

SELECTED  
TRASH  
FROM THE  
RUINS OF  
SOCIETY

VOLUME 7

SHEFFIELD PATROL GROUP



I tend to overdo it when it comes to using new filters. Unfamiliar programmes make it easy to produce images that seem radically different to representations of the same subjects that have been produced by established methods, and the novelty of the new can be overvalued on this account. To begin with, the promise of the effects that can be achieved through the application of photo editing software can encourage renewed engagement with well-known environments, but over time, the new filters are no longer new, and the images produced by them can be rendered retrospectively unsatisfactory.



In the moment of walking and seeing that constitutes the field of experience, these reflections on the consequences of using filters are absent. There is no trace of thinking about what I might think about in future. Although conscious thought might have a place in what I am doing in the moment of immediate experience, it is not necessarily the dominant force. I am in a state of being that consists of travelling more or less familiar paths with the internalised intention of photographing what calls to me at the time of calling. It sounds programmatic, but it isn't really. It's inheriting what is gained through practice.



You might have noticed that transmitter in the background appears in the first photograph in this sequence. I imagine that it will make further appearances as this volume

unfolds. The selection of images in this collection was guided by a process that is similar to the process informing the type of activity that yielded the greater body of work from which the selection was made, and I know that group of images contains many representations of the transmitter, because it is seen from many different vantage points as I travel, and it often calls me. From time to time, I consciously think of producing a collection that explicitly focuses on the transmitter, and it's possible that I might get around to that one day. I have refrained from doing this so far because I recognise that the fulfilment of the plan could become an unnecessary burden, and like most (if not all) people living in neoliberal capitalist realism-controlled societies, I have more than enough unnecessary burdens to contend with already. You could say that my quest for meaning consists of being receptive to the meaning that is revealed to me as I encounter the objects around me, rather than imposing meaning on the objects I encounter. The meaning that is revealed to me is fugitive and uncertain, but it is more substantial than supposed meaning arrived at through imposition.



The reflection of the car number plate in this picture is suggestive of a Runic inscription from a non-existent Futhark... I have noticed several stickers featuring Runic inscriptions in Crookes, attached to lampposts or displayed in car windows. It is a curious phenomenon. I wonder if it has anything to do with the foundation myth of Crookes I have introduced into the fringes of popular culture, which claims that Crookes is named after an

individual named Krekja, who is buried in a mound at the heights of Clough Fields, and that there is a character called Krekja in the Icelandic saga 'Bard the Snowfell God', and that 'krekja' means magician, and that the Mound of Krekja is joined by moorland paths to Bakewell, where the Norse-connected Tomb of Helga can be found in the porch of All Saints Church, which occupies the highest point in the centre of the town, affording views of ancient woodlands and paths that lead out to Nine Ladies stone circle on Stanton Moor, and further on towards Arbor Low. It seems highly unlikely that this is so, but isn't the fact that we're all alive and that you are reading this far less likely when all is considered (although I could be dead by the time you are reading this, come to think of it)? Of course, it's not far less likely, or even a little less likely, because although the three in one birth-life-death mystery is all-pervading and insoluble, the fact of existence far outweighs all other considerations, to the extent of possessing the properties of certainty, and this apparent certainty rules over all categories of possibility and likelihood, which render it a commonplace tyrant, ruling over all.



The bourgeois inheritors of the artisan gaffs of Crookes are wont to establish creative spaces in their sheds, which they paint in shades of yellow, to resemble the sun that they invoke to shine upon their labours. They are full of good will, which manifests in the production of nick-nacks offered for sale at the thrice yearly Crookes markets, which take over the streets around Stanington View Road, for the benefit of the community.





“The precise situation of the great hall in Hallamshire is not known, but assuming that Hallam means “hall” it must have been in one of the places called Upper and Lower Hallam. And I think that it must have stood not far from the Roman road, which just touches the south end of the village of Crookes. Following the road from the south of Crookes through Lydgate we notice Hallam Head, which on early Ordnance maps is marked simply Hallam.”



The shops on Crookes come and go, but the Crookes Ash endureth forever. Well, not forever, but it's already outlasted the butcher, which used to feature an extremely

polite and friendly boater hatted tradesman, which now operates as one of these small drinking establishments that have recently proliferated in the area, and the former post office, which some people speculate has been transformed into a money laundering operation, and a shop that might have been a fishmonger, which is now an off-licence that goes by the name of Berlin Calling. There are threats beyond the destructive force inherent in the passage of time that imperil the security of the local Yggdrasil. The consequences of ash dieback are apparent in the vicinity of the tree. Rows of mature ash have been reduced to stumps near the Headland Road entrance to Crookes cemetery and by the iron fenced perimeter adjacent to the so-called Mulehouse Road Open Space. Less mature but still substantial specimens near the source of Saint Anthony's Well a mere hundred yards away from the magisterial Crookes Ash have been marked with pink paint and destroyed. And I would not put it past the antisocial land usurpers who currently possess the nearby stables to take advantage of this existential threat to extend their holdings by unfolding some nefarious scheme, which they will present as necessary.



Now there are three steps to heaven

Just listen and you will plainly see

And as life travels on

And things do go wrong

Just follow steps one, two and three...

Step one, you find a girl to love

Step two, she falls in love with you

Step three, you kiss and hold her tightly

Yeah, that sure seems like heaven to me...

But, dear noble philosopher, I find several fatal flaws in the theory you posit. Firstly, this staircase plainly features five steps, not counting the platform step that lies before them, which one could argue constitutes a sixth step. Secondly, the jaunty lyric of the E. Cochran song takes too much for granted. Even if one accepts the basic programme, the attainment of reciprocal love is surely more doubtful than the second verse suggests. Thirdly, to fall on those concrete steps, were they covered in ice, would be more likely to lead to A&E than heaven.



See above for my remarks on the use of camera filters...  
I often wonder if the highest point in Sheffield is in  
Crookes. It seems that way when you look out from the

Bole Hills and can't really see anywhere higher until your eyes reach far distant countryside, which is probably in Derbyshire, and certainly would have been in Derbyshire before the boundaries of the city were expanded, and even then, the issue remains in dispute, because you can't accurately judge the relative heights of peaks when vast swathes of land stand between them. And even if it were the case that there are higher points in the distances of the possible Sheffield you perceive from the Bole Hills, this would not confound the proposition, or possibility, because the highest point in Crookes can be found in the cemetery, which is considerably higher than the highest point of the Bole Hills, or the roads that lead to the Bole Hills, the highest points of which are higher than the Bole Hills proper. Although this filter crazed monstrosity is not taken from the cemetery, it is taken from a relatively high point of one of the roads that borders the cemetery wall, and despite its limitations, it serves to illustrate the comparative heights of Crookes, leading down to the University of Sheffield Arts Tower, which houses the biggest working paternoster lift in Europe, and off into the misty post-industrial dreamlands beyond.



This is the smallest caravan I can ever remember seeing. Indeed, were it not so small, I believe that I would not have seen it at all, or registered what I had seen in the vast swathes of objectivity possessing the qualities of nothingness or hallucination that my eyes touch upon during the course of my pointless wandering. Granted, you can't do or say anything without something else immediately following, and that could represent some kind of point, as opposed to pointlessness, and maybe that's happening here. A small caravan; the prospect of a trip to the countryside for a maximum of two people.





There is no way of knowing if this collection of twigs has been shaped deliberately or if it is the product of an unintentional gathering in advance of removal. I believe there is evidence of deliberation because some of the sticks are placed vertically and others are horizontal. The largest stick forms a barrier, there is a cruciform shape near the centre, and there are twigs beneath the cross, which render it as a representation of a body in motion. When one considers that there is a hollow at the base of a nearby tree which regularly contains mysterious offerings, it becomes even more likely that witchery is at hand.



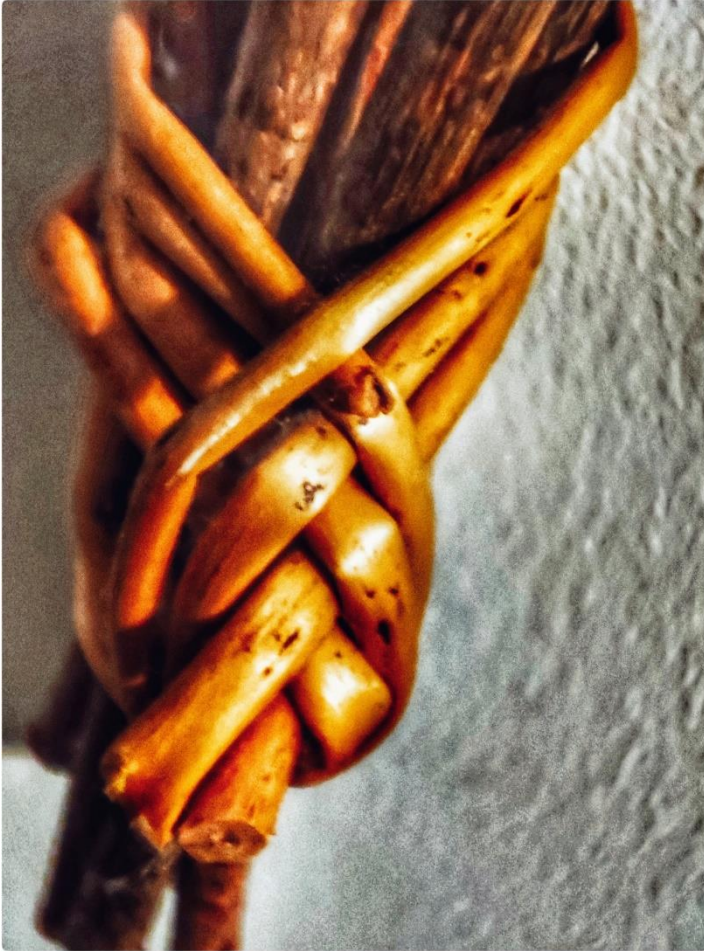
It will come as no surprise to learn that the mature trees of the Mound ov Krekja, the large and small bushes of the land adjacent to the mound, the hollow tree and the other

representatives of sylvan majesty that tower above the curving dry stone wall in the next field along form a haven for birds. Small birds flit from bush branch to bush branch, long-tailed tits land en masse and depart in unified flocks, the occasional thrush can be heard and then seen, there are blackbirds in abundance, cooing wood pigeons aplenty, and several species of corvids parade about the fields, or engage in long-running battles high above the ground. This being so, I assumed the nest that can be seen in the highest branches of the tallest tree on the mound belonged to a crow or a magpie. I have since revised my opinion, after observing a squirrel returning to its nest in the heights of a tree on Tapton Bank, about a mile away from here. As I have often said before, I am no country bumpkin, but I trust in my own experience, and the squirrel's nest on Tapton Bank strongly resembled this construction. I have observed several squirrels sporting in the surrounding lands just surveyed, and I have noted the marks left on the offerings of fruit I made on the mound for the benefit of small birds and little animals, and I therefore conclude that this is not a crow or magpie nest, but rather the home of a squirrel.



Had I deliberately recalibrated my focus from the broad sweep of the far to the narrow constraint of the near? No. I could not have done that, for the broad and the narrow

are false segregations of the real, present, and pressing. But that might be sophistry. At times, I look out at the fulsome illusions that fill the field of my perception, and at times I deliberately choose to focus on details. If I have recently devoted myself to looking at the small things, or chanced to do so for whatever reason, recognising that reason might not have anything to do with it, then the likelihood is that I will continue to do so, unless I am compelled to abandon the practice, for whatever reason, not that reason necessarily informs my approach. Anyway, I remember seeing a profusion of these small, woody protrusions, broadly similar in terms of size and configuration, but vitally different when it comes to function, not that I knew this before looking it up, which is a compulsion that goes against my predetermined preference, proving that predetermined preference counts for fuck all, or is arbitrary, and not binding. Where was I? I was not anywhere that has anything to do with this verbal unfolding. I was walking through familiar fields, blankly receptive, struck by particular beauty, and this is what I saw, alongside many other things besides.



This is the binding at the base of a six-pointed willow star. I say it is the base, because that is how it appears when I observe the artefact as it hangs from a small nail on the

wall before me. It need not be the base. It could equally well be the pinnacle of the star or occupy any of the four stations to the left or the right. It is fixed but not fixed. It possesses the possibility of variety but the possibilities of variety are not endless but constrained. As there are six points to the star, so the binding can be situated in six different places, all of which bear the same spatial relationship to each other, regardless of the chosen configuration that brightens the wall. I say it brightens the wall but the star is so familiar that it brightens nothing, having been stripped by time of the novelty and charm it possessed when it was first created. I think its absence would be more notable than its presence is. The star consists of eighteen strips of willow, which have been grouped in threes to afford strength and stability to the structure and bent into curves of broadly similar shape before being fastened together. As you can see, the colour of the binding is different from the colour of the willow strips, and as I am not a country bumpkin, I am unable to say if the light-coloured binding is made of willow or something else. What I can say is that it was made in Ecclesall Woods 15 years ago.



Here we see the dread amulet of the Chief Artificer of the New Order of Western Templars, otherwise known as the Nabob of NOWT. The disc is made of iridium and the



skull and crossbones configuration is formed of liquid platinum, which possesses the property of eternal change, meaning that today it might look like a skull and crossbones, but tomorrow it might well resemble a valley filled with lilies, or flowers of a different type. The pendant descends from a necklace fashioned from Tibetan silk of such rarity that this is the only example known. The Dread Nabob wears this chain of office outside a robe of Abyssinian cotton, which catches the sun like a Two-Tone suit worn by the ace face mod of all time (think Sting in 'Quadrophenia' before he was revealed to be a subservient bellboy). Every 42 years, the New Order of Western Templars performs the rite of the casting away, which involves drinking from a vat of Scrumpy Jack seasoned with cloves, where it behoves the Master of the Order to cast away their chain of office and other regalia on the heights of a mountainous region, such as the Bole Hills in Crookes. The profane pass by these sacred threads as if they possessed no meaning but the chosen initiate of the mysteries chances upon them during the course of their wanderings and becomes the Nabob of NOWT as a direct consequence of the discovery.



As you walk around the streets of Sheffield, you occasionally come across messages like this, calling out from the people who inscribed them to the chance observers who encounter them later. This friendly greeting can be found on Whitham Road, in the space between the Spiritualist Church and the traffic lights that allow you to cross to the row of shops featuring Richer Sounds (which used to be an impressive second-hand bookshop occupying three or four floors) and the one-time incense and tie dye T-shirt emporium Ellis's, which has recently closed down.



My favourite T. Rex song might be 'Children of the Revolution'. I liked or loved all of the singles that they (or rather he, meaning Marc Bolan) released over a period of

several years. I think 'Ride a White Swan' was the first of these records to make a strong impression on me, and 'Debra' resonated deeply (I think I might have known a girl called Deborah at the time), alongside the even more familiar numbers like 'Get It On', 'Metal Guru', 'Telegram Sam' and 'Jeepster'. My dedication to Bolan and T. Rex was similar to my devotion to Gary Glitter and David Bowie at this time, and none of them could do any wrong.

Not only did I like 'Children of the Revolution' at the time of its release but it also played a part in a striking experience from adulthood, which involved an individual choosing to broadcast the song at high volume on a portable CD player in lieu of making a more formal presentation at a mental health survivor conference in Aberystwyth in the late 1990s. The same event featured an address from a woman whose commitment to cognitive dressing involved appearing in a Star Trek uniform. I can't remember what she said but I could probably reconstruct the key messages if I were to put my mind to it, so familiar was I with the milieu.



“In the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel on Duck Bank there was a full and influential congregation. For in those days influential people were not merely content to live in the

town where their fathers had lived, without dreaming of country residences and smokeless air—they were content also to believe what their fathers had believed about the beginning and the end of all. There was no such thing as the unknowable in those days. The eternal mysteries were as simple as an addition sum; a child could tell you with absolute certainty where you would be and what you would be doing a million years hence, and exactly what God thought of you. Accordingly, every one being of the same mind, every one met on certain occasions in certain places in order to express the universal mind. And in the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, for example, instead of a sparse handful of persons disturbingly conscious of being in a minority, as now, a magnificent and proud majority had collected, deeply aware of its rightness and its correctness...

“And there floated before them, in the intense and prolonged silence, the clear vision of Jehovah on a throne, a God of sixty or so with a moustache and a beard, and a non-committal expression which declined to say whether or not he would require more bloodshed...”



I didn't notice this iron pillar and path for years, although I had passed it on many occasions. I have no idea what finally brought it into view, although it could be ascribed to the greater awareness of my immediate environment that arose when the range of my wanderings was reduced by restrictions associated with Covid. Things became quite narrow for a while, and there's a limit to the extent to which my range can be extended. It proved to be a long, high-walled path leading from Manchester Road to Fulwood Road, although it didn't seem as long on the second occasion I walked it as it did on the first.



If I was asked to picture a tree, this is the real and existing tree that I would picture in my mind, but I would not picture the view of the tree from this angle.





Memorial benches are good things. Not only do they honour the dead, but they also provide a focus for the living who have honoured the dead, and not only do they provide this focus for the living who knew the person they memorialise, they also provide a resting place for people who choose to sit on the benches, whether or not they knew the honoured dead personally. Indeed, memorial benches are prime examples of meaningful community spirit, because not only do they honour the people they commemorate, but all of the dead, and consequently all of the living, because death is the fate of all of the living.



When I discovered that my apples had withered beyond the point of seeming attractive to eat, I decided to leave them in the hollow of a tree as an offering for insects.



Delph House Road is usually one of those well-to-do suburban streets that are found throughout England, consisting of fairly substantial semi-detached houses with front and back gardens, which are so similar that it could become difficult to know where you are. The steepness of the street is an indicator that it's in Sheffield, but I believe other cities are also renowned for their hills (albeit to a lesser extent). However, for a few weeks every year, Delph House Road is transformed by the cherry blossom adorning the trees on both sides, making it temporarily one of the most beautiful streets in the city.



As you can see if you can be bothered to look, the sign beneath the broken glass proclaims that Sheffield BID (Business Improvement District) is a network that

promotes the idea of ‘Working together for a busier, cleaner, safer Sheffield,’ which is ‘easier to access for all.’ Things don’t seem to be working out very well on the ‘cleaner’ front, do they? Perhaps Sheffield BID is working on a feasibility study to explore the possibility of gilding the piles of puke that are splashed onto West Street with metronome-like regularity every Friday and Saturday night. We also remark in passing that leaving broken glass unattended for extended periods of time is not conducive to the notion of safety. Perhaps this guillotine-resembling object is an artwork commissioned to demonstrate an intent to cut off the progenitors of filth and danger at source. What they mean about accessibility is anyone’s guess. Maybe we could ask that geezer looking into the window of the Corner Shop for the view of the person on the street. Or perhaps we could take the clearly visible presence of definitely one, and perhaps as many as two buses as a sign that the city’s commitment to access has been fulfilled to the extent that might reasonably be expected. Speaking personally (whatever that means), I’m not convinced that empty slogans represent anything more than a loathsome form of corporate gaslighting.



Shouldn't there be an additional exclamation mark in the slogan, 'Be Smart! Stay Apart!'? I always think of 'Jubilee Street' when I see this picture.



The stretch of woods that this primitive fire enclosure was found in is wild, unmanaged, and not designed to encourage visitors. It's not a particularly attractive

environment, it's situated on a steep hill, the paths are covered with briars and other obstacles, all of which makes it difficult to navigate. I think its primary purpose is to act as a haven for wildlife, and I believe the extent to which it successfully fulfils this function is the subject of university sponsored scientific study. I haven't seen much in the way of wild mammals in the area, although I presume that badgers and foxes probably hang out in the location. I've noticed plenty of butterflies and varieties of unfamiliar wildflowers in due season. I know that the woods border a field belonging to the nearby stables, which used to house what appeared to be a major warren, although I haven't seen any rabbits knocking about in recent years, an absence that I attribute to the unknown nefarious purposes of the stable owners, who are pariahs in the local community, and whose actions are motivated by the sole purpose of extending their domain with the aim of maximising income. You encounter the occasional dog walker now and then, which necessitates a particular form of intuitive etiquette to ensure that these chance encounters are navigated without anyone coming a cropper.





I don't think it was a working day when I photographed this security mirror outside the Bingham's factory on Western Road. I didn't notice what appears to be a black

clothed figure bending near one of the white doors until I looked at the picture several months after taking it. He could have been caught in the act of locking up, or he might be bending to pick up something he has dropped. I can't be entirely certain that it is a person, rather than a primarily dark coloured smudge of unknown provenance. I arrive at the conclusion that it is a representation of humanity on the grounds of probability.

Bingham's prides itself on the quality of its potted meats but one might question this position if like me you had witnessed the sight of bone laden open trucks making their way to the factory in the 1990s or been subjected to the stench associated with the alchemy of meat processing. I haven't seen one of those hideous death wagons for many years, although I presume that deliveries have continued apace. Maybe they have taken to some form of concealment, in recognition of the changing sensibilities of the local populace over the decades. It's something of a wonder that such a thing as meat paste still exists. I'm increasingly convinced that it won't be around for much longer.



“Produced from dried apple pulp and corn syrup, white cider... is attractive not just to the homeless but also younger drinkers on a budget.”

It's rare to see a bottle of super strength cider these days. They seemed far more common thirty years ago. This evidence clearly indicates that Frosty Jack's has managed to maintain a foothold in the marketplace but I haven't seen a can of White Lightning in ages. And I'm sure that Frosty Jack's used to be stronger. This scarcity is the result of bourgeois paternalism and hatred of the poor presented as an enlightened approach to public health promotion and concern for the wellbeing of street drinkers. Institutionalised gaslighting is the only approach to social welfare that has any traction these days. The aim of supposedly philanthropic organisations is not to actually help anyone, but rather to arrive at verbal formulations that are sufficiently effective in persuading their funders that this is what they are doing, whilst getting on with the important business of paying the mortgages and maintaining the comfortable lifestyles of the people who work for them. It doesn't take much effort to arrive at these formulations, because very few people really care. Fundamentally, charities have become the men, the very fat men, who water the (not-)workers beer.



“They turn right at the Hallamshire and make their way past Crookes Social Club to view the three orange towers of deepest Satan Town.”

Satan Town is Stannington. Not too long ago, Stannington would have been a moorland village, and before that a settlement of widely separated farms, but it's been swallowed up by the expansion of Sheffield and become an uninspiring sprawl of social and private housing estates. The place has retained something of its former character and was famous for its celebrations of Beltane and Samhain into the early years of the 21st century. This nonconformist heritage is reinforced by the presence of Bowcroft Cemetery, which indicates that Stannington was an early Quaker stronghold.

“We will not smoke again until we come to the hills above Satan Town. Around the bright seductive hills of Satan Town the crows sound, the magpie flees. Caw! Caw! sing the crows at rest in the tree. Caw! Caw! sing the crows, merrily. Caw! Caw! sing the crows, All hail the Sons of Amos Brearley!

The sun is a pale disc in grey sky but Sons of A.B., Branch of Walkley, sing Heil dir, Sonne! Heil dir, Licht! Heil dir Sons of Amos Brearley!”



I don't know why these flats have been boarded up. The building is fundamentally sound. I suspect that it has something to do with gentrification.



This building used to house Cavendish Cancer Care. It was a good place when it was operational but clearly in need of refurbishment. The rooms in the building were



uniformly large and high ceilinged, which made them difficult to heat. The place was originally built as a dwelling for a prosperous Victorian merchant, which meant that the interior spaces were not necessarily ideal to provide support to the often highly distressed people who made their way through the doors. Then again, it was not the quality of the building that counted, but the quality of the support provided, and as the testimonies of people who have accessed the centre illustrate, that support tends to be faultless.

And fear not... I am pleased to report that Cavendish Cancer Care managed to access funding that enabled them to move to better and more purpose-built premises just up the road, where they continue their good work. When it comes to this organisation, you can disregard comments previously made about the primary motivations of philanthropic groups.

“A place that makes you feel better when things are very bad. Thank you for being there.”

I'm with Erika all the way.

# CHANGED PRIORITY AHEAD

“After choosing exile in California instead of returning to England, where the public was already crying for blood from the scapegoat of the week, Gen made the decision to dissolve TOPY, issuing a final publication - Thee Green Book - and a postcard reading, simply, “Changed Priorities Ahead.” It had become obvious that TOPY’s moment was over; that the mission, which had only ever been meant as a temporary experiment, was over. It had only been Here to Go. Though some splinter groups remained (and remain) intact, continuing to use the TOPY name and logo, the current moved on, leaving what amount to more displays in the Museum of Magick... The ritual now complete, the Temple was banished.”

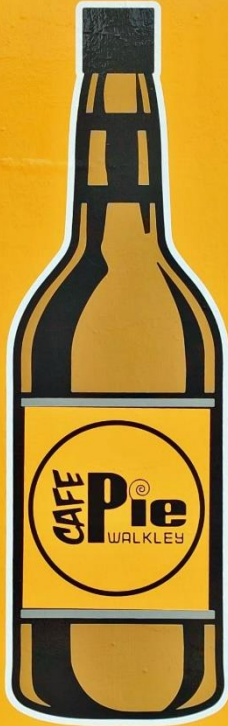


This striking decoration can be found on the front of the former Wharnclyffe Fire Clay Works. About 100 years after the building was erected, it became the site of McMurphy's, a user-run mental health day centre, named after the central character in 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'. Sheffield had a fair reputation for radical mental health initiatives around this time, but the black magic of psychiatry reasserted itself and they've all disappeared.



I took a photograph of this location a year ago and it looks almost exactly the same. The main difference is the height of the grass. I think the council was trialling some kind of long grass scheme in 2023 and this is what it looked like in its early stages. That's more or less what you'd expect (the similarity in appearance, I mean). What I wanted to mention today was that I recently realised that a character calling himself (I presume) Sky Stones, who once proclaimed ownership of the local TARA noticeboard, is not a character derived from fiction, but rather the tenant of one of the flats you can see in the background.

**CAFE PIE**



**WELCOME  
TO  
WALKLEY**

The first time I came to Sheffield was for the purpose of meeting the teenage philosopher, Kevin Leyland of Earby, near Colne. Kevin had founded the New Existentialist Order and started to publish 'Notes from Underground', its official publication. I contributed poems and articles to two of the early editions of this august journal, which attained a circulation of 30 copies at its height. My first contact with the Teenage Philosopher was when he responded to a literary phrased musicians wanted ad I placed in NME.

On the occasion of my visit to Kevin, we occupied ourselves with listening to 'Unknown Pleasures' and 'Closer' and the Velvet Underground and Nico album, whilst smoking Gitanes, drinking tea, and eating jam sandwiches in the student house in Walkley that Kevin shared with several other people. Sadly, I can no longer remember the address of this concave, so a present day pilgrimage is not possible, but I know that it was on one of the side streets running down from South Road, and I have deduced that it can be situated no more than a quarter of a mile away from this sign.



Heil Loki! See above and elsewhere for my fatuous remarks and spurious assertions regarding Sheffield and Norse-Germanic mythology.



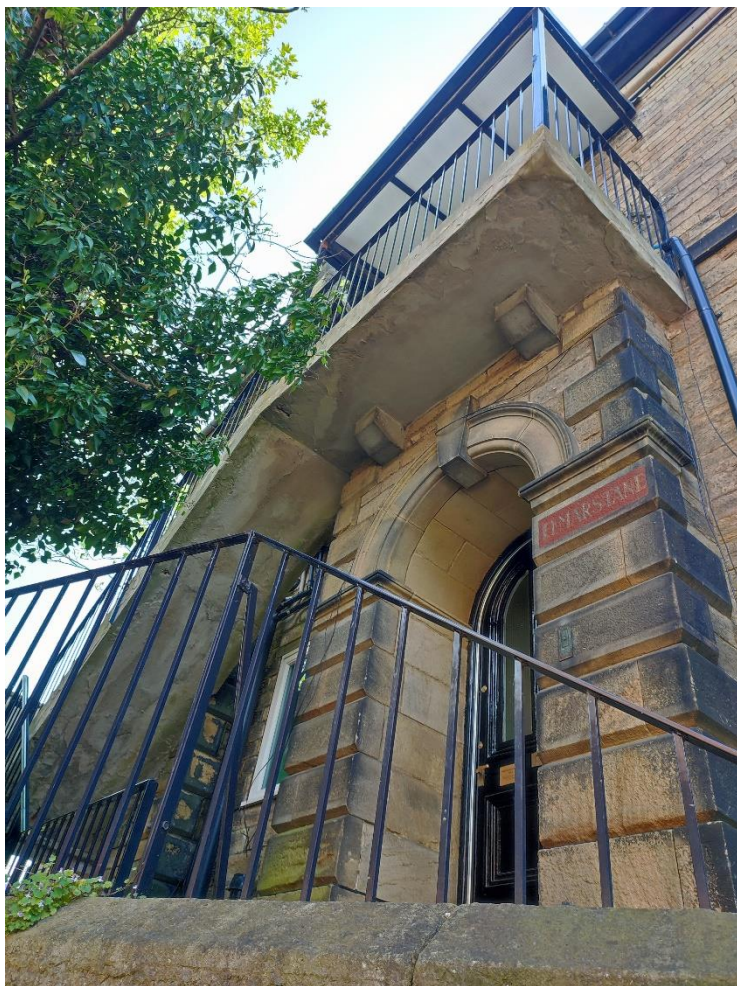
Leading para-scientists from the John Dee Centre of Absolute Fucking Bollocks at Sheffield Hallam University, formerly known as the poly, are currently investigating the probability that Atlantis is situated beneath the waters of the one-time boating lake in Crookes Valley Park. Emeritus Professor of Nonsense at SHU, Sir E. Kelley (“it’s the way I tell ‘em!”) said: “As sure as Sheffield United will avoid relegation and The Owls will make the play-offs come the end of the season, so the remnants of the fabled advanced civilisation hath a 74% chance of lurking beneath this pond.”



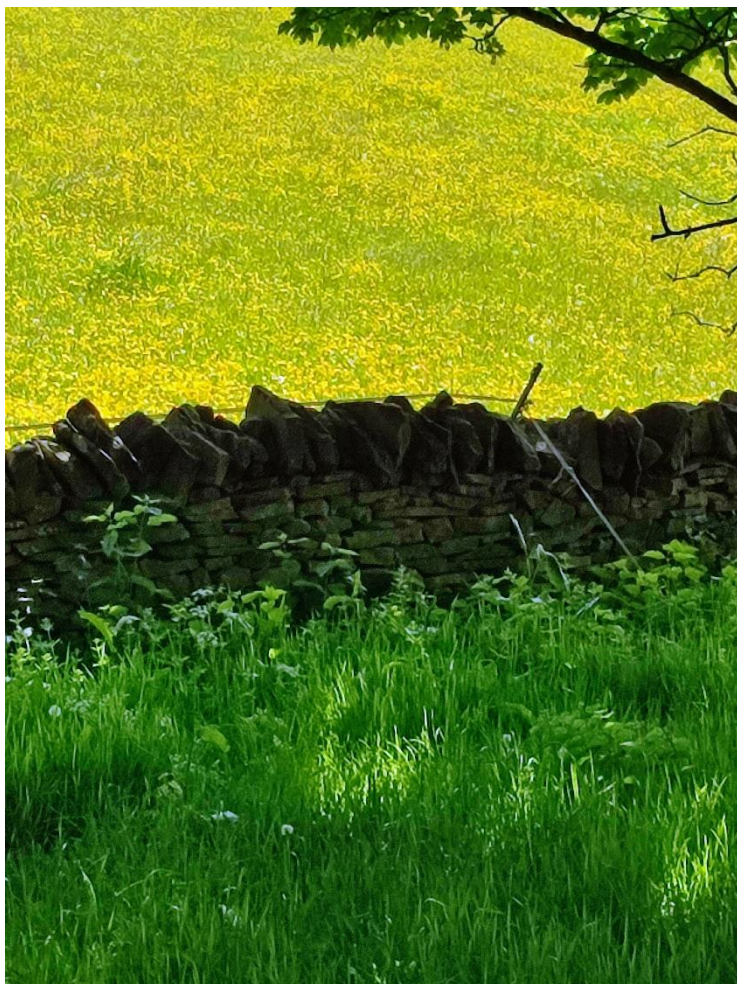


The benefits afforded by the beauty of grass left to grow untended were not deliberately bestowed and they are not constant. Would the path remain clear if there was never

any intervention? I can't work it out in my own mind, although I'm tempted to say that it would remain passable, on account of the human and canine traffic that passes this way. It would probably be different if the stairway was situated somewhere that was rarely visited, but then why would a flight of steps be erected in a wilderness anyway? How long does it take for grass at the height of its flourishing to bind with other patches of grass a short distance away? And it would seem that when we talk of grass, we mean many different things, referring as we are to plant species of widely divergent properties, which presumably grow at widely differing speeds, influenced by external factors that I could not hope to identify in my ignorance. And I'll never get to find out because interventions are made to keep the growth under control, by council workers, I imagine, although I have never seen them at their labour in this particular vicinity, and rarely witnessed them anywhere else on the Bole Hills, meaning that I deduce that they exist, and work on a variety of projects, without knowing it for sure as a result of seeing them with my own eyes.



Broomhill: The remodelled fortresses stretch out of the pleasant wilderness without purpose or meaning beyond the call of the moment, which is soon forgotten.



The term 'liminal' is now so overused in certain subcultural circles that it has been stripped of the prospect of meaning that it once seemed to possess. The definitions

“relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process,” and “occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold” are easy enough to grasp but contemporary uses of the word burden it with a weight that cannot withstand the clarity of these definitions. The term is frequently deployed to suggest occult meanings, or in tracts on psychogeography, a word that is similarly overused and burdened with impossible associations. Everything is liminal and psychogeographical these days, innit, and all of this liminal psychogeographic stuff means fuck all. I blame Iain Sinclair, although it’s probably unfair to blame him, because many of the films he has produced over the years have distinct points of interest, and even his verbose articles and books contain passages that warrant reflection. It is perhaps fairer to blame the followers of Iain Sinclair, that group of middle-class cultural studies students who like to present themselves as daring intellectual rebels, possessing deep insights into the nature of being and nothingness, which they share amongst themselves, because no one else is interested, which they take as a sign of validation, rather than testimony of deficiency.



As blackbirds are to winter, so wildflowers are to spring. The glories of blackbirds and wildflowers are so ubiquitous in season that they are commonly overlooked.



Cultivated flowers can be as beautiful as wildflowers. These put me in mind of the Mela Foundation Dream House (not the Barbie one, or the film of the same name).



It was the day of the New Temple Working. What does that mean? Can it have any meaning? The record reads: The line of initiation passes from male to female.





The record continues: The first male initiate was born of the mother. And elucidates: The Power of the Mother is Transmitted through the Seed of the Son.



They have heard: The Mother is present in the seed of the Son. The seed of the Son conveys the Mother in perpetuity. The seed of the Son leads back to the Mother. And they have learned: The Son emerged from the Mother. The seed of the Son contains the essence of the Mother. The essence contains the whole.

Furthermore: The Temple is a verb, and not a noun.

The Temple inhabits the depths, not the shallows.

The Temple is outside space and time. That which is outside space and time is located nowhere and can be accessed everywhere.



The Bald Man declaims: There is something within me that knows it is a waste of time, an evasion, an absurdity, and that pursuing it pointless. This exists alongside something else, which knows that it represents my highest achievement or accomplishment and forms a body of experience based on feeling, which links events from 1986 with events from March 2023. The lived reality of the feeling is precious, and good, and fitting.



Ornate detail on the exterior of buildings was far more common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century than it is today. Often, the figures depicted in stucco or other materials signified

something about the premises they adorned. At one time, these signifiers would have been commonly understood but they are no longer widely decipherable. I could probably work out what this figure represents if I could be bothered to do a little research but I have no intention of exerting myself in this way, because it is not necessary in order to make my point. It seems to me that she is some kind of symbol of plenty and I'm happy to leave it at that. Well, not happy, not even really content, but you know what I mean in context. From time to time, these decorative figures can be seen on private dwellings, which I take to be boastful expressions of wealth on the part of the householders. In Broomhill, they do not enliven stately homes but rather the domiciles of wealthy merchants and the elite professionals who live amongst them. Signifiers of wealth and privilege differ these days and the standard guiding principles informing the construction of fancy pads and business premises no longer involve figurative decoration. Fantasies of classical deities have no place in the world of glass and steel; indeed, statuary of any kind is increasingly hard to find, outside of the occasional meaningless squiggle.



In 1986 I noted: “I went through a phase when I could not see two pieces of wood, concrete or anything else arranged like a T without thinking of the cross on which

Christ was crucified. This ability to see geometric symbols has persisted to this day. Only yesterday, whilst travelling through rough farmland, I saw a Star of David, or Seal of Solomon, shining from a common farm gate.” This tendency has continued at intervals to the present. It is not something I cultivate but rather seems to arise of its own volition. This chain surrounded wooden post, viewed from this particular angle, immediately put me in mind of one of the nails which was used in the crucifixion alluded to earlier. Not only do I see religious symbols in everyday objects, but I also dream of Christ and engage in occult adventures in my sleep. Again, in 1986, I had a dream in which Jesus of Nazareth was revealed as the saviour of mankind, a manifestation of the Sun, the sum and total of all that is, and prompted by the sight of a beautiful collared dove taking flight from a lane in Sidlesham, West Sussex, I instantly composed a long and somewhat feverish verse extolling the wisdom, wide ranging influence, beauty and transformative compassion of Christ (a work which delighted me for many years to come, serving as a reminder of the experience that bore it).



It's strange that representations of noble and beautiful animals should be used to advertise the carcasses of their brothers and sisters for sale. It seems to be a form of nostalgia, harking back to a less literate age, when the infamous practice of meat eating was not viewed as morally reprehensible. I don't suppose that it's universally condemned today, and the issue of literacy is not as straightforward as it's presented. One might say that the heights of the age of literacy have passed, and that we're reverting to a time of idiot signs accompanied by empty AI generated slogan texts.





I used to be afraid of horses because of their size. My fear was informed by commonplace horror stories about their fondness for kicking out at passersby who unthinkingly pass behind them, dealing instant brain damage and death. Seeing them more often has caused my fear to depart.



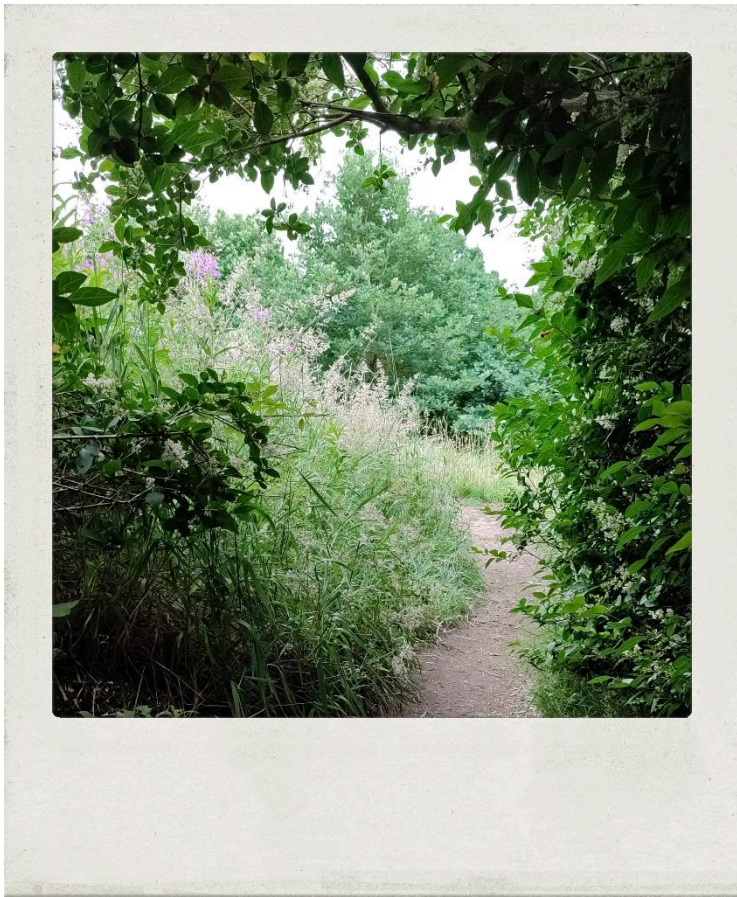
This is the sign of the Crosspool Anarchists. It can be found opposite the Spar shop, at the bottom of Benty Lane, just off Sandygate Road. It's hard to make out if the wall upon which the sign is painted belongs to the flash looking Indian restaurant or to the nursery next door.



Looking right whilst travelling along Northfield Road towards Crookes on foot often brings rewards in the form of appealing light effects, which could lead one to believe that the sun lives somewhere out Bole Hills way. But maybe it just goes there to rest.



This publication was left on the stone wall that separates the Mound ov Krekja from the field of bright yellow flowers in due season. I associate it with the offerings made in the hollow of a particular tree on the mound, which I have attributed to ‘teenage witches.’



It is pleasant to follow this path when the growth of greenery enclosing it is approaching its height. At times the path is dark and brightened by mottled light. This brightened darkness gives way to the brightness proper of the exit, which is the entrance coming the other way.



In 'Nemeton' from 'Cross of Light' it is written: "I see the moon rising like a skull. A triangle of stars forms above the city. One of the stars is reflected in a muddy pool of water. Beneath the starlit sky, the valley of vision shines." The stars have yet to appear.



This is one of the St Thomas Crookes cats. There were two of them to begin with, so similar in appearance that I took them to be siblings. I have not seen this cat's brother or sister for some time. They were friendly as kittens but they became increasingly wary as they grew older.



The key to the gates of the land of Beulah can be found in the light of a pleasant summer's evening illuminating that part of a moderately well to do suburb of Sheffield that



gives way to open countryside. The key is not a physical object that is discovered by the sun's rays settling upon it, as if it were made of metal. The key resides in the light itself. I realise this might sound quite vague but anyone who has experienced the sudden apprehension of immediate illumination in present time will know what I mean. This experience could be called nothing special but all important. It is open to everyone at all times but for some reason it is not commonly realised. It seems that people are more interested in locating their identity in jobs, houses, and families than they are concerned with their position as inheritors of light. And where is this land of Beulah, and what does it consist of? I say that it is the porch that opens on to the precinct of the prospect of vision. I know that definition lacks the clarity that people who have not entered there demand before they can give the notion credence but that need not concern me. It should go without saying that the key is not located in this suburb alone (being the suburb of Crookes by name) but that it can be found anywhere and anytime that can be said to describe exactly where anyone is right now.



Gateway to Valhalla! See above and elsewhere for my fatuous remarks and spurious assertions regarding Sheffield and Norse-Germanic mythology.



From 'The Nine O'Clock Service (NOS): An Exercise in Power and Control': "NOS was insular and defensive. It operated a rigid, dogmatic structure characterised by unequal power relationships, secrecy and privilege. The Nairn Street Community, which morphed into NOS, stated explicitly: "There should be genuine submission to the authority of the leaders." The strict bureaucracy of NOS contributed to undermining personality and reinforcing group dependence. It divided people into us and them, the saved and unsaved, and presented NOS as the legion of the saved on a holy mission from God."



Part of the former core of St Thomas Crookes, predating its expansion into its current cathedral-like proportions. “The Nine O’Clock Service (NOS) operated from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s. It first met at the parish church of St. Thomas, Crookes before moving to larger premises in Sheffield. NOS was hailed by the Church of England as a model for rejuvenating the church and bringing young people to the faith... It collapsed after a sex scandal alleging the abuse of at least 40 women by its leader and was later accused of promoting hedonistic paganism in place of orthodox Christianity.”



There are certain places that are held to be romantic or interesting, usually (but not always) by people who live outside of them. What is deemed to be interesting varies in accordance with faddish unrealities that have been accepted by outsiders as if they were real. Berlin holds this kind of allure for some people in England, but it would be surprising if this resonance could exist in the minds of native Berliners, although it does not seem to stop some of them from trying. The arrangement is not reciprocal, meaning that people from Berlin are unlikely to associate Crookes with romance and glamour.



This photograph was taken on the same evening that I photographed the lights of the traffic on Manchester Road reflected in the slime of a slug travelling slowly across the

wall more or less directly beneath this sign. I was listening to Raga Shuddh Kalyan – Khyal in Vilambit Teental by Kishori Amonkar on my phone and starting to think about the musical project that I eventually realised as ‘Bismillah in the House of Dreams’, which no one has listened to (‘no one’ in this context meaning ‘very few people’). The slug and reflected traffic lights experience was the more impressive spectacle but the representation of the spectacle did not do justice to the experience, which suggests something interesting about the nature of sight, the part it can play in generating emotional experience, and the inability of photographs to reproduce the reality of sight born emotion, although skilled photographers are sometimes capable of transmitting emotion through tapping into the typical range of emotional responses that viewers are capable of. For me, this photograph is linked to the slug and traffic light experience, and everything that goes with it. For you, that cannot be the case, even though I have outlined what happened on that evening. And even if you had seen the slug, you might not have noticed the lights reflected on its body.



It seems that white painted walls are best for displaying novel lighting effects. I'm not quite sure where this white painted wall is. It could be the living room but it might be my bedroom. And I don't know what external phenomenon is generating that beautiful violet colour. It seems to cover quite some ground, so I'm tempted to say it could have something to do with the setting sun. I know it's not the rising sun because me and the rising sun are strangers. I used to sleep in a white painted room somewhere else and the incoming morning light made it feel like a burial and birth chamber combined.





This photograph and the four pictures that follow it were taken on the same great expedition to Sheffield city centre. I undertake these epic journeys every now and again, often for the purpose of taking the piss out of inept city planners and their media allies, who boldly proclaim that Sheffield is on the verge of manifesting as New Jerusalem, despite the evidence to the contrary, which cannot be ignored. There is nothing in my archive to suggest that I had any ulterior motive on this occasion and I conclude that I had merely decided to extend the range of my wanderings for the sake of looking around.



CHERRY



#1770

graffiti on the green metal surface

**Why You Should Be A Socialist...**  
**A Guide to SMASHING CAPITALISM**  
Why...  
Wednesday 22 September 6.30pm  
The Sun Room, 100, Victoria Street, London E1 1JG  
Free tickets

**RESIST RACISM**  
**MARCH ON TORY PARTY CONFERENCE**  
Sunday 1 October, noon  
Central Manchester  
[Photo of a man and a woman]

I am not a great fan of sticker graffiti, although I suppose it can be superficially effective. I don't know when this street art fashion emerged (calling it 'street art' is pushing it really when defining this form of standard issue, subservient, status quo supporting rebellion). I think I first witnessed oversized representational images of this kind during my rambles to Neepsend in 2017. I recall a Cesare the Somnambulist type on the wall of a semi-derelict industrial building, followed by a deformed thug with his head wrapped in bandages. Not realising they were stickers, I was quite impressed, more so by the bandaged thug, because that image seemed to resonate with the feel of the place, whereas the Cesare type seemed more like an opaque reference to Pulp, remembering that Jarvis Cocker adopted a Cesare-type look around the time of the release of 'Different Class'. There's nothing wrong with Pulp; they're a lot better than most pop groups you can think of, despite their manifest deficiencies, but Pulp references in Sheffield must inevitably strike one as at least a little too obvious. The star gazing youngster depicted here seems to be a run of the mill take on the theme of hope.



It is a short-term opportunity because there has been a temporary delay in handing over the land to property developers on terms that meet the demands of the property developers, which are wholly concerned with maximising their profits. This horrible building will go but it will be replaced by a greater abomination, in the form of a sky kissing tower of luxury apartments made of the cheapest materials possible, marketed by the developers as the dawning of a new era in city centre living, but only when they're ready, mind, and with full council backing, of course. Get ready to dish out the contacts and gongs.



High in the midst, exalted as a god,

The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,

Idol of majesty divine, enclosed

With flaming cherubim, and golden shields...

A little later, insulted by Abdiel thus:

Apostate! still thou err'st, nor end wilt find

Of erring, from the path of truth remote.

- Paradise Lost

You might wonder what this has to do with the picture. It might help to know that the red brick bordered road is Milton Street. I could claim that the block of flats is a representation of 'The Apostate' but that would be pushing things really when you think about it. You could say that the block of flats towers high in the midst of the frame, and you could derive a claim of godlike exaltation from this observation; the fact that the passage speaks of Satan, the personification of apostasy, is apposite in this context, and says something about the nature of urban landscapes, but it all falls down when it comes to the sun-bright chariot, which can't be conjured into consciousness by any means that relate to what's shown.



My reflection as I made my way home was, Why is Sheffield city centre such a filthy, semi-derelict dump? Are all major English cities outside of London in a similar state? It's even worse than the 80s, in that today's squalor is less picturesque. My immediate reaction upon seeing this sign was, Why is there a picture of Kim Jong Un as a panda, apparently refusing entry to a building? You could go on to reflect that even kool kidz like me are prone to crass racist stereotyping, despite our good intentions. But you would be wrong. It's not really about that. It's about the media representations we are subject to.



I find myself starting to relax a bit. I can see the end is in sight. I know I have another succession of images relating to another epic journey to the city centre coming up, and I know that I've written about this journey previously, and that the resulting work, known as 'Narrow Road to New Jerusalem' amongst other things (the name of the road changing but the destination remaining the same) was my idea of fun, regardless of whatever anyone else might think, and that it will be enjoyable for me in some measure to revisit it again, unless I'm feeling out of sorts or queasy, which seems unlikely at the point of writing this.





I seem to have spent an inordinate amount of time travelling along suburban streets that have a definite and immediate presence in the moment of experience but which are nevertheless so similar as to be almost interchangeable, meaning that you have to keep your wits about you, or else you run the risk of becoming altogether lost in the vortex of the commonplace. Further, these unremarkable houses on unremarkable streets are the places in which countless individuals lead rich, rewarding, and dramatic lives, which are ultimately as unremarkable as the unremarkable places they live in.



The Royal Road to New Jerusalem passes through places that would look substantially different if the Council had its way. Those trees framing Westways Primary School might not have been there if the work of the Sheffield Trees Action Group and their fellow activists had proved ineffectual. Our glorious city leaders were intent on wreaking havoc on the memorial trees of Western Road, which were planted to honour pupils from this school who died in the First World War. The intent to engage in this crass act of desecration is a perfect illustration of the arrogant and antisocial nature of the local authority.



Sheffield City Council guarantees disappointment, so I don't expect to encounter the New Jerusalem that they describe or envision. I'm reminded of those front-page features that appeared in the Sheffield Telegraph throughout the 1990s, boldly proclaiming what a fabulous place Sheffield will be in ten years' time. It didn't happen then. As anyone who has walked from Moorfoot to Fargate recently will know, it isn't happening now, and as what has happened in the past is the most reliable indicator of what is likely to happen in the future, I'm not holding my breath for 2024 and beyond.



Those articles in the Telegraph were fairy tales, marked by the parochial paternalism that characterises the civic authorities and their establishment supporters.



They are dependent on exaggerated claims, an arrogance that assumes expertise on the part of decision makers and their allies, which they do not really possess, wholesale

ignorance on the part of the general citizenry, and a willingness to kowtow to the lies that are necessary to support the status quo and vested interests.

Broadly speaking, there are two kinds of expertise. The first is real technical expertise, acquired through learning and the deployment of skills and development of aptitudes for the benefit of the community as a whole. A consultant oncologist is an example of an expert of this type. The second form of expert consists of individuals who operate from a position of self-regard and self-interest by means of mystification and contempt laden power – think bankers and politicians, as well as city planners.

Groundless wishful thinking is no way to plan a city of the future. Standard issue glass and steel identikit buildings divorced from their environment can look bright and shiny to begin with, but soon degenerate into alienating and unhomely non-places. Those cheap glass palaces at the top of the Moor adjoining Pinstone Street haven't been around for long and they're already looking horrible.



I still can't think of a reason why there's a door on the third floor of the building at the end of the little alley that leads from Tasker Road to Cross Lane. My policy is to refrain from looking up things on the internet when it comes to Selected Trash from the Ruins of Society but as the issue has confounded me for some time I decided to see if I could find out anything about the history of the area that might explain the mystery. Sadly, my brief search failed to answer my question but I did learn that the largest and by far the wealthiest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century farms in Crookes was situated on Cross Lane.



The fragrance of the wood that this fence is made of was very appealing, which leads me to conclude that it was not constructed of common plywood, unless plywood is pleasantly fragrant to begin with, which is possible, but unlikely. It was also reddish in colour, and it has maintained this colour, which is another argument in favour of it being a relatively good quality building material, unless stained plywood is a mid-range middle class accoutrement. It was striking to begin with, because it was a large fence where no fence had previously been. But it's beginning to fade into the landscape.





I remember the quality of the light as I walked on to Sandygate Road, and the feelings that this experience of light provoked within me, which suggests that I was responding to the contents of a submerged memory store, rather than the environment I was encountering in present time, although the present time encounter added to the memory store, in advance of it being reactivated in future. It's a shame that the picture doesn't properly capture the quality of the light I am talking about, even though I don't need it to, because the memory store is within me, awaiting reactivation.



The range of my wanderings is so narrow, and I travel familiar paths so often, that I sometimes refrain from taking photographs for many days at a time. This is no hardship. I had travelled the world by the age of 6, witnessing exotic cultures and observing revolutions, and concluding that there was nothing more interesting or special about one place rather than another, and I am a photographer only in the sense that I take photographs, and a writer who strongly suspects that I have written everything I would like to write already, and I don't really care whether or not anyone consumes what I produce.



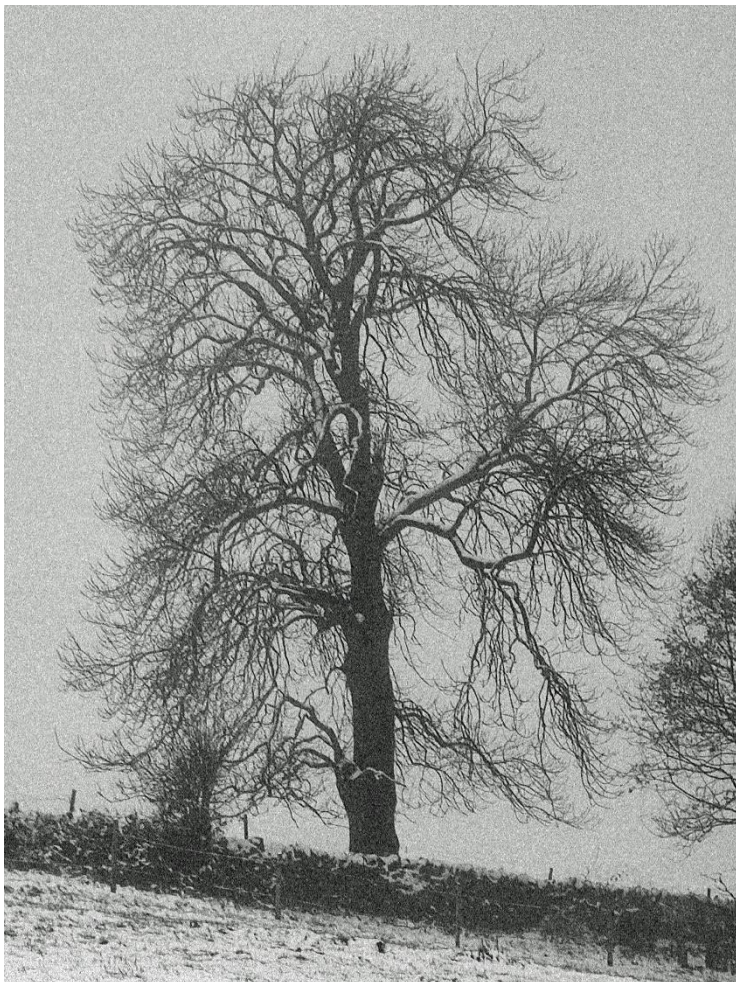
Seeing a bit of snow on the ground encouraged me to take some pictures after a period of inactivity because it makes familiar places look and seem new.



Not only does the snow make familiar places look and seem new but it also helps to make them feel new because it takes more effort to walk on snowy ground, which impacts on the speed of the journey, and this difference in speed impacts on the overall perception of detail. As you can see from this image, snowfall was succeeded by fog, which also makes the familiar seem new. That sign does not seem as prominent when the view to the distant hills is not obscured by what is commonly called inclement weather. And the fog shrouded trees on the far horizon seem further away than they do when the sun is shining.



The Mound of Krekja looks particularly alluring by virtue of the fog and snow. I didn't visit the interior of the grove on this occasion because I was more tired than usual from the effort of walking and reaching the Mound from this point involves travelling slightly downhill, which might have proved quite difficult. If I didn't know the Mound so well, I might have acted otherwise. Great changes have been visited on this place recently; one of the trees that we see nearest to us has been split halfway up, perhaps as a result of a lightning strike, and the top half of this tree now leans against its neighbours.



The local Yggdrasil, which sprang into existence when Crookes was formed, its roots and branches weaving the fabric of the settlement. Where's Ratatoskr?



I think that this picture of Longfield Road was taken towards the end of my snowbound journey. If this is so, I must have made a particular effort to walk past the first house on the Northfield Road end of the street to frame this particular view. Unsurprisingly, there is less evidence of snow on the ground, given the passage of traffic along the road and home dwellers and other pedestrians upon the pavement. Once again, the working of fog on the landscape results in the phenomenon of the way (here the street, formerly the grassy path to the grove of outlying trees) seeming far longer than it does when fog is absent.



18 years ago, I published a work called 'Balm of Gilead'. It was a collection of stories and articles about mystical and visionary experience, fringe religious movements,



occult groups and practices, and art and music that relates to these themes. It was very good, if I say so myself. Once the work had been published, I was faced with the task of distributing it. I offered the collection for sale through a variety of niche websites, including the website that I operated at the time, which led to me being visited at my place of work by an eccentric character who I went on to form a stormy relationship with thereafter (it's calmed down now, and we get along well, but it was in the balance for a few years). Having exhausted these channels, I was forced to transcend my shyness and timidity in order to request that specialist bookshops might offer it for sale. This enterprise proved broadly successful, and the work appeared on the shelves of the Atlantis Bookshop in London and Rare and Racy in Sheffield, amongst other places. But copies of 'Balm of Gilead' remained, so I took to hawking them around less immediately fitting outlets, including what I termed 'a psychic junkshop' on South Road, Walkley. This 'psychic junkshop' accepted one copy, closed down, and later emerged in expanded form as the purveyors of the extraordinary plate that is here paraded before your eyes.



When I was a young man, or a child approaching adulthood, I encountered a strange individual as I walked down the A34 from Bradwell to Newcastle, a route that I did not follow very often, as other routes were available, and they were shorter, or more picturesque. Upon seeing me, this curious person was moved to exclaim, “The sun shines on the righteous!” I didn’t really know what he meant at the time, and even after I came to understand the reference, I still didn’t know what he meant. But often when I see the sun shining like this, I think about this encounter, and it invariably seems somehow important.



Earlier I referred to my tendency to see religious and occult symbols in everyday elements of the landscape. It obviously comes as no surprise to see religious symbols

in cemeteries. I thought this particular gravestone had called to me on account of the extraordinary severity of those bolt-like circles and the rough sturdiness of the stone itself. But there is something else at play. Firstly, the circular emanations can be interpreted as a reference to the five wounds of Christ; this is quite straightforward and orthodox and easy to grasp. Secondly, and more pertinently, the five circles relate to the stations of light opened through the performance of the Cross of Light six-part rite, which correspond to what is called the Third Eye, the Navel, the Left Breast (nipple), the Right Breast (nipple) and what is called the Heart Chakra on the body of light. During the six-part rite, light – greater light – light beyond light is generated in each of these stations, and at the conclusion of the six-part rite, the stations are joined by making the sign of the Hanged Man. The rite concludes by focusing on the station of light in the so-called Heart Chakra, which corresponds with the central circle on this cross. Who would have thought it? Once a Cross of Light Templar, always a Cross of Light Templar. Once a temple is opened, it remains open until it is closed. And it never closes.