

The

No.104

T. E. LAWRENCE SOCIETY

1st Quarter 2013

Newsletter

Society Chairman interviewed by Japanese T.V.

Philip Neale was interviewed in December for a feature on the 50th anniversary of the David Lean film. The photograph below shows Philip with the interviewer, Sho standing outside 14 Barton Street, London where Lawrence re-wrote *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* after the loss of the first manuscript. More on the interview on page 4.



Photograph reproduced with kind permission from NHK-Japan Broadcasting Corporation

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Newsletter Contributions

All contributions are welcome, although we cannot guarantee to use them. If they are to be included in the next issue, either send by post to **TELS Newsletter** at the address below to arrive by **15th June 2013**, or e-mail to:

newsletter@telsociety.org.uk

We also like to include photographs of members' activities; either post original prints with an S.A.E. if you would like them returned, or send full resolution digital photographs by e-mail attachment.

Please note that all contributions are subject to editorial amendment.



The T. E. Lawrence Society Newsletter

Editor: Carol Darbyshire

ISSN 0950 950 X

is published quarterly by:

The T.E. Lawrence Society, P.O. Box 728, Oxford OX2 9ZJ

(Registered Charity no. 297940)

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Spring Event ~ 1st June Lawrence in Hythe and Southampton Water

We will meet in Portsmouth harbour at 10.30 for a trip on the HSL 102 power-boat, which members will have a chance to drive the boat, at speed. The cost for this is £25 per person and lasts one hour. HSL 102 was built by the British Power Boat Company in Hythe in 1936. T.E. Lawrence was the inspiration behind these craft when he worked at Hythe. *Note:* This date has not been confirmed by the Power Boat Trust to date, so it is tentative at present.

We will then move on to Town Quay, Southampton (which will probably take about 45 minutes depending on traffic) and the Hythe ferry which goes across to Hythe. We will have lunch (not included) either where the ferry leaves at Town Quay, or over in Hythe. The ferry runs every 30 minutes and takes 20 minutes.

If you want to join us later without meeting in Portsmouth, meet us at Town Quay in Southampton at 1.00 pm. Once in Hythe we can look at Lawrence related locations and then return to Town Quay. Prof Adrian Smith from Southampton University has offered to help if required.

Ticket price is £35 to include the HSL 102 trip in the morning and £10 without the boat trip, (lunch not included in price). Further details and timings for the event will be supplied nearer the time to those applying. ***Numbers are limited.***

If interested in joining us for this exciting day, please email Philip Neale at telsocchair@gmail.com

No rise in Subscription Rates for 2013

Due to ongoing problems with the membership database, it has been decided that the rise in subscription rates agreed on at the last AGM, will be postponed until next year. This means that they remain at **£13/18** UK and **£16/23** overseas.

Dates for your Diary

A.G.M. 2013 will be at Wareham Library, Dorset on 21st September.

Symposium 2014 will be at St John's College, Oxford on 26th-28th September.

We welcome the following new members:

Mr N Brehony, Surrey
Mr C Bunnage, Richmond
Mr P Cook, London
Mr K Corke, Cardiff
Mr R Edwards, Bath

Mr J Heath, Somerset
Ms L McGough, Galway
Mr T Smith, Pulborough
Mr D Wyatt, Abingdon

Lawrence in Japan

by Philip Neale

Last Autumn, I was contacted in my role as Society chairman, by a Japanese television company (NHK - Japan Broadcasting Corporation), to provide some views on Lawrence, what he would have thought about the current situation in the Middle East and what he would suggest to the world powers as solutions for all the strife. I kept my answers very general as I did not want to be drawn into political debate, and I reminded them that the views were personal and not necessarily attributable to the T.E. Lawrence Society.

A few weeks later, I was invited to record a short interview with the NHK Middle East correspondent for an early evening programme about Lawrence and the Middle East, to be broadcast before Christmas. Apparently Lawrence is very popular in Japan at present and much of this is due to the 50th anniversary year of the Lean film.

In December, I went down to their UK offices and studios in Millbank, immediately opposite the Houses of Parliament, to record my interview. It was all very relaxed and unrehearsed (no make up assistants) and lasted about 20 minutes or so. I was asked several questions about Lawrence's views and how I thought he would have solved the problems in the Middle East based on what he did during the Arab Revolt and after the war. Following the interview we walked around the corner from Millbank to Barton Street, followed by our single cameraman for some filming in front of the blue plaque commemorating Lawrence's time living in the street.

The programme eventually was broadcast by NHK on 21st December 2012 and I have recently received a DVD recording. On the whole programme recording, which lasted about ten minutes, there was about 20 seconds of the interview I actually recorded together with about 30 seconds of us walking down Barton Street talking about Lawrence and then admiring the door and the blue plaque. The programme appeared like a news presentation, mixing film of the Syria conflict, different people being interviewed including myself, and footage from the Lean film.

My short period of talking was about Lawrence's approach to conflict and how he enabled the different Arab tribes to work together during the Revolt and it was connected to the scene in the film where Lawrence is seen managing the conflicts between the different tribes in the Town Hall. It was impossible to understand exactly what was being said in the programme because it was all in Japanese. I was disappointed that so little of my interview had been used, but I guess that is television!

アラビアのロレンス

(Lawrence of Arabia)

Card Images of Lawrence's World

by Ray Bishop

Some years ago, as a consequence of inheriting numerous sets of pre ~ WW II cigarette cards from my father and brother-in-law, I became interested in collecting these fragments from the past. From friendly and knowledgeable dealers at card fairs I learnt the rudiments of this relaxing hobby, derived pleasure from completing all broken sets with 'odds', mounting sets in 'seethrough' plastic holders within attractive modern albums. Personal interest soon takes over; my current target is the Kaiser-baiting '*Punch Cartoons*' set of the Great War (W.D. & H.O. Wills, 1916).

Along with marbles, cigarette cards were the portable currency of young boys in the 1930s. Cards were undoubtedly educational; like many other 11-year olds, I learnt the Rules of the Road from '*Safety First*' (W.D. & H.O. Wills, 1934) and was familiar with images of Caliban and Malvolio ('*Characters from Shakespeare*' trade cards, 1937, Typhoo Tea Ltd.). Wartime restrictions in early 1940 led to the disappearance of cigarette cards; since then trade cards have taken over.

To come to the point, I recently wondered if Lawrence had appeared on cigarette and trade cards. To my surprise, so far I have only found one cigarette card (Fig.1).¹ It appeared in a set titled '*A Gallery of 1935*' that was issued post-humously in 1936 by a lesser-known purveyor of tobacco, Stephen Mitchell & Son of Glasgow.

Fifty celebrities of the times are portrayed and the cards provide a portal into the world that Lawrence was acquainted with. (The full set now sells for about £50.) Some members will know the photograph's provenance. A photograph of Lawrence in the

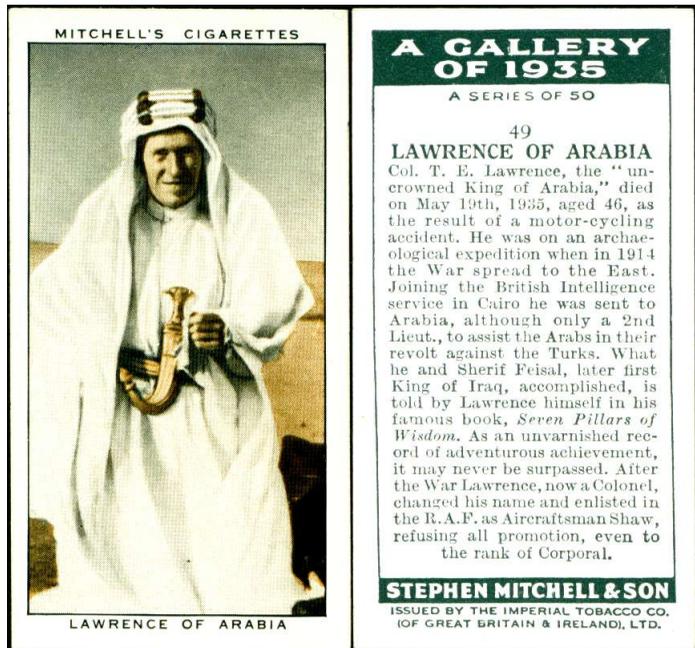


Fig.1

Fig.2



same combination of headdress, robe and dagger was used to advertise a posthumous 36-minute documentary produced by Ace Films in late 1935.² In the late

1930s the Art Department of the Imperial Tobacco Co., Bristol produced paintings for a 50-card set tentatively titled '*Adventurers & Explorers*' that portrayed historic figures. One card depicted Lawrence, dressed in white robes and a blue cape, mounted upon a camel. Trial prints of the standard-size set of attractive images were made and viewed by several tobacco companies e.g. Lambert & Butler. However, text was not added and the set was apparently never issued commercially.

With regard to trade cards, a dealer friend led me to a Lawrence card in the 50-card '*Famous People*' set issued by the tea firm of Brooke Bond & Co. Ltd. in 1969. Fig. 2 shows card No. 37. The imagery and colouring are stylish and attractive.

My final step was particularly gratifying; hence this note. Recalling Lawrence's service days in the RAF, I turned to my 1937 set depicting '*The RAF at Work*'. The parent tobacco firm, W.A. & A.C. Churchman, sold more expensive cigarettes, hence the cards are larger than normal (2 x 2.5 inches) and the colour photographs are of high quality. (This 48-card set sells for about £25. Prices that I give are nominal, currently affected by the recession: one can easily strike lucky.)



Bearing in mind that their production probably dates from 1936, only a year or so after his death, the photographs of this set can be taken to portray the contemporary technical world of the Royal Air Force, at home and in the Near East, that

Fig.3

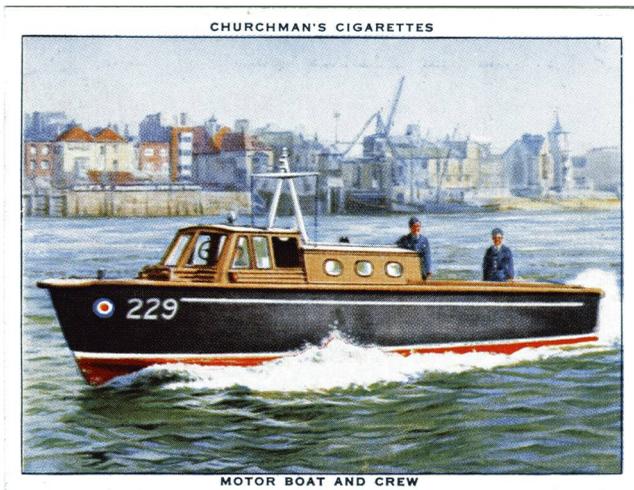


Fig.4

Lawrence understood and loved. Propeller-driven biplanes are much in evidence. Fig. 3 is set in an Iraqi desert. Tentatively, I identify the aeroplane as a two-seat general-purpose Westland Wallace. Famously, in 1933, a Westland Wallace and a Westland Wapiti, both

modified for high altitudes, made the historic first flight over Mount Everest. These two workhorses of the RAF abroad would have been familiar to Lawrence. The set clearly depicts essential support activities such as aircraft and weapon maintenance, refuelling, instrument repairs, etc. but support information on the back is rather trite.

Card No. 36 is a gem (Fig. 4). It provides a fine shot of the type of fast seagoing vessel that Lawrence worked on in his later years. Photographs of these craft are usually monochrome. Officially it was classed as a Series 200 RAF Seaplane Tender.³ A similar craft, marked RAF 200, established a record time between Southampton and Plymouth.⁴

For access to the fascinating world of cigarette cards I commend a website gallery devoted to the subject and any recent annual copy of the collectors' bible^{5,6}

Notes:

1. Search for 'A gallery of 1935 cigarette cards' on www.flickr.com
2. *Lawrence of Arabia: the 30th. Anniversary Pictorial History* by L. Robert Morris and Lawrence Ruskin (1992, Doubleday) ISBN 0-385-42478-7, p.19.
3. Jeremy Wilson <http://blog.castlehillpress.com/chpblog/2010/04/21/200-class-to-raf-museum/>
4. *A Prince of our Disorder: the Life of T.E. Lawrence* by John E. Mack (1977: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd. London) contains photograph of RAF 200. ISBN 0-297-77097-7
5. www.cigarettecardinserts.co.uk/catull.htm
6. *Cigarette Card Values: Catalogue of Cigarette and other Trade Cards* (Murray Cards International Ltd. London).

(I am indebted to Midlands cigarette card dealers John Kendrick and Peter Russell for helping me in my search.)

Some Glimpses of Lawrence

by Graham Chainey

Lawrence knew so many people and impinged on so many lives that passing mentions of him can often be found among the literary byways. Here are ten glimpses of Lawrence, of the sort unlikely to get into the regular biographies, that I have put together.

First, James Harpole (pseudonym of James Johnston Abraham), in *A Surgeon's Heritage* (1953), relates how in 1916 he was sent out to run a military hospital near the Suez Canal. He describes the “wave of optimism” that followed Allenby’s arrival in June 1917. Lawrence, he says, visited Allenby’s headquarters one evening “and got ill just afterwards. For this I saw him professionally; and I cannot think of anyone less like the picture the world now has of him. He was a little man with the delicate figure of a girl, and startlingly blue eyes in a thin very tanned face.” Lawrence looked about twenty, wore a second-lieutenant’s badge on one shoulder, a lieutenant-colonel’s on the other (he was appointed to that rank in March 1918, which helps date the incident), “and went about in carpet slippers”. Harpole says Lawrence was received coolly by the general staff as he regarded their schemes as “damned nonsense”, but Allenby told Harpole to let the Arabs have whatever medical stores they required. Lawrence’s complaint (unspecified) “cleared up in a few days”.

The next glimpse, from the diary of Arnold Bennett, is dated 29 May 1920. “James Douglas was in the strangers’ room of the Garrick lunching a boy,” Bennett records. “Afterwards he introduced me to this boy, who proved to be the celebrated Colonel Lawrence.” This description echoes, perhaps consciously, Lowell Thomas’s in the previous day’s *Daily Express*: “A slight and boyish figure, ‘he is thirty, and might be mistaken for seventeen’”. The lunch was doubtless occasioned by Lawrence’s own article in that paper: Douglas was editor of the *Sunday Express*.

George Antonius, in *The Arab Awakening* (1938), describes meeting Lawrence in September 1921 (location not given). Lawrence modestly “volunteered a sweeping belittlement of his knowledge of Arabic”, and indeed Antonius thought neither his accent nor his use of words could have deceived anyone in Arabia for long. They talked for three hours. “His conversation was lively and entertaining on a variety of subjects, except when it came to the topic of the Arab campaign on which he would answer my questions dully, not so much with reluctance as with apathy, as though he had exhausted his interest in the subject.”

H.St J.Philby in *Forty Years in the Wilderness* (1957), records a day’s trek with Lawrence in October of that year to upbraid an offending tribe, culminating with a four-hour train journey back to Amman at night. “I was drenched through though I had a comparatively snug seat next to the boiler ... but Lawrence, who had insisted on riding the whole journey on the foot-plate of the engine, com-

pletely exposed to the icy rain, had had the worst of it.” That *insisted* seems characteristic.

The artist Wyndham Lewis, in *Blasting and Bombardiering* (1937), describes how Lawrence shinned over the locked gate outside his Holland Park studio at eight o’clock one night to knock on his door. Lewis, assuming the “small and unobtrusive” figure in a raincoat with no hat was a dun come to present a bill (Lewis was broke), descended the steps “truculently” to tell him he was trespassing. “‘I know,’ said this enigmatical person, in a low and gentle voice, turning his head slightly to one side, as if the victim of a slight embarrassment.” When Lewis demanded who he was, he replied “I am Lawrence” and the penny dropped. Lewis shook his hand and apologized. Lawrence was not invited in on that occasion but they met next day and several times over the following years, often lunching in a nearby tea room.

The Shaws had a spiked security gate outside their Adelphi flat, according to Blanche Patch in *30 Years with G.B.S.* (1951) but Lawrence did not scale this one (though an American fan of Shaw’s once did), calling it “the barbed wire gate”. When visiting them in London or at Ayot St Lawrence, he would discuss with the Shaws “the affairs of everyday: their new Lanchester 8, which he liked; their trip to Palm Beach; how [Shaw’s] *Collected Edition* should be presented” ~ he wanted colour-coded bindings for novels, plays, essays and so on. Patch describes how Charlotte would send Lawrence books and records, as well as “chocolates from Gunter’s, China tea from Fortnum and Mason’s; at Christmas, *foie gras* and peach-fed ham to Clouds Hill; to Karachi, chocolates, cake and *marrons glacés*”. (A photographic glimpse of Lawrence standing outside Shaw’s study window at Ayot, not otherwise published so far as I know, may be found in a 1946 volume celebrating Shaw’s ninetieth birthday, *G.B.S. 90: Aspects of Bernard Shaw’s Life and Work*.)

Meanwhile, down at Max Gate, Thomas Hardy had a ferocious terrier called Wessex that would snap and bite visitors. Nellie Titterington, the parlour maid, records in her memoir, *The Domestic Life of Thomas Hardy* (1963), that Lawrence “was the only other person who could safely deal with Wessex.” He alone could pick up a dropped object without getting bitten. “Wessex was very fond of Col. Lawrence, who could pat him and speak to him and had a wonderful power over him.” She relates a curious incident in which Wessex one day retreated whining from a visitor, and seemed ill at ease in his presence: this man, who seemed in good spirits, died suddenly that night. When Nellie told Lawrence, he replied: “There is an Arab proverb which says: ‘The dog sees the angel of death first’, and that is what he saw.”

The artist Nicolette Devas, in *Two Flamboyant Fathers* (1966), describes growing up in the bohemian Augustus John ménage at Fordingbridge. Meeting Lawrence, when he came to sit for John, was a “star of excitement”. Lawrence arrived “with a swish of speed round the laurel bend in the drive, and the gravel scratched as he came to a halt.” She says he had a “cringing obsequious admira-

tion” for John, calling him “Master”. He would tell the children he lived on a handful of raisins per day, which impressed them more than his desert exploits ~ until one of them, visiting Clouds Hill with John, spotted chicken, a joint, bread and marmalade, in his larder (fortunately no sign of the chocolates from Gunter’s). On Christmas Day they watched the alleged ascetic gobbling turkey. After lunch she gathered the courage to tell him how much she had admired *Seven Pillars*. He glanced at her, moved rapidly forward, and started talking to John. “I was too silly to know that I had been snubbed.”

Basil Liddell Hart mentions in his *Memoirs* (1965) how in 1933 Lawrence turned up for sports day at his ten-year-old son’s preparatory school near Hindhead “and was very good at letting the boys throng round and examine his motor-cycle.” Afterwards, when a visit was proposed to Lloyd George, whom Lawrence hadn’t seen since Versailles, “he jumped at the chance ... It proved a most stimulating re-encounter, with both in their best conversational form, and I could hardly drag T.E. away in time to deliver Adrian back to school.”

Finally, here is Geoffrey Keynes, in *The Gates of Memory* (1981), describing Siegfried Sassoon’s wedding on 18 December 1933 at Christchurch Priory. “In the church I was placed opposite him and could gaze my fill at the small but strongly built man, with a pink face and a shock of yellow hair.” After the ceremony he and Lawrence had a long conversation, “leaning on opposite sides of his motor bicycle”. One would like to have been a fly on the handlebar!

Obituary ~ Catherine Kennington

by Nick Lynch

Catherine attended the Symposium at St Hilda’s only 2 months before she died, where she addressed the audience to thank a speaker for their kind words about her father. She was indeed proud of his achievements and connections with Lawrence. Ed.

Catherine Kennington, who died on 20th November 2012, was a loyal supporter of the T.E. Lawrence Society and its London Group. Her father was Eric Kennington R.A. the portrait painter and sculptor who formed a long term friendship with Lawrence from their first meeting in 1920.

Catherine was born on 22nd February 1927 at Morton House, Chiswick Mall. Her mother was Celandine Kennington, a granddaughter of the third Marquis of Exeter. From 1935 to 1939 Catherine attended, as a day pupil, Homer School, a nearby boarding school for young children whose parents wished to move them out of London to avoid pollution. In 1939 she started to attend a girls’ boarding school on the South coast but in 1940 this was evacuated to an inland location because of the risk of invasion. Simultaneously Eric and Celandine were offered the opportunity to evacuate their children (Catherine and her elder brother Christopher) to Canada for the duration of the war, under the auspices of the

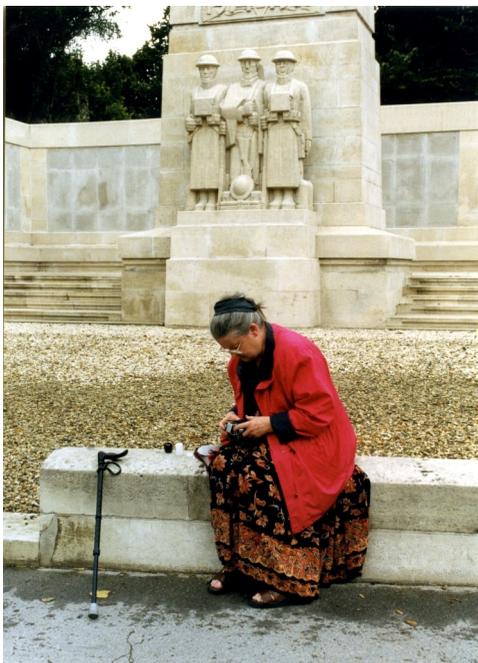
‘Oxford Group’, a religious and social cult with Christian origins.

Catherine and her brother arrived in Canada in June 1940, initially living in New Brunswick, then Toronto and then in 1943 to Montreal. This time was not a particularly happy one for Catherine; she was finally able to return to England, with many of the cult’s expatriate personnel, in May 1946. After the war Catherine stayed on in the family home at Homer House, Ipsden, where she developed a very close relationship with her father. Her parents were at this time deeply connected with matters relating to Lawrence of Arabia, for whose books Eric had served as Art Editor. This led to Catherine developing a strong attachment to Arabia and matters Arab, which persisted to the end of her life.

After qualifying as an Occupational Therapist, Catherine first worked in Peterborough and then in 1959 went to Libya to stay with her brother. She was entranced by Tripoli and the Arab culture and worked in Tripoli as an O.T. until sensing that a revolution was coming, she returned to England. Life at Homer was now not simple, and Catherine experienced a nervous breakdown. She recovered in due course, and then took a position with Westminster City Council. In about 1990 she suffered a stroke, from which she made a good, but not complete recovery.

Catherine started attending the London Group meetings soon afterwards and attended regularly, including our longer visits around France. She was usually reticent about her family name, but she was, I think, very proud of her father. Dick Crowder remembered the occasion on the London Group’s 1998 trip to France, when quite by chance they passed through the town of Soissons. She was suddenly surprised, elated and excited to find the WW1 memorial there had been sculpted by her father.

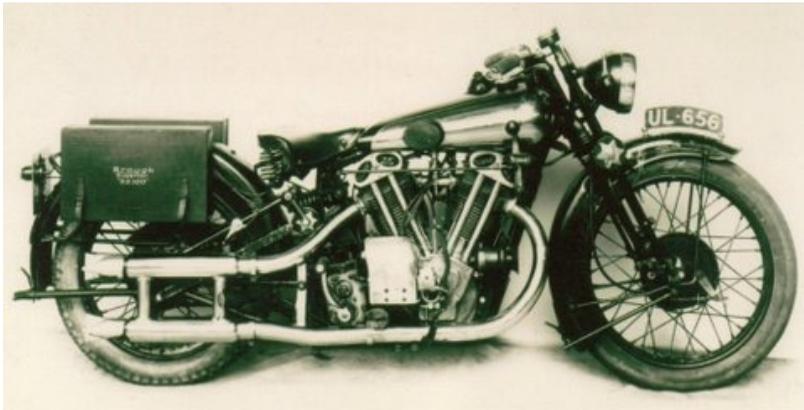
*Catherine at the
Soissons WWI Memorial*



Catherine died after a very short illness. She was cremated at Lambeth Crematorium, and her ashes are interred in the grave of her parents at Checkendon, Oxfordshire.

Long Lost Photograph of ‘George VI’

This is a photograph of what is almost certainly ‘George VI’ the penultimate Lawrence Brough and the one Lady Astor would have ridden on, (the luggage rack or ‘flapper bracket’ on which Nancy Astor would have sat, has been removed). There is a little uncertainty as George Brough was rather cavalier about the use of number plates and UL 656 apparently appears on other machines. It was almost certainly taken at the Brough works in 1932 after T.E. Lawrence had collected GW 2275 and this machine had been tidied up for re-sale. It is a 1929 SS100 and most unusually has a smaller rear wheel and the saddle pushed down as far as possible. These were Lawrence trade marks. This photograph has to the best of my knowledge never been published and its provenance has been confirmed as being from the Brough works photo album by Barry Robinson, who used to work for George Brough and was a founder member of the Brough Superior Club. *Alan Payne.*



Published by kind permission of the Brough Superior Club

Review of *Lawrence of Arabia: The Man and the Myth* (BBC Radio 4, 8 December 2012)

by Graham Chainey

This radio documentary, in the Saturday night “Archive on 4” slot, presented by Allan Little, was designed to tie in with the fiftieth anniversary of the release of the David Lean biopic. For the first ten minutes or so, this led to a certain amount of confusion. Snatches of the well-known film score and newsreel extracts from 1962 relating to the film’s premier gave the impression this might be a programme about the film, or at any rate about the relationship between the film and the historical person the film is based on. Only gradually did references to the film fade out, and the programme settle down to focus on Lawrence him-

self and his role in the Arab Revolt.

Many of the archive clips of people who had known Lawrence were familiar from previous programmes (including one in the same slot a few years ago), though it is always good to hear again the testimony of Storrs, Joyce, Kirkbride, A.W.Lawrence, Lowell Thomas, Arthur Russell, Fareedeh el Akle and others. These were mixed in, not always with adequate information as to who was speaking, with contemporary authorities ~ Jeremy Wilson, Rory Stewart, James Barr and so on. There were interesting contributions from Bristol University archaeologists, “testing the veracity of Lawrence’s account” by digging up sites of conflict in Jordan; and from those involved in the 2003 Iraq invasion on the continuing influence of Lawrence’s writings on guerrilla warfare. General Petraeus (I *think* it was he) said *Seven Pillars* had been “required reading”, while a British military commander noted that the Americans were “using *Seven Pillars* at every meeting” and thought there was an “enormous difference”, as a result, between the Iraq operation and Vietnam. (But this contrasted with Jeremy Wilson subsequently saying that “Libya was a Lawrence solution, Iraq was not”).

There was also a section that contrasted the historical Sykes-Picot carving up of the Middle East with a map drawn up by Lawrence himself, which has only recently come to light in the National Archive at Kew, which would have allowed a “huge chunk” for an independent Arabia, as well as allowing the Kurds and Armenians territories of their own. Lawrence’s prescience, in foreseeing things that have since come to pass, and his continuing relevance today, when so much of the Middle East is again in turmoil, were repeatedly emphasised.

A good deal of this was familiar ground from previous documentaries, and in a way it was disappointing that there was no critique of the film which was the nominal reason for the broadcast. Though it was mentioned that A.W.Lawrence tried to have the film banned, it was not explained why, and I felt this was an opportunity missed. Snatches from the film were uncritically collaged in at junctures, giving the impression that there is no mismatch between Lean’s celluloid version and historical truth.

In fact, the Lean film is a far from faithful representation of either Lawrence or historical events. It may over a half-century have brought many people to hear about Lawrence who might not otherwise have done so, but it has done that by conveying quite a false impression of the man, making him seem boastful, exhibitionist, neurotic, effeminate, egomaniac and bloodthirsty, while playing fast and loose with history and geography. The anti-war prejudices of the scriptwriter, Robert Bolt, and something of the debunking spirit of Aldington’s notorious 1955 “biographical enquiry”, vitiate what might have been a first-rate theme. For those interested in this subject, Jeremy Wilson’s invaluable 2006 critical analysis of the film, scene by scene, can be read online. Wilson concludes that the film is “inexcusably and often pointlessly inaccurate”. As he rightly observes: “There was drama enough in the life of the real T.E.Lawrence without that kind of meddling.”

Lawrence of Almería

There have been various tributes for the 50th anniversary (December 2012) of the David Lean film *Lawrence of Arabia* in some of the locations where it was filmed. The industrial town of Carboneras in the Almería province of Spain is very proud of its association with the film. A dry river bed (*rambla*) just south of the town on the coast, became the setting for the capture of Aqaba. A mock town of 300 buildings was built on the nearby beach of Algarrobico and many of the locals were hired as 'Arab irregulars'. O'Toole was nearly killed during the filming when he fell from his camel during the charge, but was saved when his camel stood over him and prevented the horses from trampling him.

The town decided to commemorate its place in cinematic history with a week of events and an invitation to Egyptian actor, Omar Sharif, who played Sherif Ali. He was given a royal welcome in the town square by the Mayor and there were even 2 real camels to make him feel at home! Sharif acknowledged the role the town played in the film and the film's role in starting his own career. He then opened an exhibition of photographs, memories and props of the film held at the Hotel El Dorado. This hotel had been built and owned by the late Eddie Fowlie, Lean's special effects man, who later settled in the area. Other events of the week included screenings, conferences, visits and talks, one by Eddie Fowlie's biographer, Ricardo Torne.



© La Voz de Almería

A lasting tribute is the commissioning of a bronze statue of Lawrence/O'Toole by a local company ~ Bio Fuel Systems. The Chairman, Bernard A.J. Stroïazzo is reported to be a fan of the film. Sculpted by Carmen Mudarra, it was officially presented to the town by Omar Sharif on behalf of the company.

Ed. It is reported that Peter O'Toole's health has taken a turn for the worse recently, preventing him from joining the film's 50th celebrations in London.

Letters

Dan Little writes

The synopsis of the paper by David Murphy *T E Lawrence and the Iraqi Rebellion of 1920* at the 2012 Symposium brought back memories of my Dad relating events in which he was involved whilst serving in the British Army. My Dad joined the Royal Irish Fusiliers sometime towards the conclusion of WW1, however, I'm not sure exactly when.

In the summer of 1919 the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers was ordered to Persia due to local rebellions breaking out in Northern Persia. The Bolsheviks supported these outbreaks, however, the Mesopotamian situation was nationalist rather than being inspired by the Bolsheviks.

The 1st Battalion set sail from Tilbury for Bombay on the 18/09/1919 stopping at Port Said for coal. Apparently it was here that a woman on board disembarked here and was to travel on the Baghdad, apparently this turned out to Gertrude Bell who was going the Baghdad via Aleppo.

Arriving at Bombay the battalion disembarked and was transferred onto another ship which transported them via the Persian Gulf to Basra in Iraq. Tigris paddle steamers then took them up river to Kut. The journey from here was continued by railway to Baghdad where a change was made to a narrow gauge train by which they reached the Persian border village of Quraitu. From here lorries took them on to Qazvin via Kermanshah and Hamadan, a distance of 400 miles, where they arrived around the 14/11/19. Whilst at this base camp reinforcements from the 2nd Battalion arrived. They were to become part of the North Persia Force (Norperforce) as a replacement of Dunsterforce created in 1918 which reached Baku to find the city already under siege and which subsequently retired to Enzeli.

The Red Army were active and captured Baku from where they pursued the White Russian Army, under the command of Denikin. The British forces withdrew their outposts from Enzeli, where Red Army troops landed on the 18/05/20, to Rasht and then to Manjil. When the Red Army entered Rasht a Persian Socialist Soviet Republic was created on 04/06/10.

The Persian Government, located in Tehran, set up by secret treaty in 1919 with Britain, fell and was replaced by a nationalist regime. It was in the Manjil area that Templer, on the 07/07/20, with his own platoon, plus other detachments, was ordered to hold the Kamisa Pass against any incursions from the Caspian coast. They apparently held out here for three weeks without action. News from Baghdad reported that rebel guerrilla groups were making the railways inoperable ~ typical Lawrence tactics. The Royal Irish Fusiliers were ordered to move rapidly back to the railhead at Quraitu, arriving 27/08/20, via Qazvin. From here they were to proceed south, as part of Greercol, along the railway towards Baghdad where they would join up with a force moving northwards repairing the line.

The closing days of October 1920 saw the Royal Irish Fusiliers, using Shahraban as a base, marching and counter-marching in an attempt to pacify the area north of Baghdad by confiscating weapons and ammunition from hostile villages. I can remember one story my Dad related where the battalion was marching through a town with the colours flying and the band (of which my Dad was a member) playing with the people lining the street to watch them. During this show of force the troops were ordered to 'fix bayonets' on the march. Apparently the street was cleared of spectators within seconds!

April's end, 1921, saw the Royal Irish Fusiliers ordered to Egypt, yet another hotspot, where nationalists were rebelling against the British protectorate created during WW1. The Royal Irish Fusiliers boarded the train for Basra on the 09/05/21. From Basra they set sail for Cairo on the 20/05/21 via the Persian Gulf, Arabia, the Red Sea, Aden and Suez. However, this is another story.

Although my recollections of the above events are sketchy, and may contain errors, I have tried to fill in detail by researching the subject. One source, in particular, that I found very helpful was a biography entitled *Templer ~ Tiger of Malaya* by John Cloake, published by Harrap Ltd. in 1985. I can remember my Dad saying that as a result of his sojourn in Persia, Mesopotamia (Iraq), Egypt and India he had great respect for the people of this area.

New Books

These details are provided for information only and should not be regarded as endorsements or recommendations.

John D. Grainger *The Battle for Syria, 1918-1920* Grainger, an author of numerous military histories, gives a timely reappraisal of the twists and turns of the creation of Syria after the fall of the Turkish Empire mainly from a military point of view, looking at the opposing armies, battles and tactics. The betrayal of Arab nationalist aspirations by French colonial ambitions at the Peace Conference is also covered.

Publisher: Boydell & Brewer; January 2013; 270 pages; 22 b/w illus; hardback; price normally £25/\$45 **Offer Price to Society Members:** £18.75/\$33.75, plus postage. Order online at www.boydellandbrewer.com or call +44 1394 610 600 or in North America 585 275 0419. Please enter or mention the offer code **TEL13** when prompted.

Clive Semple *Airway to the East, 1918 - 1920 and the collapse of the No. 1 Aerial Route RAF* An account of the pioneering route finding flights carried out by the RAF shortly after the end of the First World War. It commences with an account of the accident at Rome in May 1919 when Lawrence was injured. His name appears in various connections to do with the Middle East in the first hundred or so pages.

Published by Pen & Sword; 2012; price £19.99; hardback; 243 pages; 8 col illus with numerous b&w in the text; ISBN 978-1-84884-657-9

MSS Auction

Two items are coming up for sale in April and May at Bonhams:

Eric Kennington *Ghost Portrait*, No.59. Based on Kennington's first pastel portrait c.1920 of Lawrence, Kennington put the portrait on the floor, and a sheet of paper over the surface of the drawings, and walked on it for a minute. This he found, gave him two portraits, the second faint and in reverse. The second was known as the 'ghost portrait' and 100 copies were printed.

The second item is 12 lines of a poem by Dowson (previously unpublished) in Lawrence's hand, written for Lionel Curtis.