be the first American reprint of Fitzgerald's work. I can find no connection between John W. Lovell and Edward Heron-Allen. The Belford publishing connection with Heron-Allen is well documented.

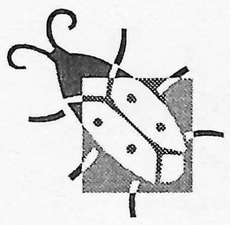
The book arrived and it, indeed, has The National Book Company, New York, listed as publisher on the title page but does not have a separate date. The first printed page states the following:

Vol. 1: Kisses of Fate
Vol.11: Princess Daphne
Vol.111: A Fatal Fiddle
Pending Publication: The Marrying of Marmaduke Scott

The title page clearly states this is Vol 11. The presumed publication date is certainly no earlier than 1890. The current internet site, VAMPIRE JUNCTION, a Vampire Book Bibliography, also lists this identical book.

I can safely conclude that the Fatal Fiddle book I missed purchasing in 1995 was Vol. 111 of this series.

A major finding with the discovery of this early reprint edition was the announcement by the publisher of a pending publication, "The Mar-



rying of Marmaduke Scott". This manuscript has never been published to my knowledge,. The current existence of the manuscript is in doubt. Prior to the discovery of this reprint, the Edward Heron-Allen Society had no record of this manuscript in Mr. Heron-Allen's personal papers.

Just another future great Heron-Allen adventure.

Attention: Ye Bibliophiles! The game's afoot!

John and Barbara Mahoney
mahoneysbooks@violinsandbows.com

EDWARD HERON-ALLEN ON THE SPOTLIGHT: Keynote Address at Oscar Wilde
Symposium

On the 31st of March 2008, I participated in an Oscar Wilde Symposium presented by The Indiana State University Honors Program. I was the keynote speaker, and the title of my talk was "Edward Heron-Allen and Oscar Wilde's 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime': A Study of Influence."

Members of the EH-A Society will recall that I lectured on "Edward Heron-Allen in America" at the 2nd Annual Heron-Allen Symposium. My recent writing draws upon this work, but it expands the focus by including a short story by Oscar Wilde. I argue that Heron-Allen influenced Wilde's "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime: A Story of Cheiromancy" (1887). More than a source of inspiration for Wilde, Heron-Allen also contributed to the publication history.

Wilde's story has been praised as a parody of a murder mystery. It could also be celebrated as a black comedy about the importance of being a palm reader. The setting is a London soirée, the characters are from fashionable society, and the dominant motif is about the science of palmistry and the duties and dangers of looking at the lines of the hand. Lord Arthur Savile, the main character who has his palm read, believes that it is his duty to murder before marriage. Destiny decrees this: a professional palm reader has revealed what is written in his hand. Palmistry propels the plot. This dominant motif also illustrates Wilde's acute awareness of both the fashion of the day and the figure behind the fashion.

Heron-Allen, palmistry expert and friend to Oscar and Constance Wilde, single-handedly inspired the palmistry craze in both England and America. As the *New York Times* of 7 November 1886 reports, "It is through him and his books that all London society has so suddenly taken up this 'fad,' so that wherever you go young ladies demand to see what kind of a line of life your hand reveals and if its wrinkles mask some ghastly secret."

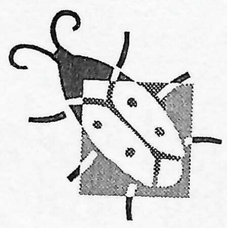
A handful of scholars acknowledge that Heron-Allen influenced Oscar Wilde's story about palmistry. However, the acknowledgement has only been made in passing, often reduced to a footnote.

My work puts Heron-Allen where he deserves to be: in the spotlight. The proceedings of the Oscar Wilde Symposium are going to be published, and publication details will be distributed.

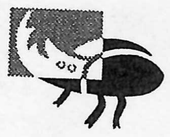
Joan Navarre

EDWARD HERON-ALLEN IN THE SALE ROOMS

A number of interesting Heron-Allen items have appeared in the Sale Rooms during the past year:



A Catalogue of the Treasures of Marie Anna Heron-Allen, dated January 1902, was offered for sale as Lot 125 at Henry Adams sale at Chichester on 20 March 2008. The list of jewellery, silver etc of Heron-Allen's first wife, was signed by Edward Heron-Allen. The catalogue was beautifully bound in blue morocco, with silver roses to the front and back. The catalogue was illustrated in Henry Adams, General Antiques & Furniture Sale, including the Holleyman Collection of Books and Effects, Thursday 20th. March 2008



In a sale catalogue 178 of Bow Windows Bookshop at 175 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex. BN7 1YE, was offered for sale as Lot 91, a copy of Frank Harris, *Oscar Wilde. His Life and Confessions*. (With Memories of Oscar Wilde by Bernard Shaw). New York: Printed and Published by the Author 1918. The work is in two volumes, and includes 5 portraits and a facsimile letter. It boasted ink stamps of the zoologist Peter Chalmers Mitchell, with a letter from him to his fellow author Edward Heron-Allen tipped into volume I concerning these volumes - "I have no doubt from what I knew from Harris himself, Bernard Shaw, Robbie Ross and Reggie Turner that it is substantially accurate...", plus a couple of newspaper cuttings and a further piece of relevant manuscript loosely inserted. Original gilt titled green cloth, spines darkened. Peter Chalmers Mitchell will be familiar to members as Secretary of the Zoological Society, one of his supporters for thefellowship of the Royal Society and Heron-Allen's boss at M17b, as described in Peter Scott's talk at the last symposium.

In its spring sale, Bubb Kuyper Auctions of Hofje van Staats, Jansweg 39, NL-2011 VM Haarlem, offered for sale as Lot 48/2656 a collection of 88 vols. from the library of Edward Heron-Allen, all related to Ye Sette of Odd Volumes, including manuscripts and a dedication copies. All members of *Ye Sette* were known to the Odd Volumes Brotherhood under a nickname. Heron-Allen, known as 'Necromancer', had been elected to the Sette in 1883, served as Secretary in 1885 and Vice-President in 1892 but resigned in 1893. Although he did not seek and gain readmission until 1924 he had remained keenly interested in their work throughout the estrangement, and was President in 1927. In the *Opuscula* series his first work on palmistry was published in 1883, with a first appendix in the *Miscellanies* series of the Odd Volumes in the same year. The collection comprised the manuscripts, proofs and deluxe editions of these first works on palmistry by Heron-Allen and related correspondence, as well as an unpublished(?) manuscript of a paper read by him. It also consisted of a large series of privately published and mostly finely bound works published for Ye Sette of Odd Volumes, all of which were from Heron-Allen's library. For a detailed list of the collection, see http://www.bubbkuyper.com.

Among several items recently offered for sale on e-bay was what was described as Edward Heron-Allen's *Loving Ballad of Lord Bateman*. It was a copy of the 1887 edition of the ballad, illustrated by George Cruikshank with a bookplate of Edward and Marianna Heron-Allen, and was offered for sale by Lazarus Books. Evidently the volume was one of Heron-Allen's collection of copies of The Ballad, of which twenty four copies were listed in the catalogue of his library sold by Sothebys in October 1944. As well as collecting various editions of The Ballad, Heron-Allen wrote several pieces about it in *Notes and Queries* and elsewhere.

EDWARD HERON-ALLEN AND EDWARD FITZGERALD

Next year will be the 200th anniversary of the birth of Edward FitzGerald as well as the 150th anniversary of the first publication of his translation of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* – the subject of EH-A's Persian studies. To mark the occasion, the academic world is holding a conference in July 2009; the first two days will be held in Leiden (in the Netherlands), and will be dedicated to Omar Khayyam, the medieval Persian astronomer, mathematician and poet. On the 9th and 10th July, the conference will move to Cambridge to consider FitzGerald's translation and other European versions.

Garry Garrard, one of our members, has been invited to present a paper at the Cambridge conference, and will talk on the subject "Edward Heron-Allen: a polymath's approach to FitzGerald's translation of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam". He will share the platform not only with United Kingdom scholars from Oxford, Cambridge, York, Kingston and Keele universities but with a broad international contingent: from universities in Indiana, Princeton, Columbia and Ohio in the United States of America, Toronto in Canada, Tbilisi in Georgia and Azad, Birjand and Chabahar in Iran.

"The prospect of addressing so many distinguished full-time academics is quite daunting" Garry says, "I may be an enthusiast but I am only a part-time amateur." Garry expects the content of his paper to be quite similar to the one he presented at the 6th Annual Symposium of the Society at the Royal College of Music in 2006. "However, I won't need to introduce the audience to Omar Khayyam or his Rubaiyat. This time I will have to introduce them to EH-A and, hopefully, a few more people will realise how remarkable he was."

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

The Chairman will be delivering a lecture entitled, 'The Singular Life of Edward Heron-Allen, FRS' at 1pm on Friday, 21 November 2008, at the Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London. SW1 5AG as part of the History of Science events celebating 350 years of the Royal Society.

The Society's ninth annual symposium will be held on Saturday 4 July 2009 at the Allen Room, Dean Street, Soho, London. The theme of the Symposium will be 'Edward Heron-Allen and Literature'.

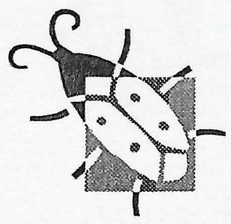
The Society will be holding a joint meeting with the Royal Irish Academy at the Royal Irish Academy, Dawson Street, Dublin, Republic of Ireland on Friday 2 October 2009. There will be an opportunity to visit the Praeger Collection at the Academy, and to view Heron-Allen's scientific and travel journals relating to the Clare Island Survey, together with other items relating to the 1911 expedition from the collection of the Natural History Museum in London. There will also be talks on the Clare Island Travel Journals and on Edward Heron-Allen himself.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Gyles Brandreth, *Oscar Wilde and the Ring of Death* [featuring Edward Heron-Allen], (2008)

Selina Dolaro, *Mes Amours: Poems, Passionate and Playful, written to me by People celebrated and obscure; and my Answers to some of them.* (Kessinger Publishing's reprint of Belford Clarke and Company's 1888 edition, 2008).

Steve Farrar, 'Out of the Cupboard and calling to you: The cursed Delphi Purple Sapphire', in



Opusculum X (2008), 42-7.

Edward Heron-Allen, 'Le Courrier De L'Air', in *The Falling Leaf*, no.177 (2002), 47-50.

Edward Heron-Allen, *The Purple Sapphire, Opusculum X* (2008).

Brian Hulan, '"Off the Shelf": Armorel Heron-Allen and Umar Khayyam', in *Opusculum XI* (2008), 30-4.

Ivor Jones, 'Armorel Daphne Heron-Allen: The Early Years', in *Opusculum XI* (2008), 4-10.

Timothy J. McCann, (ed.), *"Armorel Heron-Allen and Oxford": Proceedings of the 7th. Heron-Allen Symposium, 2007, Opusculum XI* (2008).

Timothy J. McCann, '"Men of Pre-Vision": Edward Heron-Allen, John Johnson and the John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera at the Bodleian Library, Oxford', in *Opusculum XI* (2008), 35-44.

Joan Navarre, '"Woman of the World": Armorel Daphne Heron-Allen and Lady Longford at Oxford', in *Opusculum XI* (2008), 11-22.

Joan Navarre, 'Edward Heron-Allen FRS', in Ehsan Yarshater, (ed.), *Encyclopedia Iranica* (1996-2008).

Alethea Pitt, 'Reminiscences of Lady Margaret Hall and the Heron-Allen Family', in *Opusculum XI* (2008), 23-5.

Alethea Pitt and Marjorie Ridley, 'morel Daphne Heron-Allen Scholarship: a historical note', in Opusculum XI (2008), 26-9.

THE HERON-ALLEN BIOGRAPHY

Joan Navarre is writing a biography of Edward Heron-Allen. Any information concerning Heron-Allen (e.g. letters, manuscripts, photographs) will be greatly appreciated. E-mail: jnavarre@hotmail.com

THE SOCIETY'S WEB-SITE

The Heron-Allen Society has a website at: http://www.nhm.ac.uk/hosted sites/heronallen/ The webmaster, Dr. Andrew S. Henderson, can be contacted through the website or directly be e-mail at: a.henderson@nhm.ac.uk. Andy updates our web-site on a regular basis, and members are encouraged to keep in touch by making use of it. There is an opportunity on the site for members to make comments and suggestions and to post queries.

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