

Gaskell Journal Editor's report for AGM 10th April 2021

I hope everyone enjoyed reading the 2020 *Gaskell Journal*, which I think was a particularly strong edition. A special issue on 'Gaskell and Working-Class Culture', it brought together three excellent articles exploring Gaskell's personal experiences, writings, and intellectual milieu in relation to issues of class, poverty, and reform. By coincidence, the winning submission in our 2020 postgraduate essay competition shared a thematic connection with these, being focused on the metaphor of the beehive as a model of social transformation in *North and South*, so this completed a coherent issue. Christopher Harrington's essay was certainly one of the best, if not the best, winner in the history of the essay competition to date. Thanks are due to Professor Kate Flint of the University of Southern California for acting as judge, a role we hope she will continue for two more rounds of the biennial competition.

This year, the journal is likely to feature around 4 articles again, on a diverse range of subjects connected to Gaskell's writings and networks.

I would like to record special thanks to Ben Moore from the University of Amsterdam, who is entering his third year as our Book Reviews Editor, and who has done great work so far to secure many books for review, and people to review them, often drawing in specialists from beyond our regular editorial board who are the best match for the subject. Ben's proactivity and diligence deserves our grateful thanks.

I'd also like to record special thanks to Meghan Lowe (formerly Healy) who chose to continue her invaluable work as copyeditor and proofreader during at the same year as having her first baby. Linsey, our excellent Production Editor, and I were more than impressed!

The journal's extended online presence continues to extend the readership while also bringing in useful income to the Society based on numbers of article/review downloads. Having been part of Proquest's Literature Online package since 2014, we also joined JSTOR in 2020 (as reported at the September 2020 meeting). These are both online packages which academic libraries, and a few public libraries, subscribe to. Recently I was informed by Libby that JSTOR has just sent the Society about £1000 based on just the one year's usage so far.

Linsey Parkinson confirmed that the journal has had a new printer, as of 2020: Joshua Horgan, who also prints journals for a number of other literary societies.

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