

Clerk's Notes

Eight new members were appointed to the Livery at the meeting of the Court which preceded the Livery Lunch on 28th September 2007. Liverymen Jonathan Farminer, Roger Buse, Nick Fisher, William Kieffer, Roger George, Simon Noakes, Peter Godding and April Weiss (from left to right in the photograph) were introduced to the Company at the Lunch by the Master.

Neil Doling was appointed to the Livery at the Court Meeting on 27th November 2007. Sadly Neil's uncle, Liveryman David Harvey, who brought him into the Company, died shortly before the ceremony.

We are pleased to announce that Liveryman Professor Alan Gillett was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours List for his services to the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and the community in Ealing, West London.

The Mercers have recently completed a survey of Livery Companies using a questionnaire designed by our Clerk. The results showed that the 107 City Livery Companies had a total of 26,000 Liverymen and 15,650 Freemen and contributed some £41 million to charities in 2006. The results are summarised in short Livery Profile which is available on the Company's website or directly from the Clerk.



The true story of Stanley in Africa: a man of foresight and dauntless courage

Henry Morton Stanley was made an honorary Freeman and Liveryman of the Turners' Company in 1872 "for his enterprise in discovering the great traveller, Livingstone, in Central Africa." The Court's resolution ingeniously mentioned "the great probable benefit likely to accrue to the Trade over which the Company presides from fuller information and relations with that ivory-producing country."



We were probably the first public body in England to recognise the truth of Stanley's claims, and he was grateful. The City Corporation did not follow with their Freedom until fifteen years later.

Stanley (born John Rowlands, the result of a teenage pregnancy, in Denbigh in 1841) was abandoned by his mother. His father was unknown. He grew up in the workhouse. At 17 he signed on as a cabin boy on an American freighter, and jumped ship at New Orleans. Henry Stanley was a local cotton magnate, and Rowlands took his name, later claiming to be his adopted son, though they never met. Under his new name he joined the southern army in the American civil war,

fought at the battle of Shiloh, was captured, changed sides and joined the federal army, deserted, joined the federal navy, deserted from that, and became a journalist, covering fights with Indians in the wild west and a British military foray into Abyssinia. His quest to find David Livingstone was financed by his paper, the New York Herald.

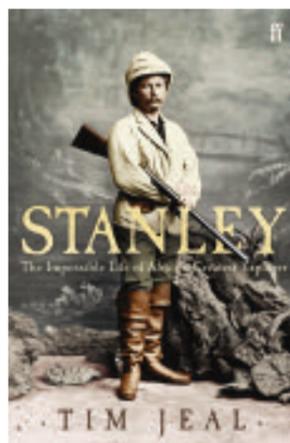
In 2003, Past Master Ian Cowper presented to the Company Stanley's honorary Freedom and Livery medal. As I had read through all the Court minutes from 1965 onwards when writing the update of the History, I was aware (though those who acknowledged his gift were apparently not aware) that the medal had come up for public auction in 1986, and that Ian Cowper had attended the auction with the Company's bid limit of £400.

He reported to the Court at its next meeting that £400 was inadequate, and that the medal had fetched £1,200. I realised that Ian had evidently bought the medal himself at the auction for £1,200, without mentioning that fact to the Court. Thanks to his generosity, the Company now owns this item of great historical interest.

"STANLEY, The Impossible Life of Africa's Greatest Explorer", a new book written by Tim Jeal, is according to its reviewer, John Carey, not just an absorbing, sometimes horrifying biography, but a feat of advocacy – an ardent, intricate defence of a man history has damned. Stanley, Victorian explorer and hero, has been indicted in

modern times as a brutal racist who connived with King Leopold II of Belgium in the vicious exploitation of the Congo.

Jeal is the first biographer to have had unrestricted access to the Stanley archive in the Museum for Central Africa in Brussels.



Comparison of his diaries with his books shows that in the latter, which enjoyed colossal sales to the Victorians, he exaggerated the harshness of his disciplinary measures and the number of Africans he shot.

Jeal thinks even his most famous utterance "Dr. Livingstone, I presume" was a fabrication. Stanley was one of the few Europeans to witness the effects of the slave trade in Africa.

He was convinced that the trade must be stopped, and the only way to do it, he believed, was to open up Africa to European influence. Stanley comes across as a man of dauntless courage, intent on reducing the sum of suffering and injustice in the world. Anyone who, after reading this book, imagines he would have behaved better than Stanley, if faced with the same dangers, must have a vivid imagination.

At her last Court meeting as Master, Penrose Halson said that she would buy the book for the Company Library, where it can now be found.

Brian Burnett

'Stanley' by Tim Jeal is published by faber & faber in hardback at £25 RRP.



THE TURNER



NEWSLETTER OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF TURNERS OF LONDON

January 2008

Sixty Years of the Gardner Williams Dinner

This year sees the 60th Anniversary of the Dinner commemorating our benefactor, Richard Gardner Williams. Born on 24th February 1866 and educated at the King's School, Chester, he became a premium apprentice at the LNWR locomotive works at Crewe and then worked in the drawing office at Laird Brothers, shipbuilders in Birkenhead. Some time later he joined the Vacuum Oil Company as an engineer, later acting as the sales representative in the North.

The General Manager of the time was Charles Wakefield (subsequently Viscount Wakefield of Hythe) who joined the Livery in 1906 and the Court in 1912. Based in London, Gardner Williams became Wakefield's special railway representative for South America. Doubtless he was introduced to the Company by Wakefield and came to the Livery in 1913.

From the records, he apparently had little contact with the Livery or Court and it came as a complete surprise, therefore, to find that when he died on 13th February 1931 he had bequeathed a huge sum to the Company. He died childless but had made generous provision for his widow and sister during their lifetimes.

Some seventeen years later, the major portion of his estate of some £40,327 finally came to the Turners. The Company's general investments at that time stood otherwise at £4,329. It was bequeathed "absolutely, but with a request that they will apply the same in the first place to provide the cost of an Annual Dinner and Banquet to all the Members of the said Company... on the 24th day of February in each year".



A familiar scene as the Clerk proffers the Loving Cup at the last Gardner Williams Dinner

The Finance Committee of the day recommended that the capital be invested in first-class equities, thus changing the wealth of the Company dramatically.

The first Gardner Williams Commemoration Dinner was held on 22nd April 1948 and has been held every year since, whenever possible on 24th February, Richard Gardner Williams' birthday.

The rationale for Gardner Williams to make the bequest has never been totally explained. Roland Champness, the Company's historian, concludes that it seems to follow a thought process of other benefactors that here was an organization that had already survived for 600 years and could evidently be relied upon to make good use of it.

On drinking a toast to our benefactor at our next Dinner, made possible by his wonderful legacy, we should perhaps reflect on that sentiment and also on the first Dinner attended by 64 of the Livery almost 60 years ago.

Company Gold Medal awarded to Tony Johns

At September's Livery Lunch, the Company's Gold Medal was awarded by the Master to Liveryman Anthony Johns. In his speech presenting the award, the Master explained how Tony's association with the Company began in the early 1980s when he was nominated by the Institution of Production Engineers as an eminent professional to judge the Company's Design Award Competition. Tony became a Freeman by presentation in 1991 and a Liveryman in 1993. Tony's commitment to the Company has been "resolute and positive throughout his 25 years' service" and includes his work with the Howe Committee, which provides the Company's link to the craft of turning.

The Master also explained how Tony has written himself into the Company's history, as over the last ten years he has laboured at the monumental task of capturing and recording our age-old procedures in the Court Manual. This outstanding achievement provides a guide for the officers of the Company and particularly the current and future Masters.



Issue 29

Celebrating the lives of Past Master John Ciclitira and Honorary Liveryman Theo Fabergé, grandson of Carl.

News of the 'Wizards in Wood' exhibition which starts 29th January at LINLEY in Mayfair, featuring the work of Stuart Mortimer and Joey Richardson. Ends 16th February.

Update on the Company's plans for the Wizardry in Wood 2008 exhibition in June plus key dates for your diary.

Clerks' Notes: nine new Liverymen appointed.

African explorer and opponent of the slave trade, Stanley was an Honorary Freeman and awarded the Company's medal. Tim Jeal's new biography tells the story.