

Editorial – Nothing much to add to the editorial from last issue, except to tell you to look out for festive posts on the **5-7-5 Haiku Journal** site and a Christmas theme for **View From Atlantis**. (There is still time to submit festive haiku, and the Santa’s Claws theme, along with a spooky one, will be open between the 4th and 10th of December.)

There will be a new **Xmas Bard**, from the pen of Neil K. Henderson, out soon and I’m still hoping to get at least one more issue of **Monomyth** out before Christmas.

The release schedule should return to normal next year.

Best,

DJ Tyrer,
Editor

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The webzine which celebrates the 5-7-5 syllable form of haiku. Submissions are welcome via the editorial email address with 5-7-5 Submission in the subject line.

<https://575haikujournal.wordpress.com/>

Atlantean Publishing will be **closed** to general submissions during December and January, but submissions to **The Supplement** will remain *open*. So, you can send your letters of comment, your reviews, your news and articles, as usual.

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In Appreciation of... The Rockford Files

By David Edwards

This article is directly inspired by Harris Coverley's excellent *In Appreciation of... Columbo* from **The Supplement** 101.

The Rockford Files, created by Roy Huggins and Stephen J. Cannel, and starring affable leading man James Garner (who first achieved stardom in Huggin's 1950's T.V. western series *Maverick*) as the titular character, aired on NBC Television from September 13, 1974 to January 10, 1980 – a successful two hour pilot (syndicated under the title *Backlash of the Hunter*) premiered March 27, 1974.

One hundred twenty-three episodes were produced in total (counting the pilot and several two-parters) and there is not a bad one in the lot. Never finishing higher than #12 in the year-end ratings during its original run, the show has proven hugely popular in syndication. In the 1980's alone it reportedly generated 125 million dollars in revenue for Universal Studios. The series has been airing on the nostalgic GET TV network since early 2022.

Jim Rockford is an ex-convict (the crime he was imprisoned for is never delineated, but the full pardon he received clearing his record is) turned private investigator who resides in Malibu / Los Angeles, California (Paradise Cove, location of an early Beach Boys album cover shoot, to be precise). But this is no posh, celebrity Malibu. His home is a very middle class trailer anchored in a parking lot near a public beach.

Rockford charges his eclectic clientele (he often works gratis or for himself) an unvarying fee – two hundred dollars a day plus expenses – and “does not handle active police cases”. This is a rule he routinely ignores! As an action adventure/detective show there are plenty of fisticuffs and shoot-outs, but our hero engages in these reluctantly. He doesn't always win his fights, and usually holsters his gun in a cookie jar on his kitchen counter-top. Rockford prefers to use his wits and fast talk to avoid potentially violent situations.

He is aided in his work by a core group of supporters: his father, retired trucker Joseph ‘Rocky’ Rockford (Noah Beery Jr.) who is always badgering Jim to “get into a decent line of work”; cracker-jack

attorney Beth Davenport (Gretchen Corbett) who not only occasionally brings Jim clients but also routinely helps clear him of criminal charges resulting from his work; and police Sergeant [later Lieutenant] Dennis Becker (Joe Santos) who gives Rockford critical access – all be it reluctantly – to police records related to cases, invariably shows up at climatic moments to save his friend from imminent harm, and also runs interference between Jim and antagonistic police superiors, most often in the persons of Lieutenants Diehl (Tom Atkins) and Chapman (James Luisi).

Also helping out in more than three dozen episodes is Rockford's excellent and ‘friend’ Angel Martin (Stuart Margolin, who also directed several episodes). A snivelling, cowardly conman, Angel often gets Jim into hot water, but also works the streets for information not even the police can obtain.

In addition to these co-stars there were also several semi-regulars: the aforementioned Atkins and Luisi; Joe E. Tata as bail bondsman Sully (very important for the oft-incarcerated Rockford); Garner's real-life best friend (and co-creator's brother-in-law) Luis Delgado as police officer Todd Billings; and Garner's brother Jack, in several cameo roles.

Frequent guest stars – either as clients, villains, or simple antagonists – include George Loros, Ken Swofford Scott Brady, Robert Weber, Mills Watson, Joan Van Ark, and Robert Loggia. Special mention must be made to musician Isaac Hayes as tough guy ex-con Gandolph Fitch, and the multi talented Rita Moreno who, as hooker-with-a heart-of-gold Rita Capkovic, won an Emmy for best performance by a guest star – Garner and Margolin also won acting Emmys during **Rockford's** run, and the show was voted 1978's Outstanding Drama Series.

Jim Rockford worked with, and against, several private detective colleagues and competitors over the years. Among these were too-good-to-be-true Lance White (Tom Selleck, who, as Thomas Magnum proved to be the 1980's most popular TV P.I.); fast-talking con man Marc Hayes (Louis Gossett Jr.); abrasive Vern St. Cloud (Simon Oakland); wanna-be Fred Beamer (James Whitmore Jr.); and neophyte Richie Brockleman (Dennis Dugan, who had his own short-lived spin-off series with the character).

Jim Rockford drove ‘the’ iconic TV car of the 1970's – a gold Pontiac Firebird. Actually a series of gold Pontiac Firebirds, for one was blown-up by a bomb in Season 2's *Gearjammers*

episode and another destroyed going over a cliff in Season 3's *The Birds, the Bees, and T.T. Flowers*. The Surviving Firebirds were routinely banged into and abused with transmission/suspension destroying maneuvers, shot full of bullet holes, and sabotaged – slashed tires and tampered brake lines were a favored technique. In fact the final scene from the series finale – Season 6's *Deadlock in Parma* – shows Rockford driving his misrepaired Firebird away from a service garage.

Each episode begins with the opening credits running on screen as Rockford's answering-machine picks up an incoming call. The recorded messages almost never have anything to do with that particular episode, but they are always biting funny. Even if I don't have time to watch (actually rewatch for the umpteenth time) a full episode I always try to catch this humorous prologue.

The scripts to **The Rockford Files**, penned by many writers over the years – notably co-creator Huggins, Juanita Bartlett, and future **Sopranos** producer David Chase – are peppered with elaborate plot twists and subtle, ironic humour. Some of the early first season shows might be a little padded with extended pursuit scenes to fill ‘short’ scripts, but that is the only quibble I have with the series' entire run.

As I stated earlier there are, in my opinion, no weak episodes in the entire six seasons. Like any adherent I do have my personal favourites: *Sleight of Hand* (Season 1), it takes only twenty seconds for Rockford's girlfriend to go missing; *Chicken Little is a Little Chicken* (Season 2), Angel stuffs 30,000 laundered dollars in Jim's car; *The Oracle Wore a Cashmere Suit* (3), a phony psychic uses Rockford as a stalking horse; *Drought at Indianhead River* (3), Jim tries to help Angel out of a tax scheme turned murder plot; *Beamer's Last Case* (4), Rockford returns from vacation to find his identity stolen; *Irving the Explainer* (4), [directed by actor James Coburn], a complicated case involving Nazis, stolen art, a thirty year old murder, and the greatest ending to any television episode this side of the Newhart series finale in 1990; *The Queen of Peru* (4), a stolen diamond ends up in Jim's barbecue grill; *White on White and Nearly Perfect* (5), the Rockford-infuriating Lance White makes his

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Letters to the Editor

Dear DJ,

One Flew Over The Vampire's Nest arrived safely today, despite my initial trepidation. Of course, nowadays most official mail comes in white envelopes, but us old timers still carry the traditional fear of the dreaded 'brown envelope'. The contents came as both a relief and a pleasure. And what a surprise to see the title. I'm pretty sure this is the first time in my writing history that one of my pieces has given its title to a collection – thanks for that honour.

A goodly set of varied ghostly goods contained within. *Distance Lost* and *The Poltergeist And The Twice-Boned Girl* (great title) both immediately grabbed me, with *Making Amends* darkening the otherwise sparkler-illuminated twilight. But these are just my first-read standouts. Everything in the collection is as full of enjoyableness as a pumpkin bursting with the seeds of Jack-O'-Lanternism. Thanks for including me in it.

Yours, appearing through a cupboard door near you,

Neil K. Henderson.

Hi DJ

Many thanks for **The Supplement** 105 and including *New Psychic Action*.

With regard to David Edwards point (Letters): he is quite right!

These terms are not mutually exclusive and all apply simultaneously. It is basically a matter of emphasis. The original statement was a bit polemical (propaganda!) and so over simplified.

all best for now

AC Evans

Dear DJ,

T'Supplement 105 – one third larger than its predecessor – came thundering through the Knightswood Library printer and damn near broke the delicate mechanism with the extra weight of its hugely expanded half-dozen pages. If this rate of increase continues exponentially, **T'Supplement** will attain several million pages about the middle of next year or the one after that, depending if the moon is in the ascendant and arithmetic has been numerically derestricted.

I don't know how you do it – but I suspect having Celine Rose Mariotti writing half the issue may be a factor. So many *Ghostly Beings* recorded in her article/self-advertisement, and yet so many more still to be catalogued and

extracts quoted. Get them out of their old haunts and set them to work on supplying material, and before you know it **T'Supplement** can be entirely ghost-written! (Yes, I can stoop that low.)

Not that this is the kind of *New Psychic Action* intended by AC Evans. According to Evans, "From our present vantage point we should be able to formulate a 'post-surreal' or 'neo-Surreal' perspective." (I can use quotations to fill up space like the best of 'em.) I think I've been doing what AC suggests already. The next time I'm standing in a queue and someone has to nudge me and wave a hand in front of my eyes, instead of saying, "Sorry, I was miles away" I'll simply point out that I was formulating a 'post-surreal' or 'neo-Surreal' perspective. Of course, by the time I've said it, someone will have jumped in ahead of me. In the words of Blur, Modern Life Is Rubbish. (For 'Rubbish' read 'Subtopian Cyber-Junk'.) Frankly, I don't know what was wrong with good old-fashioned crap.

John Francis Haines made modern life a little less rubbishy with his review of Cardinal Cox's *Space Saving Device*. Not only was the review compelling and informative, but John actually used the phrase "sense of wonder". Oh, what a warm, comforting pre-'post-surreal' or 'neo-Surreal' perspective he evoked!

Yours, awaiting next issue to see if Knightswood Library's printer can take the ghosts in the machine,

Neil K. Henderson.

Hi, DJ,

I recently received an ARC (advanced review copy) of one of Cardinal Cox's current releases – **King Bladud's College** – that confirms my misspelling of *Chyndonax*, the title of his 2021 release that I reviewed in issue 100. Druidry is a relatively new subject for me and I had never heard the name Chyndonax pronounced before. It's important because it's William Stukeley's druidic pseudonym.

I also spelled Druidry with a capital *D* and elsewhere in the review with a small *d*, the latter seeming permissible to me, while hoping for eventual clarification from authoritative sources. Like, now. It's on this week's To Do list.

One can hardly avoid making typos. In this case my Word spell checker did not help me out. So, I must apologize, as I hope not to have offended any followers of Druidry nor Mr. Cox nor any of his fans.

Awen 121 is a very satisfying issue, with an array of authors whose individuality of styles is remarkable: Joyce Walker, Pamela Harvey, SchiZ, Matthew Wilson and so forth.

I bought Matthew Wilson's **Gargoyles of the Abbey** but haven't read it yet because I didn't find any of his horror

verse in it, that I love madly. His 100-word microfiction in **Awen** 121, *The Short Revolution*, is really very good.

At least, I hope I got the 100-words right, I only counted them about 9 times already!

Best,

Christine Despardes

Hi DJ,

Just a couple of comments on the all too brief, yet still satisfying, **Supplement** 105.

In your review of **Landscapes** (by Wendy Ann Webb and David Norris-Kay) I loved Mr. Norris-Kay's description of a butterfly as "...this unchained flower." For is that not exactly what a lepidopteran is visually as it dances chaotically along micro-air currents?

Celine Rose Mariotti's mention of **The Ghost of Flight 401** in her article, *Ghostly Beings*, sent me to the **Internet Movie Database** (IMDb) to confirm a hazy memory. There was a TV Movie of the Week by that title back in the 1970's starring, among others, Ernest Borgnine, Kim Bassinger, and Russel Johnson. More chilling than any supposed ghost sightings is the fact that the actual Eastern Air Lines crash into the Florida Everglades near Miami in December 1972 (killing 101 people) was determined to have been caused by the flight crew being distracted by a burned-out instrument panel light bulb!

Best Wishes,

David Edwards

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(continued from page 2)

impeccable debut; *The Battle Ax and the Exploding Cigar* (5), Jim gets hopelessly caught up in the gears of federal bureaucracy; and *The Hawaiian Headache* (6), a vacationing Rockford is roped into helping out on a National Security case.

In several episodes, Rockford uses skills acquired during his murky criminal past – in almost every episode of the series he proves adept at picking locks and printing up phony business cards – to run elaborate confidence games in order to successfully complete his case. Among these are: *The Farnsworth Stratagem* (2), erecting a fake oil rig in the courtyard of a posh hotel; *Joey Blue Eyes* (2), using extortion and ‘murder’ to beat the mob at their own game; *There’s One in Every Port* (3), navigating obscure maritime laws to turn the tables on an old friend who put him in deadly peril; and *Never Send a Boy King to Do a Man’s Job* (5), in which Jim and company stage a phony King Tut exhibit to exploit the greed and phobias of an unscrupulous promoter in order to save the business of fellow P.I. Brockleman’s father.

This latter episode is a two-parter (as is Richie Brockleman’s other appearance, *The House on Willis Avenue* from Season 4) – a frequent device used for the last time in the excellent *Only Rock n’ Roll Will Never Die* from the truncated Season Six.

The series came to a premature end due to Garner’s health issues (knees, back, and ulcers) at the time, as well as NBC/Universal Studios claim **The Rockford Files** was too expensive to produce, with its ‘pricey’ guest stars and location filming. Garner, always litigious with studios and producers throughout his career, disputed this, then filed a breach of contract suit, eventually winning a lucrative settlement years later.

Garner and Universal smoothed things out enough to produce eight **Rockford** TV movies, airing on CBS, between 1994 and 1999. The films – all written by script veterans Cannel, Bartlett, or Chase – reunited most of the regulars from the original series (Beery Jr. passed away in 1994) and proved popular with fans and critics alike.

There have been persistent rumours of a **Rockford** reboot over

the years – a new pilot was actually filmed about a decade ago, but never aired. Fortunately none of these plans have come to fruition as of yet. Reboots of Classic TV shows are rarely a good idea – I find the new **Magnum P.I.** unwatchable after about thirty seconds due to the quick-cut editing used and the presence of a female Higgins!! There can be only one Jim Rockford, and the perfectly cast and irreplaceable James Garner passed away in 2014 at the age of eighty-six.

A melancholy postscript: I had just finished a rough first draft of this article when I belatedly learned of the death of Stuart Margolin (December 2022). In addition to his acclaimed work on **The Rockford Files**, he directed scores of television episodes over the years, appeared in such classic series as **Gunsmoke, Love, American Style, The Partridge Family, MASH, and Magnum P.I.**, and can be seen in films like **Death Wish, Future World, and Days of Heaven**. With his passing only Gretchen Corbett and Tom Atkins remain from the series’ cast of regulars and semi-regulars.

Review by DJ Tyrer

Bacchus Against The Wall

By Roy Duffield

83pp, pb, 979-8397473811, \$13 / £10.21

[Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)

How much you enjoy this collection will probably depend, in part, on your political leanings, although I’m sure most people in the UK and USA will have some sympathy for the rage and despair that burn within this collection, regardless. But, more so, it will depend upon a tolerance for idiosyncratic layout and truncated spelling (if these are things that alienate you from reading a poem, then this probably won’t be the collection for you...)

Roy Duffield takes a jaundiced, or realistic, look at a bleak society that offers little and demands much, albeit played out with humour and wit. I must admit I was amused by the (otherwise) blank page titled *Waste of Space* and the pun in the title of *haiking*. Overall, I did tend to enjoy the haiku and short form pieces more as they were easier to read and focused the poems more than the longer ones, but this was purely a matter of taste and I know many readers will get far more out of the longer pieces than I did.

I especially liked *low hanging fruit* (“black bough / bent low to the ground – / storm clouds”), more traditional than much in this collection, the untitled ‘wrecking ball’

haiku, and *esca(r)pe(ment)*, in which the poet is unable to head where they wish, yet can proclaim, “but still, / never still.”

This isn’t a collection for everyone, but if you want poetry with a point, with politics and fire in its words, then this collection is for you. Recommended.

Advert

Celine Rose Mariotti has two ghost stories about George Bowman.

In Book One, **I Hear the Banjo Playing**, he is a ghost playing the banjo, who keeps appearing as a ghost to his wife Melinda, who discovers things she never knew about her husband.

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To order, contact: celinem@aol.com

Celine Rose Mariotti also has a new young adult science fiction book, and it is entitled **Atomic Soldiers**.

This is the story of the Capricorn-29 Spaceship venturing on a journey to the planet of Saturn. It is the year 2515 and all the people who were on Earth in the 1980s and 1990s are back on Earth again and President Ronald Reagan is once again the President of the United States.

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Boudica's Ghost

By Cardinal Cox

King Bladud's College

By Cardinal Cox

The Orbital Committee 1: Chaos

By Cardinal Cox

The London Section

By Cardinal Cox

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Boudica's Ghost is a script whose idea came from the same workshop that Mr. Cox's one-woman play **A Poem for Jean Armour** came from.

Here, the drama format becomes a perimeter of opportunity for a pastiche of varying styles like quoted verse (Tennyson, Cowper, etc.), Roman-writ history by Tacitus or a verse by John Fletcher (c.1611) serving as Boudica's dialogue, as well as Mr. Cox's fabricated dialogue for her. The boundaries of the script are biographical; even Boudica's monologues are based on the primary sources of Tacitus' and Cassius Dio's accounts of her deeds.

The Romans invaded Britain in AD 43. After a rancorous series of events, Boudica, Queen of the Iceni, organized a revolt, to bring them down. In AD 60 her army destroyed London, although the overall coup did not end in her favor.

One finds in this theatrical piece references to Brexit and prominent Brexiteers. Mrs. Thatcher too, Queen Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria. The Brexit references make far more vivid the life and issues of Boudica than ancient historical accounts might do. The script abounds with stage direction, settings, and unobtrusive citation. This is a restive play, unsettling, inducing one to leave the theatre or finish reading the pamphlet feeling incited to action, as if history wasn't long ago at all.

In **King Bladud's College**, Mr. Cox shares with us his passion for and involvement in the pre-Covid Stamford Georgian Festival and Whittlesey Straw Bear Festival, and it brings on a communal warmth that was missed during the epidemic.

The Cave, the opening 14-line terza rima, invites us to a moment of druidry in action, in a lamp lit cave, in ancient days when such was done, where a druid teacher is holding a learning,

healing and growing session with initiates to whom esoteric truths are being imparted.

Never were Mr. Cox's footnotes more desirable than here, where he introduces the topic of William Stukeley who lived in Stamford and chose the druid pseudonym 'Chyndonax' for himself. Stamford is also where the legendary King of the Britons, Bladud, built a college.

From the very start, we find the pamphlet's histories, legends and rhyme-and-metered lines reverberate in the mind long after a reading.

Robin Hood Games, Castle Bytham is a folk play whose characters' dialogue is in ABAB quartets. In the play, Robin and his famous band of friends come upon the Sheriff of Nottingham, unfortunately, and both parties are trying to pass through an area of the forest while avoiding each other. Robin and company have to travel, to collect money owed to them, but must hide from the Sheriff, for fear of arrest. Here, one enjoys abundant lively dialogue and pertinent stage settings, rather than descriptive passages.

The rhyme-and-metered music of its dialogue seduces the ear and instruments aren't missed. A delightful cast of characters and the merry event—May Day entertainment 'round the Castle Bytham maypole – are lively and warming.

The Revesby Dancers is an 8-character folk play whose characters tell their backstories by addressing the audience (in genuine mummies' fashion, you see) and occasionally engaging in a bit of verbal exchange. The format is 4-beat rhymed quatrains displayed singly and sometimes stacked. The quatrains' musicality might delude the reader-listener into believing this is the only way to convey dramatic entertainment.

The play's historical significance adds to a tantalising poem. Mr. Cox wrote it this year in the style of the original October 20, 1779 Halloween performance, according to his footnote. I also downloaded and read Paul and Georgina Smith's 1979 article *The Plouboys or Modes Dancers at Revesby*, published right after the 200th anniversary performance of its original one at Revesby Abbey.

The Brazenose College Boar's Head Carol is a carol in sestina form (an amazing work to find being written in the 21st century) accompanying the serving of a boar's head at Christmas, most likely. The accompanying footnote fascinates with its discussion of the legendary centuries-old rivalry between Stamford and Oxford University over the handsome 12th century knocker (which, steeped in legend, has anyone confirmed yet whether it's made of brass or of bronze?).

The depth and intricacy of all the footnotes makes them a pleasure to process for their uncompromised clarity and

imaginative scope. In this pamphlet sparks and voltage jumps fly all over the place, keeping one pleased and safe in the sphere of imagination, history and community, a definite respite from anxiety over our currently besieged external world.

At first glance, **The Orbital Committee 1: Chaos** might be a story arc encompassing 13 component compositions. Actually, it's a group of engrossing individual stories to be savored individually, ten of them an evocative verse narrative touching on 'facts' discussed in the footnotes.

In one line of a punctilious sonnet or terza rima, the unexpected may step in, in the form of an unanticipated event or cosmic detail or level of reality. **Chaos** is current themes (climate, energy, pollution, corporate greed, chatbots and algorithms, even the politicization of diversity) treated within parameters of the sci fi genre that were established by masters like Heinlein, Moorcock, Burroughs and Le Guin.

In *No Nukes on Mars*, a wanna-be autocrat desires a repressive empire of the solar system and possesses nuclear weapons which if deployed would alter the DNA of a life form on Mars that would inevitably enslave humanity. Centred on the page in fourteen rhymed lines whose content in the closing couplet startles, I thought *No Nukes on Mars* a possible sonnet. But its rhyme scheme is 7 couplets, not a traditional sonnet; but sonnets can vary in form, I've heard from a seasoned lyric tenor, and still be called sonnets (just as single-line haiku in English are nonetheless haiku).

The London Libertine introduces us to a rock musician who we now suspect to be a hidden-in-plain-view global player, by dint of photos of him at various capitals around the world at critical moments of their history. Then, is he a cross-border black marketer specializing in goods related to intrigue. Whatever he's up to, flamboyant though he be, his skills get goods through customs without detection. He reminds me of my favorite Cox character ever, secret agent Phileas Fogg in *The Great Game (Le Monde Extraordinaire, 2014)* who alone strategized for Britain in the 19th century struggle between the Russian and British Empires over dominance of Central Asia.

Squatters on Salyut 8 surprises me in how the villanelle's repeated 2 lines along with its footnotes make it so compelling a little story. After 1991 (the end of the USSR) a Salyut space station gets inhabited by squatters that maintain its orbit. They were the Nova Mob, an infestation of cosmic viruses that moved

into the power void left behind by the Soviet Union. In earlier times, these outré infections of the mind were treated by means of exorcism. And while you sit wrapped up in the narrative, reader, you may wonder at being immobilized by this, and staring into empty space, on hold as it were, since none of it is real.

Farmer Jones is a new prose form called flash micro-fiction, this one a 245-word story where a real estate scam turns out to be a horror nightmare. There are two more prose fictions in **Chaos** and none of the three share similarities.

“Every bloody riot starts with a single shot”, the line goes, in the villanelle *Luna for the Loonies*. There is a breakaway movement in the moon colonies and billionaires’ Mining Companies’ security guards overreact to a protest. That simply exacerbated the insurgency.

An intriguing, satisfying read.

In **The London Section**, *Quick Step Around the Metropolis* is a Shakespearean sonnet about an anarchist bomb threat on a seemingly normal day in 19th century Piccadilly Circus.

When I received the ARC of this pamphlet, having just watched Peter Ackroyd’s BBC documentary **London: Water and Darkness** on YouTube, it occurred to me that the British Empire might have been threatened by political violence as a result of unconscionable living conditions of the London working poor whose efforts contributed so much to the wealth and breadth of the Empire (Henry Mayhew, **London Labour and the London Poor**).

I was also wrong about political violence as an outcome of Russian revolutionaries migrating there, and the revolutions of 1848 and afterwards, across Europe.

In *The Dynamiter*, a fiction in Shakespearean sonnet form, we’re told that the head of Section D of the Metropolitan Police, who had successfully arrested Fenians, was later forced to retire when a British agent was discovered to have arranged an assassination attempt against Queen Victoria. No big surprise there, in my humble opinion, for arresting Finians might have been done for the optics, to preclude suspicion of Section D’s involvement in the assassination attempt.

Surely, the Russian revolutionaries in exile brought on tensions in the midst of which, in 1861, Alfred Nobel invented dynamite. And surely, at the same time the dissatisfaction of the working poor exerted a pressure on the police and the intelligence services, but the poor were

not the threat to the Empire’s political instability that, say, the Fenians were.

The Princess Casamassima is a terza rima story poem about an American noblewoman-by-marriage in London who condemns theera’s mass poverty as well as 'social chains' the people had to suffer. The verse is named after the famous novel by Henry James.

The Informer and **The Secret Agent** by Joseph Conrad, **A Girl Among the Anarchists** by Isabel Meredith and **The Railway Spy** by Edith Nesbitt are among many well-known works Mr. Cox references in his footnotes, working them into a stimulating, illuminating thriller.

What fascinates further is techniques which **The London Section** shares with **The Russian Section** (2022). Both works mix genre (thriller with sci-fi including nonlinear time), and they mix planarity (real historical time with characters from historical fiction participating in real history, and deceased historical figures alive and interacting with fictional characters).

The title **The London Section** might refer to the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, formed in 1883, the first counter-terrorist law enforcement bureau ever. Or it might refer to Section D, considering what offences and intrigues they routinely committed against whomsoever, with impunity.

So many plots trace back to Section D
They run the gaol and they have the key

Elsewhere Mr. Cox mentions 'spycops' acting as agent provocateurs, and in *Betrayal*,

Doubt is a fat wedge they drive between us
Police pay friends to spread terrible lies

In The Mines

By DS Davidson

The old timer swears he saw
Flopping, clutching on the tunnel floor
Something like a disembodied arm
All white and pale and wet
It can't be true, and yet
He swears that's not the strangest thing
In the mines he's ever seen
Down in the darkness
The foetid depths of eternal night
Things better hidden from mortal sight
And he also swears he saw
Something that walked like a man
But was not a man but something else
Something without a face
Something that never was part of
the human race

Originally published in *Tigershark*

The Supplement will return in 2024.

The Wasteground

By DJ Tyrer

In the little Welsh town of Llanbadarn Fawr, there is an area of wasteground, suggesting of itself a shape between that of a triangle and an abused rectangle, liberally dotted with trees and bushes. On two sides, it is bounded by houses, on a third by a road leading up Primrose Hill to the university campus, and, lastly, with a buffer of private land, equally feral, between them, by Capel Soar. This small area of wasteground, with its crumbly old wall and surroundings, indicates to anyone who cares to glance at it, the suggestion of a park long returned to the bosom of Mother Nature. Across what once was its gateway, the gates long since gone, is a bench where only the foolhardy would sit, with their backs open to the wasteground.

A dark and foggy January night. A student, freshly inebriated from celebrating the end of the exams, staggers up Primrose Hill. Puffing, he takes a pause. Tired, legs aching from the steep climb, his body and thoughts numbed by the combination of alcohol and cold. He needs to sit down, take a load off his feet.

Stumbling onward a short distance, he recalls the bench. Fumbling in the darkness, in and out of the road without rhyme or reason, he eventually takes hold of the seat. He sinks down onto the cold, hard boards, the first in some time to do so. He groans with the pleasure of the pause. Slowly, his eyelids droop as alcohol, cold and fatigue work their magic and he falls asleep.

Something, a shadow, no more, looms over the prone form of the student. He doesn't even have time to scream. It is done in a moment. The next morning, they will find the body slumped across the bench. Was it just hypothermia? Or, was he another victim of the wasteground?

Ends

The Green Man Sleeps

By Aeronwy Dafies

When the chill wind blows from the north
And a blanket of snow covers the land
The Green Man retreats from view
Awaiting the return of the glorious sun
To warm and waken the land
And remake the world brand new
Out of sight the Green Man sleeps
And rebirth in his sacred heart keeps
Until the appointed hour

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