

# T. E. Lawrence Society Symposium 2010

**St. John's College, Oxford  
17-19 September 2010**

## Programme

### **Friday 17 September**

#### *Visits to Jesus College and the Ashmolean Museum*

Group A will take a short walk to Jesus College in Turl Street where there will be a guided tour of TEL's old Oxford college and a chance to view some of the artefacts it holds. The tour will last approximately one hour.

Group B will walk to the recently re-opened Ashmolean Museum for a tour organised by the Education Department staff. There will be an opportunity to view items relating to Lawrence, some of which were displayed at the Imperial War Museum exhibition in 2005.

Group A will then walk to the Ashmolean for coffee before the commencement of their tour. Group B, after coffee, will walk to Jesus College.

#### *Welcome from the Chairman, Peter Leney*

#### *The Search for Identity in the Writings of T. E. Lawrence and Sayyid Qutb*

Dr. Vino Roy

The terrorist attacks in New York in 2001, and the US-led war in Afghanistan and Iraq have renewed interest in the 'clash of civilisations' theory that views cultural and religious differences as the main source of international conflict. Vino Roy's presentation will attempt to provide a better understanding of the identity-conflicts of today, through a comparative study of the lives and writings of T. E. Lawrence and Sayyid Qutb. The writings of both men expose the misrepresentations and earnest desire for mutual and self-understanding that has often characterized both Western and Arab representations of the 'other'.

Vino Roy manages the distance learning programme for the Leader Development and Education for Sustained Peace programme which educates US military and civilian leaders on US objectives, regional geopolitical and cultural frameworks in Iraq, Afghanistan and other regions.

#### *The Journeys of T. E. Lawrence*

Alan Payne

The starting point for this presentation is the thesis that whilst T. E. Lawrence eschewed all involvement with competitive sport, he did throughout his life undertake long journeys; on foot, on bicycles, on camels and on Brough Superior motorcycles. In many cases, these journeys and particularly his wartime camel rides were born out of necessity. Many other journeys and particularly his motorcycle journeys were undertaken for the sheer joy of the

journey itself. The common theme for most of the journeys is that he looked on them as a challenge and a test of his own abilities and powers of endurance. They were a test for himself, but there is ample evidence that he delighted in telling others of his achievements. This presentation will explore the nature of these journeys which were taken in the earlier years of the 20th Century; particularly with the cycling, walking and motorcycle journeys, comparisons will be made with modern times.

Alan Payne gave a lecture to the 2008 Symposium on T. E. Lawrence and Brough Superior motorcycles. Much of this presentation was based on a lifetime's experience with Brough Superior motorcycles. Beyond his extensive knowledge, he is a keen long-distance cyclist and in the last few years has cycled in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Denmark and has now travelled as far as Sweden on the North Sea Cycle Route. During the 1990s he made five trips to the Nepal Himalaya including the full trek to Everest. He has also walked and climbed extensively in the Pyrenees, the Alps and many parts of Britain, particularly in North Wales. He is a member of two mountaineering clubs. He now lives in the Dartmoor National Park and works part time as a Planning Consultant and is Chairman of a Building Preservation Trust

*Question and answer session with the speakers on the day's papers, chaired by Pieter Shipster*

## **Saturday 18 September**

*Welcome from the Chairman, Peter Leney*

*Humour in The Mint?*  
Dr. Andrew Williams

Andrew's talk will focus on Lawrence's writing of his daybook of the R.A.F., *The Mint*. Something that is often overlooked in the scholarship surrounding Lawrence is his sense of humour. Lawrence's sense of mischievousness comes through in *The Mint*, and in his letters surrounding the text. Often, this sense of fun masks a darker side to Lawrence. Through a look at selected passages from his letters and *The Mint*, he will add to the appreciation of this remarkable character.

Andrew Williams has taught in the English Departments of Université Sainte Anne, the Université de Québec a Trois Rivières, Bishop's University and Dawson College. He was first drawn to the figure of T. E. Lawrence through David Lean's film and soon became fascinated by the differences between the 'film' Lawrence and the 'real' Lawrence. He is currently at work on a book examining Lawrence's influence on Modernism.

*Colonel P.C. Joyce and the Arab Revolt*  
Dr. David Murphy

This paper will explore the career of this Galway-born officer who served with Lawrence during the Arab Revolt. A serving officer in the Connaught Rangers, Joyce had served in South Africa during the 2nd Anglo-Boer War and was based in Cairo from 1907. From 1916 he served in Arabia and was commanding officer of Operation Hedgehog - the British mission to the Arab Northern Army. Drawing on Joyce's own papers, this lecture will examine his

wartime career and his relationship with T. E. Lawrence and also other leading figures in the revolt such as Prince Feisal and Jafar Pasha. Joyce's later career in Iraq will also be referred to and it will be shown that he played a crucial role in the making of modern Arabia.

David Murphy is a graduate of University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin. He was a major contributor to the Royal Irish Academy's Dictionary of Irish Biography and currently lectures in military history and strategic studies at NUI Maynooth. In this capacity, he also teaches at the Irish Military College. His publications include *Ireland and the Crimean War* (Dublin, 2002) and *The Arab Revolt: Lawrence sets Arabia Ablaze* (Osprey, 2008). He is currently working on a short biography of Lawrence for the Osprey Command series.

### *The Jeddah Diary of Captain T. P. Goodchild during the Arab Revolt, 1916*

Philip Walker

Captain Goodchild was sent to the Hejaz to buy camels for the advance of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force through Sinai and Palestine. His travelling companions on HMS Lama included T. E. Lawrence and Ronald Storrs. Goodchild was attached to the Jeddah Agency under Col. C. E. Wilson, and began his diary at a crucial time, in October 1916, when the Arab Revolt was stalling and risked failure. Philip Walker's paper will address the diary's significance and will attempt to put Goodchild's words into their military and political context.

Philip Walker is a retired archaeologist who spent most of his career as an Inspector of Ancient Monuments with English Heritage. He has travelled in Palestine (the West Bank), Libya, Morocco and Central Asia and became interested in Lawrence when he acquired a First World War diary, the subject of this paper, that was written during the Arab Revolt. His particular interests are the relationship between the Arab Revolt and British intelligence, and the procurement of camels for the Palestine campaign.

### *The Druze and Karaka Revolts of 1910: Prelude to the Arab Revolt*

Dr. Eugene Rogan

In 1910, the Ottomans faced major revolts in both the Druze Mountain to the South-east of Damascus, and in the town of Karak, now in southern Jordan. For two weeks, the Ottomans struggled to contain a major insurgency they feared might spread throughout the Syrian Desert as far as the Hejaz and Yemen beyond. Fear swept Jerusalem and Damascus, of a tribal insurgency that would overwhelm Ottoman defenders and expose the townspeople to tribal violence. In the aftermath of these events, Arab deputies in the Ottoman parliament began to petition for clemency for the Druze and Karaka rebels as part of a growing Arabism political sentiment. In the process, the urban nationalists of Damascus came to appreciate the potential of united tribal action to undermine Ottoman rule in the Arab provinces. The events of 1910, and the clemency campaign of 1912-13, played a key role in promoting the idea of a wartime alliance between urban nationalists and Arab tribesmen that resulted in the 1916 Arab Revolt of T. E. Lawrence fame.

Dr. Eugene Rogan is Director of the Middle East Centre at St. Anthony's College, Oxford, and has taught the Modern History of the Middle East at Oxford since 1991. He took his BA in Economics from Columbia, and his MA and PhD in Middle Eastern History from Harvard. He is the author of the *Arabs: A History*.

*Question and answer session with the speakers on the day's papers, chaired by Pieter Shipster*

*Sherry party in the Garden Quadrangle, followed by the Society's 25th Anniversary Dinner in St John's College dining hall*

Guest after-dinner speaker is Sir Mark Allen CMG. One of Britain's pre-eminent Arabists, Sir Mark served in British Foreign Service for 30 years and lived for many years in the Middle East. During his service he developed a keen appreciation of the nuances of Middle Eastern culture and politics. Since retiring from public service, Sir Mark has worked as a special advisor for BP. Sir Mark studied Arabic at Oxford, where he is now a Senior Associate member of St. Antony's College.

### **Sunday 19th September**

*T. E. Lawrence and the Tribes*

Dr. Eveline van der Steen

T. E. Lawrence's claim to fame is intimately related to his actions in the First World War, and his interaction with the tribal groups. Tribal wartime politics and loyalties are complex, involving a mixture of inter-tribal relationships, personal and tribal interests and perceptions of honour. Lawrence understood this, and used it to involve a number of tribes, particularly the Huwaytat and the Rwala in the battle. However, we learn relatively little about how these tribes saw the war and their own role in it: Lawrence is silent about the tribes in the other camp. This paper looks at the tribal politics of the time, to provide a background for the events he describes.

Eveline van der Steen is an archaeologist and anthropologist specializing in the Near East. She did her PhD at the University of Groningen, Netherlands, on the Bronze and Iron Ages of the Jordan Valley. These days one of her special interests is the politics of tribal societies in the Near East (particularly Levant and Arabia) in the 19th and early 20th century. She has written numerous articles on the subject, developing a model for tribal societies that can be used in the archaeology of the region. Presently, she is preparing a monograph on the subject.

Eveline is based in Liverpool, as honorary research fellow of the University of Liverpool.

*T. E. Lawrence and the Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.)*

Dr Roderick Bailey

Drawing on recently declassified files, this paper explores the connections between T. E. Lawrence and Britain's Special Operations Executive, the secret organisation set up in the Second World War to encourage resistance and carry out sabotage in enemy-occupied territory. It examines the impact of Lawrence's ideas on revolt and guerrilla warfare on S.O.E. planning and operations. It also reveals, for the first time, enduring links in terms of personnel: several officers who had served with Lawrence in the desert went on to work for SOE, as did A. W. Lawrence, T. E.'s youngest brother.

A graduate of Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities and a former Alistair Horne Fellow at St. Antony's College, Oxford, Dr. Roderick Bailey is a professional historian and a specialist in the study of Britain's Special Operations Executive. He is the author of the critically acclaimed *The Wildest Province: S.O.E. in the Land of the Eagle*, a study of S.O.E.

operations in the occupied Balkans, and two Sunday Times top-ten bestsellers: *Forgotten Voices of the Secret War*, *An Oral History of S.O.E.*, and *Forgotten Voices of D-Day*

*Richard Aldington: Lawrence's Strongest Critic*  
Philip Neale

In 1955, Richard Aldington's book *Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry* caused a massive storm of protest. The opposition had developed well before publication, through the co-ordinated actions of a powerful group of people including Basil Liddell-Hart, Robert Graves and A. W. Lawrence. Aldington's prolific literary career and health were destroyed, his life drifted into obscurity, and his reputation still suffers today. This paper looks at the controversy surrounding the book and what Aldington was trying to achieve. It also examines his life and presents an appraisal of his literary skills, particularly as a war poet.

Philip Neale is a pharmacist by profession and works for the Medicines Regulatory Agency in drug safety. He is Treasurer for the T. E. Lawrence Society. His interest in Lawrence developed following the National Portrait Gallery exhibition in 1988. He also has a strong interest in the First World War and twentieth century art and literature, particularly relating to the Bloomsbury group. Philip is the author of different journal articles as well as a small book in the Bloomsbury Heritage series. He also presented a paper at the Symposium in 2008.

*Question and answer session with the speakers on the day's papers, chaired by Pieter Shipster*

*The T. E. Lawrence Society Annual General Meeting*