

# **“Necessitous Men Are Not Free Men” Bridging Ruskin’s Thought and the New Deal**



**Gray Brechin**

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## **“Necessitous Men Are Not Free Men” Bridging Ruskin’s Thought and the New Deal**

Shortly after she began dating her distant cousin in 1903, Eleanor Roosevelt took Franklin to visit a fetid tenement on New York City’s Lower East Side. She later recalled his horror at what he saw there: “It was the first time, I think, that he had ever really seen a slum and when he got back to the street he drew a deep breath of fresh air. ‘My God,’ he whispered, ‘I didn’t know people lived like that!’”<sup>1</sup> They would both do much to insure that people did not do so in the future.

The only child of American patricians, Franklin Delano Roosevelt grew up cossetted on his parents’ Hudson Valley estate 90 miles and light years north of the festering slums served by the University Settlement House in which Eleanor was working when their romance began. As president, FDR would describe University Settlement as “a landmark in the social history of the nation.”<sup>2</sup> Like other settlements, it served as a bridge between the social and economic reforms to capitalism espoused by John Ruskin and those implemented by Franklin Roosevelt when he assumed the presidency in 1933.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Scheuer, *Legacy of Light: University Settlement: 1886-2011* (New York, University Settlement, 2012), 83.

[http://www.universitysettlement.org/us/news/blog/legacy\\_of\\_light\\_to\\_our\\_second\\_ce/LegacyofLight\\_FINAL\\_10:en-us.pdf](http://www.universitysettlement.org/us/news/blog/legacy_of_light_to_our_second_ce/LegacyofLight_FINAL_10:en-us.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

Ruskin's belief that his readers had misunderstood or ignored — if not vehemently rejected — his prescriptions for ameliorating the brutality of laissez-faire capitalism<sup>3</sup> contributed greatly to the debilitating depressions he suffered as he grew older. But as Stuart Eagles has noted,<sup>4</sup> Ruskin's critique did not fall on impermeable ground but percolated through porous beds to emerge in myriad springs, their source largely unknown. More than three decades after Ruskin's death in 1900 those prescriptions merged with other streams such as the Social Gospel and trade union movements to emerge in a geyser of practical solutions to the Great Depression in the United States. That catastrophe was as essential for their emergence as was the conduit of the Roosevelts. Both had read Ruskin.

Anna Eleanor Roosevelt's childhood differed greatly from Franklin's. Born two years after him in 1884, she lost her mother to diphtheria, her brother to scarlet fever, and her father to alcoholism and dementia by the age of 10. Her mother, moreover, bequeathed to her the belief that she was ugly and a disappointment to the family, crippling her self-worth. Tutored on her dour grandmother's estate north of Franklin's she grew up lonely until the age of fifteen when she was sent to an exclusive finishing school for wealthy young women at Wimbledon on London's outskirts named Allenswood Academy.

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<sup>3</sup> First enunciated as an essay in *The Cornhill Magazine* in 1860 and published as the book *Unto This Last* in 1862.

<sup>4</sup> Stuart Eagles, *After Ruskin: The Social and Political Legacies of a Victorian Prophet, 1870-1920* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011)



Founded and run by the charismatic free-thinker Marie Souvestre, Allenswood would doubtless have expanded Eleanor's limited horizons even had she not become Souvestre's favorite pupil. Recognizing in the tall and diffident American heiress qualities of curiosity and compassion quite out of the ordinary among her other students, Souvestre personally guided Eleanor's development to the extent of inviting her along on trips to the Continent. Long after Eleanor's grandmother summoned her back to New York for her society debut in 1902, she remembered Marie Souvestre as one of the decisive influences in her life. She kept a photograph of her mentor and friend on her desk and cherished her letters, writing in 1949 that "Mlle. Souvestre imbued her pupils with moral courage that stayed with them throughout their lives,"<sup>5</sup>

As if anticipating Eleanor Roosevelt's remarkable trajectory, Souvestre wrote to her protégée from Switzerland in the summer of 1902. She counselled Eleanor not to dissipate her energies in "the various fashionable affairs" expected of her. A month later Souvestre wrote that although she missed Eleanor greatly "You fulfill your destiny more where you are than you would near me."<sup>6</sup>

Marie Souvestre died in 1905 before she could see her star pupil fulfill her destiny as "the first lady of the world." but Allenswood's headmistress had done much to set her on a path of unflinching moral courage. Eleanor largely detested the class distinctions and social obligations about which Souvestre

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<sup>5</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day" column, January 28, 1949.

<sup>6</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt papers, Marie Souvestre correspondence, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York.

warned her. For the rest of her life, she championed workers' and consumers' rights,<sup>7</sup> racial equality, cooperatives, handcrafts, international understanding and peace, public arts and education, and much else that John Ruskin had advocated. Constantly prodding her husband to do more for those in need, she saw government enact many of the reforms that he collectively called the New Deal. After his death in 1945, she continued to work for a New Deal for the world through the United Nations and her own prolific writing and speaking.<sup>8</sup>

In her autobiography, Eleanor Roosevelt claimed that Marie Souvestre taught her the value of spontaneity. She gave as an example an instance when, on a train to Italy, Souvestre suddenly ordered her to disembark when the conductor shouted "Alassio." Souvestre's good friend Mary Humphry Ward had a house in that coastal town, she told Eleanor, and Souvestre wanted to pay a visit. Ward, it turned out, was not at home, but the two women enjoyed their unscheduled stop on the beach before continuing to Pisa the next day.<sup>9</sup>

Mrs. Humphry Ward was far more than England's best-selling woman novelist by the turn of the century. Born Mary Arnold in Tasmania, she was the granddaughter of Rugby's reformist headmaster Thomas Arnold and the niece of Matthew Arnold. Raised in an intellectual milieu after her father returned to England and secured a position at Oxford,

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<sup>7</sup> Brigid O'Farrell, *She Was One of Us: Eleanor Roosevelt and the American Worker* (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1981)

<sup>9</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt*, (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1958) 30-31.

she used her novels to promote social reform. Her efforts to remediate the scarring effects of poverty by sharing the advantages of her own rarified class with those deprived of them went well beyond writing. Ward devoted much of her fortune and energies to building and teaching in a settlement house in Bloomsbury whose building now bears her name.

She used her first best-selling novel *Robert Elsmere* in 1888, to promote the politically radical ideas of Oxford don Thomas Hill Green, the mentor of the eponymous hero of her three-volume work in which Elsmere is a troubled Anglican priest persuaded by “Professor Grey” to actively embody his faith in good works by establishing and running a Christian settlement house in the slums of East London. “The New Brotherhood” was clearly modelled on Toynbee Hall, the first university settlement house founded in 1884 by Canon Samuel Barnett and his wife Henrietta in which university-educated men “settled” among the poor in order to learn from and uplift them. Steeped in Ruskin’s writings herself, Jane Addams visited his disciples in Oxford and at Toynbee Hall in 1888. The experience inspired her to export the settlement house movement to the United States as her famous Hull House in Chicago.<sup>10</sup> Her work earned Addams the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931; at a White House dinner in 1935, Eleanor Roosevelt called her “one of the greatest women alive” a few weeks before Addams’ death.

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<sup>10</sup> Addams wrote of her education at a women’s seminary in Illinois: “Of course we read a great deal of Ruskin and Browning, and liked the most abstruse parts the best, but like the famous gentleman who talked prose without knowing it, we never dreamed of connecting them with our philosophy”. Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1912) 47.

When Mary Ward visited Toynbee Hall in 1889, she was surprised to see that a copy of *Robert Elsmere* in the library had been “read to pieces”.<sup>11</sup> Her widely-read novel gave much greater visibility to the work being done by Ruskin’s disciples among London’s working class.

Earnest Christian that she was, Mary Ward practiced what she preached in her novels. In 1890, she established University Hall in Bloomsbury’s Gordon Square to encourage “an improved popular teaching of the Bible and the history of religion in order to show the adaptability of the faith of the past to the needs of the present.”<sup>12</sup> She wanted University Hall to serve the poor of London’s St. Pancras district but it was also conveniently close to the Wards’ townhouse at 61 Russell Square as well as to the University of London.

Mrs. Ward’s authoritarian personality and perceived condescension to those she sought to help soon antagonized the Hall’s residents who, her biographer noted, “did not want to be ‘students’ and reconstruct Christianity. They wanted to reconstruct London”<sup>13</sup> — and much more besides. Several of them decamped for rented rooms in nearby Tavistock Place. They named their new and pointedly secular settlement Marchmont Hall.

Learning from her mistake, Mary Ward used her social contacts to raise money for a far more ambitious version of Marchmont Hall. Ward hoped to construct a cheerful and

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<sup>11</sup> John Sutherland, *Mrs. Humphry Ward: Eminent Victorian, Pre-Eminent Edwardian* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990) 218

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, 219.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

customized building to better serve the neighbourhood, but fundraising proceeded slowly until May, 1894, when an unsolicited check for \$4000 arrived from her neighbour John Passmore Edwards.

A self-made man and champion of the working class from which he had risen, the Cornish philanthropist devoted a fortune he had made in publishing to uplifting the poor, paying for over seventy major buildings dedicated to their betterment.<sup>14</sup> Relentlessly wheedled by Ward, Passmore Edwards ultimately contributed four times his initial donation to the cause along with considerable advice often ignored by the recipient of his generosity.<sup>15</sup>

Two young architects and residents of the settlement — A. Dunbar-Smith and Cecil Brewer — won a competition to design a building that, with its' adjacent garden, is now regarded as an outstanding landmark of Arts and Crafts architecture reminiscent of the work of Charles Voysey.

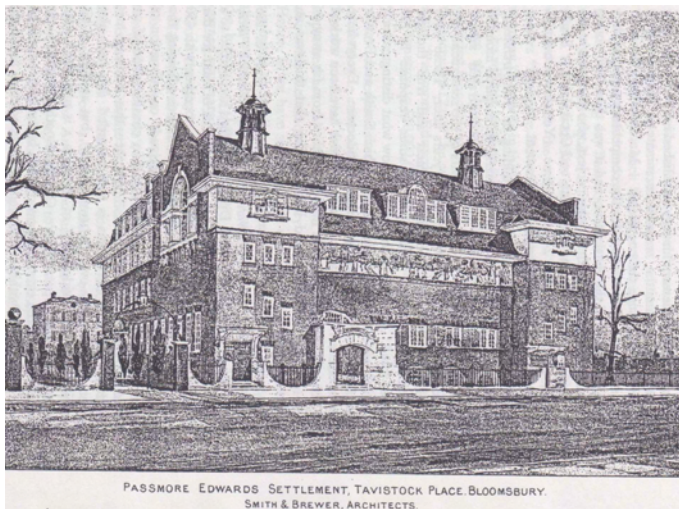
The Passmore Edwards Settlement was opened in February, 1898 — the year Eleanor Roosevelt arrived at Allenswood. That Marie Souvestre had made a modest

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<sup>14</sup> J. Passmore Edwards, *A Few Footprints* (London, Watts & Co., 1906).

<sup>15</sup> On 15 March, 1895 Edwards warned Mrs Ward that under her proposed Articles of Association “The Association will consist of members easily made who will possess all powers, who may mortgage the property or any part of it, or who may sell the whole [of] it to pay debts... and the thing may vanish.” The Settlement’s Council of Management sold the building in Tavistock Place and today leases space nearby in Queen Square. Peter Baynes, *John Passmore Edwards & Mary Ward: A Beneficial Relationship* (London, Mary Ward Centre, 1991).

contribution to its construction and was present for the dedication indicates she was sympathetic to its ends.<sup>16</sup>



Architects' drawing of Passmore Edwards Settlement (now Mary Ward House) *London Metropolitan Archives*

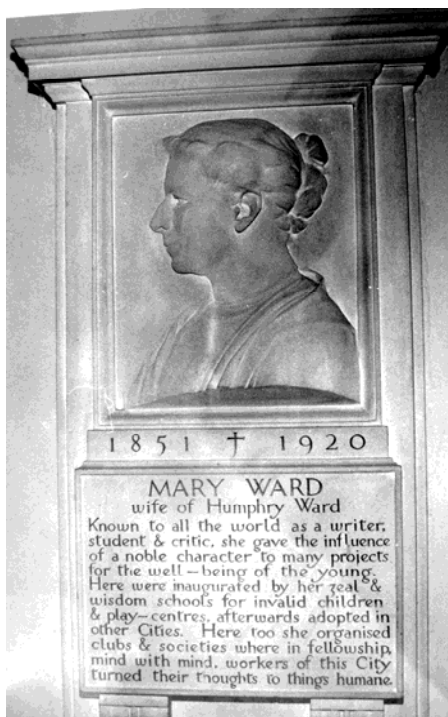
Mary Ward defined the settlement's purpose in a 1901 brochure which answered the question "What is a Settlement?" by quoting her original plea for funds: "Our object.... is to

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<sup>16</sup> "Passmore Edwards Settlement: Proceedings at the Opening of the New Buildings on the 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1898 by the Right Hon. John Morley, M.P." in Mary Ward House papers, London Metropolitan Archives.

Eleanor Roosevelt cited a pamphlet — "*Some Memories of Marie Souvestre*" by Dorothy Strachey Bussy that noted that Souvestre left much of her own fortune to the "health and care of workers. A block of workmen's dwellings and workshops fitted with electric power in Paris, a seaside holiday home for women workers of the professional classes and a hospital in Paris for those who have retired from work were built and liberally endowed with the money she earned during her laborious life." "*My Day*", January 27, 1949.

provide a centre of educational and social life and work in the West-Central and North-Western districts of London, analogous to that which East London has found in Toynbee Hall...”. The communitarian prospectus, she continued “also spoke of ‘an ideal of equality and fraternity’ in which ‘there is nothing artificial’ since ‘it is a protest against artificiality; and at a Settlement where all sorts and conditions mix naturally together, men realize it almost unawares.’”



Memorial relief of Mary Arnold Ward (Mrs. Humphry Ward)  
in the Mary Ward House (formerly Passmore Edwards  
Settlement) *London Metropolitan Archives*

The new settlement was to be “‘in its construction and its aims entirely unsectarian,’ and it looked forward to a type of teaching within its walls ‘of a wide and liberal character, of which knowledge for its own sake should be the aim.’”<sup>17</sup> A history of the settlement published after Mary Ward’s death noted that it was meant to show “that those who have had the great advantage of education, perhaps of fortune and of station” would do “all they can to offer to others some of that meal that has been so bounteously spread for themselves.”<sup>18</sup>

I have not been able to determine whether Eleanor Roosevelt actually visited the Passmore Edwards Settlement with Marie Souvestre during her three years at Allenswood, but Souvestre must have talked about it and Eleanor likely would have grown sympathetic to its aims as indicated by the alacrity with which she volunteered to work at New York City’s University Settlement soon after her society debut. There she was exposed to the conditions of the city’s impoverished immigrants — taking public transit and walking unescorted through tenement districts “though the dirty streets, crowded with foreign-looking people, filled me with terror”<sup>19</sup> — but also to the progressive causes of social reformers, union organizers, and consumer advocates with whom she would work for the rest of her life.

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<sup>17</sup> Mary Ward, “*The Passmore Edwards Settlement*,” 1901 [a brochure in the Mary Ward House papers at the London Metropolitan Archives.]

<sup>18</sup> John Rodgers, “*Mary Ward Settlement: A History 1891-1931*.” Mary Ward Settlement papers, London Metropolitan Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1958) 40.



Though not as actively involved at that time in the remediation of poverty as was his cousin and soon-to-be wife, Franklin Roosevelt's parents raised him with a sense of Christian duty to those less fortunate that was not shared by many others of his class.<sup>20</sup> That obligation only grew when he himself was stricken with polio in 1921 and when the country plunged into the Great Depression while he was serving as Governor of New York. Eleanor later remarked on his acute sensitivity to the needs of others: "From him, I learned how to observe from train windows. He would watch the crops, notice how people dressed, how many cars there were and in what condition, and even look at the wash on the clothes-lines. When the Civilian Conservation Corps was set up [in 1933], he knew, though he never made a note, exactly where work of various kinds was needed. Franklin saw geography clearly."<sup>21</sup>

As a young Harvard graduate and Wall Street attorney, Franklin married a woman who, through her settlement house work, had shown him the living conditions of those not of their class. As Governor and then as President, he chose many others who had worked in settlements to implement policies that would help vast numbers of Americans, as Eleanor had said, "where work of various kinds was needed."

A deeply but privately religious person, Frances Perkins worked at settlement houses including Jane Addams'

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<sup>20</sup> Franklin's father, "Squire" James, had, like his son, been horrified by a visit to a London slum, and declaimed at his church in Hyde Park that its parishoners must "Help all who are suffering...Work for humanity. Work for your Lord." Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, Volume One, (New York, Penguin Books, 1992) 145

<sup>21</sup> Amy Waters Yrsinske, *Rendezvous With Destiny: The FDR Legacy* (Virginia Beach, The Donning Company, 2003) 10.

Hull House before Roosevelt asked her to become his Secretary of Labor. His wealthy Hudson Valley neighbour, Henry Morgenthau, Jr, also worked in a settlement house before FDR made him Undersecretary and then Secretary of the Treasury. A graduate of Iowa's Grinnell College — a hotbed of the Social Gospel movement — Harry Hopkins became profoundly committed to and adept at social work and reform through his work at the Christadora Settlement not far from the University Settlement. Picked by President Roosevelt to administer work relief programmes, he created millions of socially beneficial jobs as head of the Civil Works Administration (CWA), Federal Emergency Relief Agency (FERA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Eleanor Roosevelt, in her ceaseless travels around the country kept her disabled husband informed about conditions during the Depression while constantly urging him to do yet more. She personally received thousands of letters of distress and requests for help, and herself kept in close touch with Harry Hopkins and other New Dealers suggesting ways that they and the government could help those in dire need.<sup>22</sup> She also worked closely with Rexford Tugwell in the Resettlement Administration to build over one hundred new towns to resettle families from exhausted and Dust Bowl farms onto better land and the urban poor into new communities that, Tugwell and the Roosevelts hoped, would become self-sufficient.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See Eleanor Roosevelt correspondence with Hopkins in Eleanor Roosevelt papers at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library.

<sup>23</sup> None did. See Conkin, Paul K. *Tomorrow a New World: The New Deal Community Program*. Ithaca, NY (Cornell University Press), 1959. Though acknowledging that few of the resettlement projects had any measure of success," Eleanor Roosevelt said that "Nevertheless, I have always felt that many human beings who might have cost us thousands of dollars in

Eleanor herself set up a furniture-making cooperative on the Roosevelt estate — Val-Kill Industries — that may have been inspired by the example of William Morris and his disciples.

She championed the settlement house idea to the end of her life in 1962. The settlements were, she believed, critical for fostering community as well as combatting poverty in growing cities: “There are probably many people in our great cities who are not aware that these neighborhood houses even exist, yet these houses make it possible for people to know each other and become helpful friends in their own neighborhoods. Every neighborhood settlement house needs the cooperation and support of all the people in the neighborhood.”<sup>24</sup> Nearly every big city in the country, she said, “can tell the same story of the valuable contribution made by [settlements] in some neighborhoods of their cities.”<sup>25</sup>

If photographs of the varied activities at the Passmore Edwards Settlement can be taken as representative of other settlement houses, they bear a striking resemblance to those of the service projects created and offered by Harry Hopkins’ three work relief agencies, especially the WPA (1935-1943.) Vocational training, workers’ discussion groups, music lessons and performances, theatricals, libraries, domestic training classes, nutritious food, country excursions, and recreational activities of all sorts were all standard fare.

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tuberculosis sanitariums, insane asylums, and jails were restored to usefulness and given confidence in themselves.” Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt*, (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1937) 180

<sup>24</sup> Roosevelt, Eleanor, “*My Day*”, March 19, 1958

<sup>25</sup> Roosevelt, Eleanor, “*My Day*”, March 23, 1960

Above all, the settlement offered opportunities hitherto inconceivable to poor children in Britain. In a letter written in 1904, Mary Ward said that “I felt always, and feel now, that deep Carlylean sense of our debt to the working-class, which would not let me rest till I had done something to brighten and help his path.” That path for adults, she seems to have understood, might have been irremediably detoured by poverty early in many of the workers’ lives, but Ward was convinced that “at this particular moment almost the best that anyone can do in Settlements is to plan and strive for the workman’s children, and that in them lies the real hope of the workman’s future.”<sup>26</sup>

The Passmore Edwards Settlement thus offered not just daycare for working mothers but a kindergarten with art and other lessons for the early development of abilities denied the children’s parents.

At Ward’s instigation, the settlement also offered the first school for crippled children in Britain and possibly in Europe as well as a specially equipped “ambulance” to transport the children to and from the school. During the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt — himself paralyzed by polio at the age of 39 — his administration built special orthopedic schools equipped with ramps, elevators, solariums, physical therapists, and hydrotherapy pools to aid others afflicted by the disease.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Letter from Mary Ward to Mr. JJ Dent, October 28, 1904 in scrapbook, Mary Ward House papers, London Metropolitan Archives, 4524/K/05/001.

<sup>27</sup> <http://livingnewdeal.berkeley.edu/everything-possible-new-deal-response-polio/>

**(Top) Music Classes.**

*(Left)* Violin lessons at Passmore Edwards Settlement,, *London Metropolitan Archives*;

*(Right)* WPA-sponsored piano class at University Settlement, New York City, *National Archives and Records Administration*

**(Middle) Art Classes.**

*(Left)* Art lessons in the school for crippled children, Passmore Edwards Settlement, *London Metropolitan Archives*;

*(Right)* WPA-sponsored art lessons for crippled children, San Francisco  
*National Archives and Records Administration*

**(Bottom) Discussion Groups.**

*(Left)* Current affairs discussion for men, Passmore Edwards Settlement, *London Metropolitan Archives*;

*(Right)* WPA-sponsored discussion of labor problems at Fur Workers' Union, San Francisco, *National Archives and Records Administration*



It may well be impossible to determine whether John Ruskin's prescriptions for sweeping social and economic reform had any more direct influence on the New Dealers than their transmittal through the settlement house movement, but a few clues suggest more direct transmission.

Eleanor Roosevelt voraciously devoured books, among them Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* which she read during her engagement and wished to share with her future husband.<sup>28</sup> A copy of that book given to him in 1935 and now in his Presidential Library has notations in pencil, apparently in his own hand, on the back page, among them a comment that "practical Christianity only of value."

A friend of his mother's also gave Roosevelt a copy of *Fronde Agrestes: Readings in 'Modern Painters'* [16<sup>th</sup> edition] in 1898 according to a handwritten inscription opposite the title page. He was sixteen at the time. Only the chapter on Education shows signs of being read, but that closely as in the following underlining: "61. The most helpful and sacred work which can at present be done for humanity is to teach people (chiefly by example, as all best teaching must be done) not how 'to better themselves' but how to 'satisfy themselves.'" And "So there is only one kind of bread which satisfies all hunger — the bread of justice or righteousness; which hungering after, men shall always be filled, that being the bread of Heaven."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Cook, *op cit.*, 158.

<sup>29</sup> Roosevelt (presumably) also sidelined the following passage: "65: I believe an immense gain in bodily health and happiness of the upper classes would follow on their steadily endeavouring, however clumsily, to make the physical exertion they now necessarily exert in amusements, definitely

Ruskin's injunctions to social justice — and those of Franklin's wife — may well have been superfluous since he was a committed — albeit private — Christian. Labor Secretary Frances Perkins recalled that when a “superficial” young reporter challenged him to define his philosophy, President Roosevelt simply responded “Philosophy? I am a Christian and a Democrat — that's all.”<sup>30</sup>

Ruskin would have approved of the way in which Roosevelt embodied his philosophy through the New Deal. Perkins said that the objective of his often visionary plans was “to make human life on the planet in his generation more decent. ‘Decent’ was the word he often used to express what he meant by a proper, adequate, and intelligent way of living,” and it was by no means confined to his own class — it applied to *all* the institutions of human life: “He would insist in his way of thinking that all of these institutions should accept and practice a moral responsibility for making the life of the individuals who make up the life of the common people ‘more decent,’ and in the common people he included the rich and the poor alike. I remember that he wanted to find a way for well-to-do boys, as well as relief boys, to go to [Civilian Conservation Corps] camps to get the advantages of the training and democratic living”<sup>31</sup> — a levelling prescription markedly like that of the settlements.

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serviceable. It would be far better, for instance, that a gentleman should mow his own fields, than ride over other people's.”

<sup>30</sup> Frances Perkins. *The Roosevelt I Knew*, (New York, Penguin Books, originally published 1946) 316.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 318-9.



The Roosevelts, like Mary Ward, understood that only by eliminating the crippling effects of poverty at an early age could the individual and social pathologies that inevitably arise from privation be mitigated or eliminated. As President Roosevelt had used the crisis of the Great Depression to implement the radically progressive policies of the New Deal, so he hoped to use the approaching entry of his country into World War II to expand those policies to the world. In his 1941 State of the Union address on January 6, 1941, Roosevelt told Congress and the nation that to the freedom of speech and religion guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, there must in the future be added the freedoms *from* want and fear — and that, he pointedly added, these Four Freedoms must apply *everywhere in the world*.

In his last State of the Union address three years later, Roosevelt went even further by enumerating a Second Bill of (Economic) Rights that would, he hoped, abort wars such as that still raging. Ruskin would have found much favor in those prospective rights:

- The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the Nation:
- The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation:
- The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living:
- The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad:
- The right of every family to a decent home:
- The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health:

- The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment:
- The right to a good education.

To extend these human entitlements was not only right but necessary, Roosevelt insisted with an earnestness no doubt driven by the strain of war as well as the imminence of his own death: “We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. ‘Necessitous men are not free men.’ People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.”<sup>32</sup>

Franklin Roosevelt died suddenly fourteen months later, less than a month before Germany’s unconditional surrender. Immediately after his death, Eleanor Roosevelt said that “the story is over,” but she carried it on in the seventeen years that remained to her. Her stature was so great that when President Truman appointed her to serve as the first U.S. delegate to the fledgling United Nations, her colleagues chose her to chair the Commission on Human Rights. There she played a leading role in crafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, through tough and agile lobbying, seeing it through to unanimous adoption by the General Assembly on 10 December, 1948.

Many streams of thought went into the framing of FDR’s Four Freedoms and Second Bill of Rights, and then into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — Christian

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<sup>32</sup> Cass R. Sunstein, *The Second Bill of Rights: FDR’s Unfinished Revolution and Why We Need It More Than Ever* (new York, Basic Books, 2004) 242-3.



Eleanor Roosevelt holding The Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
*Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library, National Archives and  
Records Administration*

charity, Judaic justice, Enlightenment humanism — but among those streams was, I believe, Ruskin's prophetic voice. However faintly, I hear it still in the chorus of voices raised then and now against the savagery of the unregulated market and the concomitant corruption that he deplored. Though himself born to wealth, he like the Roosevelts, well knew that necessitous men can never be free, and that their need must be lifted in order for them to be so — everywhere in the world.

## Ruskin Lectures

### *Original Series*

- 1978 Lord Asa Briggs:
- 1979 Robert Hewison: Art & Society. Ruskin in Sheffield in 1876
- 1981 Philip Rawson: Ruskin, Turner and Time
- 1982 Van Akin Burd: Ruskin, Lady Mount Temple and the Spiritualists
- 1982 Michael Kitson: Ruskin's 'Stones of Venice'
- 1983 Joe Holyoak: J. H. Chamberlain. Ruskin's architect of the Civic Gospel
- 1985 Anthony Harris: Why do our little girls have large shoes?
- 1986 Tim Hilton: Ruskin's Masterpiece
- 1987 Sir Roy Shaw: The Relevance of Ruskin
- 1988 Nicholas Shrimpton: Ruskin and 'War'
- 1991 Anthony Harris: Ruskin and Siena
- 1992 Malcolm Cole: Be like Daisies
- 1994 Royal W. Leith III: Ruskin and his American followers in Tuscany

### *New Series*

- 2005 Stephen Wildman: Thomas Matthews Rooke
- 2006 Sam Smiles: Ruskin and Cambridge
- 2007 Jacqueline Yallop: Our Power to Bequeath
- 2008 Paul Tucker: Charles Fairfax Murray and Duccio's *Maesta*
- 2009 Robert Hewison: Of Ruskin's Gardens
- 2010 Stuart Eagles: Ruskin and Tolstoy
- 2011 Zoe Bennett: The True Use of Faith
- 2012 Howard Hull: Demeter's Dowry: Ruskin and Landscape
- 2013 Mark Frost: Curator and Curatress
- 2014 Gray Brechin: "Necessitous Men Are Not Free Men"

### *Whitelands Ruskin Lecture*

- 2014 Dinah Birch: Thinking Through the Past: John Ruskin and the Whitelands College May Festival

### *Occasional Lectures*

- 2013 Clive Wilmer: 'A new road on which the world should travel': John Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic' and William Morris

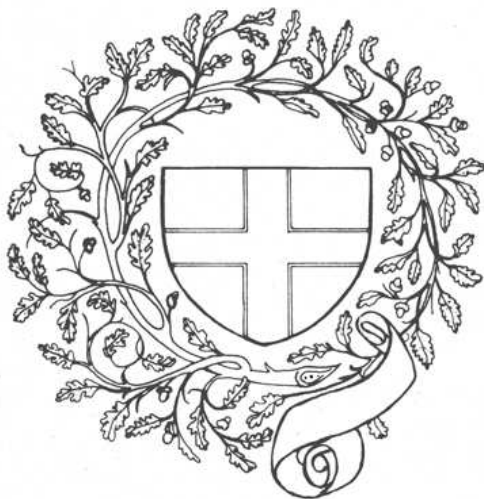
The Guild of St George was formally established by John Ruskin in 1878. Through the Guild, Ruskin strove to make Britain a pleasanter and happier place in which to live. His aims and aspirations for the Guild are contained in the ninety six “Letters” of his *Fors Clavigera*.

Today the Guild is a charitable Education Trust which tries to put Ruskin’s hopes into practice through its collection at the Ruskin Gallery in Sheffield and its other activities. It can offer scholarships and awards across a range of subjects close to Ruskin’s heart, including the practice of crafts and scholarly work in agricultural science and economics, education, industry and the social sciences.

The first of the Ruskin Triennial Exhibitions, themed on the Environment and Sustainability was staged at Sheffield between October 2009 and January 2010. A second exhibition, with the theme Landscape and Creativity, took place in 2013 and a third is planned on the theme of Craft to open in the Millennium Galleries Sheffield in 2016. Also, the Guild is supporting work on the regeneration of old orchards and hay meadows in the Wyre Forest.

The annual Ruskin Lecture was inaugurated in 1978 to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the Guild. The present lecture is the tenth in the new series.





**£6.00**

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