

Book Review: Lord Nuffield by Edward Gillbanks

This book was published by Cassell & Co in 1959, as part of a series for young people thinking of their future careers. They are biographies of famous men and women, which may encourage young people to emulate them. Well that's the gist of the banner on the back cover.

I would say this is the most unusual biography I have read so far, and being about Lord Nuffield, whom I have a wide knowledge of, it was quite entertaining. On the face of it, it is a well written and easy to read book, which appears to cover his life extensively. Would I trust what is written, and quote it as fact? That would be a big fat no!

I have eight other biographies of Lord Nuffield, plus associated works on the Nuffield Foundation and others by former employees. To get a full picture there are works about Lord Austin and the Leyland (BMC) negotiations too. Furthermore there several books about production at Cowley through the various ages, so I feel I have some grip on Nuffield's life.

Never mind, the book in question tells an interesting story about his early struggles through to his years of fabulously huge donations. If all the other wealthy folk of this age gave as sensibly and as widely as Nuffield did, the world would be a better place.

To our great good fortune, many of his bequests are still having an impact on our lives, especially in medical matters. A good bugger!

Alan Gulleford
Kaikoura 2021