



The Grasshopper

The Organ of The Gresham Society

Sumer is icumen in- we must be all cucu!

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College Notes

Our hearty congratulations go to Alderman Alison Gowman on her appointment as CBE and Professor Joanna Bourke as OBE.

Members' Corner

From Strijp to Stripe

Members who attended the Society visit to the Parker Library in Cambridge in 2017 will remember Robert Stripe being acquainted with a book written by an ancestor. It turns out that John Stripe (1643-1737) was the son of a Dutchman who came to London from Brabant in 1640 to avoid persecution and, having set himself up as a silk merchant, also became a Mercer. John Stripe had a varied ecclesiastical career in places like Theydon Bois and Leyton.

His main claim to fame was his writing. For many years, John Strype devoted himself to collecting materials but did not publish any of his own works until he was 50. He collected many manuscripts from the Burghley Family and from which he wrote many church works including 'The Life of Cranmer' in 1694.

John Strype's other works included 'Annal of the Reformation', 'Ecclesiastical Memorials', the Lives of Archbishops Parker, Grindal, and Whitgift, and others. Apparently his style was cumbrous, his material clumsily arranged, whilst his accounts were 'partical and biassed' but his accumulation of documents make him a storehouse of information of the greatest value to all students of the 16th century. Indeed, as we found out in our visit to the Parker Library in Corpus Christi College in Cambridge, he was one of the few people then, and since, who was able to decipher Matthew Parker's writing, which had a distinctive but unusual style and it was of course in Latin too.

Probably Strype's most famous work is the continuation of John Stow's work of 'Survey of

London'. John Stowe's monument can be seen in St Andrew Undershaft church by Leadenhall Market and John Strype is actually mentioned on the inscription. The 'distinguished Perpetual Curate of Theydon Bois' is also commemorated by a plaque erected by the then L.C.C. in 1929 on a house in Petticoat Lane, Stepney.

Oddly enough, the literary gene does not seem to have come through to Robert though he is an organist of some distinction. He is also the only member of the Gresham Society to have had a train named after him – but that's another story.

Noisy cicadas

Members of our American Chapter are warned of the simultaneous emergence of thousands of cicadas who have emerged recently as part of their natural life cycle. This involves emerging from underground every 13 or 17 years and they make a truly awful buzzing noise as they do. This would be OK in normal circumstances, but two broods have emerged simultaneously and are full of the joys of Spring – the first time that this has happened since 1803. Sound levels of up to 110 decibels have been recorded. The Grasshopper Himself is quite put out – letting down the species indeed. "They really should think of the neighbours," He says.

No stone unturned

And may I report with modest pride that my account of Female Toxophilites in 19th Century British India is now out. That must rank as one of the most obscure topics ever, though perhaps at least one member can trump that. Any suggestions?

Reflections

The Dakar Expedition

Following on from the story in G19 about the abortive attack on Dakar in 1940, it is a curious



literary coincidence that Evelyn Waugh was actually present at the time, which explains that episode in *Men At Arms*, the first volume in his *Sword of Honour* trilogy which follows quite closely Waugh's own military experiences in Crete and Yugoslavia.

There was more than military logic in the Dakar exhibition of course, as it was one of the locations for storing gold from countries about to be occupied by the Germans. France had twelve hundred tons in storage there, and even little Luxemburg had 319 gold bars, whilst Belgium had deposited two hundred tons. (Wars do cost money and Britain did not pay off its war debts until 2006.)

More on Mussolini

Reflecting further on Mussolini (G10, G11 and G19 all refer), Mussolini lies in a crypt with other family members in the small village of Predappio in the north-eastern province of Emilia Romagna. It has become a focus of attraction for neo-fascists, the nostalgic and the simply curious. There are plans to create a mausoleum, though that may prove to be controversial.

It is curious to note that General Franco was exhumed in October 2019 from the basilica at the Valley of the Fallen near Madrid and re-buried privately alongside his wife in a small private cemetery in Mingorrubio, not far away, and not the Almudena Cathedral, as his family had suggested.

Snakes and the Sistine Chapel

When recounting the tale of Moses and the brazen serpent in G19 I should of course have remembered that it appears on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the triangular pendentives (where else?). Indeed – the episode from the Book of Numbers appears in one corner, seen to the left, when facing East towards the altar. The other pendentives if you care to look are Judith and Holofernes, the punishment of Haman from the Book of Esther, and David and Goliath. I wonder why Michelangelo chose those particular episodes.

Of course, TE Lawrence took notes about the ways in which the Arabs tried to cure snake bites. He recounts that during their snake-infested two-day stay at Abu Tarfeiyat in May 1917 three men died and four recovered, which

is miraculous in itself as the only treatment was to bind up the affected part with snake-skin plaster, read the Koran to the victim and hope for the best.

It is perhaps worth noting that there are 45 species of snake in Jordan, though (according to Wikipedia) only 12 of those are common, which is something of a relief.

Envoi

Bury my heart

Colonel Howard Stephens' piece on investigating crusader tombs (G17 and G18 refer) got me thinking about aspects of mortality. At what stage do we start thinking about such items of mortality as our own last resting place? Care must indeed be taken, as in the case of Thomas Hardy, whose body of course lies in the churchyard at Stinsford in his beloved Wessex. His heart, however, was interred in Westminster Abbey – along with the remains of the cat who actually ate part of it. The story goes that the doctor who was preparing the heart for burial nipped out for a minute and the unfortunate moggy slipped in and got his teeth into it. *Que faire?* The cat was duly bumped off and buried along with the heart in the Poets' Corner (just to the North of Charles Dickens). [*Editor's Note: Could this really be true? It was posted in The Independent on 26.4.1996.*]

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

More from the Mansion House

It seems hard to believe, but Michael Mainelli's mayoral year is over halfway through. And what a year it has been. Apart from the ride around the City on May 22nd, not to mentio abseiling seven hundred feet down the Leadenhall Building on June 7th, Michael has been round the world several times (well, the Northern Hemisphere at least). At home he has had up to a dozen events in a single day. A focal point in all of this are the Lord Mayor's Lectures, a series involving organisations in and around the City of London and the livery companies in particular.

The City livery companies are a central element of the Lectures; over fifty are involved to date, with more in the pipeline, focusing on the forward-looking elements of their work rather than their traditions. Other City-related bodies



are also involved, ranging from banks and the City of London Police to the Bridge House Trust. So there is plenty of variety: in one week we had lectures on the Future of the Arts and Humanities with Professor Christopher Smith, Executive Head of the AHRC; Sir Kenneth Olisa, Lord Lieutenant of Greater London on the Athenaeum and the Clubs of London; and Leadership in Sustainable Finance with Simon Thompson, CEO of the Chartered Banking Institute. Other key speakers include Andrew Tremlett, Dean of St Paul's, Sir Martyn Lewis and Jonothan Porritt.

In brief, six initiatives have been launched:

- the Ethical AI Initiative, using ISO standards;
- the Smart Economy Networks Initiative, using international X-Road standards;
- the Constructing Science Initiative, for life science laboratories;
- the Green Finance Initiative, reinforcing carbon markets;
- Oxford University's and others GALENOS, to accelerate global mental health research.

Of these, the most original must be the Space Protection Initiative, using space debris removal insurance bonds (SPADRIBS). Society member Charles Vermont is taking the lead and explains:

“Space is a resource most of us use every day, whether we notice it or not. Since the USSR first launched its Sputnik satellite, the human race has become more and more dependent on it. And yet, we are on track to lose access to it.

There are around one hundred million person-made objects in space at the moment, and it is set to become a lot more crowded. Starlink alone is hoping to launch around thirty thousand satellites in all. More spacecraft means more debris, and, unless we can come up with a solution, eventually space will be full.

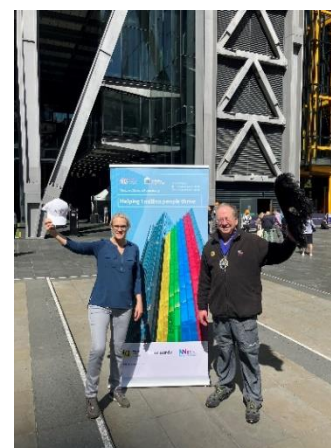
Currently, satellite operators face a choice: do they use their crafts' remaining fuel to continue operations, or do they use it to retire them? Economics suggest the former, and that is what forty percent of operators do. Spadribs change this equation.

Completion Bonds are a form of insurance which guarantees that if the insured does not do something, underwriters will. They currently

have a multiplicity of applications on earth, and there is no barrier to using them in space. Spadribs guarantee all insured satellites will be removed from orbit. Operators can do this more cheaply than insurers, and they know underwriters will send them the bill, so they have every incentive to clean up their own mess.

For underwriters to issue Spadribs, two conditions must be met. Launch regulators around the world have to make their purchase mandatory. In addition, someone has to demonstrate they can retire third party debris. The 695th Lord Mayor and I are working on both of them. Insurers will be open for business if we succeed.”

Finally, both Michael and Elisabeth have covered themselves in glory, having abseiled down the Leadenhall Building (aka the Cheesegrater) on June 7, accompanied by over 100 people (though not at the same time...)



If you have any news items for *The Grasshopper* do let Tim (t.j.connell@city.ac.uk) or Basil (greshamsociety@gmail.com) know. Anything on awards, recent publications or odd curiosities will doubtless suit.