

completeness and accuracy of the transcribed diary. It would have enhanced the diary had this short section been repeated for the benefit of those with immediate access to just this volume. Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson details in the first volume that between 10-15% of the manuscript has been transcribed, an appropriate amount for such a long series of diaries that last in total from 1835 to 1869. Editorial omissions include repeated text, lists of names, and records of his attendance at services, whilst periods of lack of diary-keeping are highlighted. Risley's punctuation and spelling have been preserved in the text and the overall editorship works very well.

Mid-Victorian Squarson covers the last twenty years of Risley's life until 1869, a period after he had given up the living as vicar of Deddington. He had resigned his clerical position in 1847, purportedly due to family ill-health, at age 50, but this volume reveals that Risley remained extremely active with his land-holdings, his family, and official positions, such as Justice of the Peace, perhaps questioning that assertion. His religious service came at a time of immense change for the Anglican Church and his early career had been as a pluralist, with a living in Buckinghamshire where he was absent, whilst residing at Souldern as curate for another absent parson. The relationship with his clerical successors was not easy, and occasionally hostile. This diary provides an insight into the people and places of Deddington and its environs through his detailed recording, albeit from the perspective of a key member of the local elite. Naturally, his association was with those of standing in the community – shopkeepers, professionals and landowners. His contact with the labouring classes was largely limited to the numerous court cases he heard officially, or resolved locally. This is an important point in placing Risley amongst contemporary diarists. John Batts' *British Manuscript Diaries* (1976) records 3,000 nineteenth-century diary manuscripts, but this figure should be much greater as many have since been identified from personal papers and archives.

Was Risley's diary meant to be read, either during or after his lifetime? He does not tell us, but his use of simply the first letter of a surname in many court cases over which he presided indicates he expected it to be read at some time. J....., a 'Villain and Wretch' was found guilty of indecent assault on a girl in 1860 (page 455). There is certainly no indication he expected it to be published and this is to its advantage in revealing so much of the everyday life of this landowner and clerical magistrate. The latter was a position that endured in