

MILITARY HISTORY

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Military History Live Tour for the T E Lawrence Society

Romans, Crusaders, and Lawrence of Arabia

Destination: Jordan

Dates: 9-18 November 2018

Introduction

Jordan lies at the heart of the modern Middle East, yet has remained stable, friendly, and welcoming. It is located where Bedouin nomad interacts with Levantine peasant, where rival civilisations and empires have clashed over thousands of years. The result is a landscape rich in battlefields, fortifications, and military history.

This tour explores three periods of conflict – under the Roman and Byzantine Empires, at the time of the Crusades, and, above all, during Lawrence of Arabia's campaigns in 1916-18.

The tour is led by two leading members of the Great Arab Revolt Project archaeological team, Neil Faulkner and Roger Ward. This will ensure exclusive access to numerous remote desert locations to see the fortified stations, hilltop redoubts, and abandoned campsites of 'Lawrence of Arabia's War'. With Lawrence's great memoir *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* in hand, we will track the raids, ambushes, and battles in a way that has never previously been possible.

Many tours claim to travel 'in the footsteps of Lawrence'. This is the only one that actually does so. It is being offered to members of the T E Lawrence Society at a 10% discount on the usual commercial price.

Programme

Day 1

Arrival: **Amman**

Accommodation: Amman

Day 2

Visits to:

Amman Railway Museum, located in a major Hijaz Railway station.

Azraq Castle, a Roman frontier fort, Crusader castle, and Arab Revolt base located at the head of the Wadi Sirhan in the eastern desert.

Umm al-Jimaal Ancient Town, a heavily fortified Roman and Byzantine frontier town on the edge of the desert.

Today we will explore the historic relationship ‘between desert and sown’, the age-old military tension on the desert fringe, and the advent of the railway in this traditional landscape.

Accommodation: Amman

Day 3

Visits to:

Al-Qatrana Ottoman Fort and Hijaz Railway station

We will visit this 16th century Hajj pilgrimage fort and early 20th century Ottoman station south of Amman.

Site of Battle of Tafila

The site of Lawrence’s greatest battle – described in great detail in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* – has only recently been identified and research is ongoing. Our tour provides a unique opportunity to do some real ‘hands-on’ conflict archaeology!

Shobek Crusader Castle

After travelling a distance along the King’s Highway, we will explore this 12th century frontier castle in the afternoon.

Accommodation: Wadi Musa

Day 4

Visits to:

Site of Battle of Abu al-Lissan, where Lawrence participated in a charge of 450 cavalry and camel-men.

Kithara Fort, one of three guarding the Wadi Itm on the road to Aqaba.

Aqaba Castle and Emir Hussein’s House, the principal historic monuments in Aqaba itself, and additional free time in Aqaba.

Today we will focus on the Aqaba Campaign of May-July 1917, following the route of the victorious Arab forces from Abu al-Lissan to Guweira, Kithara, Khadra, and Aqaba.

Accommodation: Wadi Musa

Day 5

Visit to:

Petra Ancient City and Necropolis

We devote the whole day to exploring the fabulous 2,000-year-old remains of the ‘red rose city’ of the Nabataean Arabs, with its monumental temples, royal tombs, and acre upon acre of rock-cut ‘cities of the dead’.

Accommodation: Wadi Musa

Day 6

Wadi Rum, for a two-hour camel trek in the desert landscape where much of David Lean’s *Lawrence of Arabia* was filmed. We also get a taste of camel-mounted desert movement!

Mudawwara Redoubts, which were attacked repeatedly by Anglo-Arab forces and finally captured in August 1918.

This will be the first of three days looking in detail at the railway war between Ottoman garrison and counter-insurgency forces on the one side and Arab guerrilla and British special-forces operations on the other. It will include a desert crossing in 4x4s from Wadi Rum to the Hijaz Railway and then on down to Mudawwara.

Accommodation: Wadi Musa

Day 7

Visits to:

Wadi Rutm Station

Wadi Rutm Fort

Batn Al-Ghoul Fort

Our theme today will again be the railway war. We will use off-road vehicles to explore three Ottoman counterinsurgency sites, a fortified station, a hilltop redoubt, and a regional command-and-control centre.

Accommodation: Wadi Musa

Day 8

Visits to:

Tooth Hill Camp, where Lawrence stayed in December 1917 and April 1918.

Tell Shalm Fort and **Siddons Ridge**, attacked by Arab irregulars and British special forces in April 1918.

Our third day on the railway war will focus on one particular military operation in April 1918, tracking the detailed description in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

Accommodation: Wadi Musa

Day 9

Visits to:

Kerak Crusader Castle, a 12th century frontier fortification.

Machaerus Fortified Palace and Zealot Stronghold, where Herod Antipas held court, John the Baptist was executed, and Jewish rebels faced a Roman siege after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Rift Valley Escarpment and Dead Sea

After three days' intensive exploration of military landscapes associated with Lawrence of Arabia's campaigns, we end the tour with more Roman and Crusader archaeology, eventually descending the spectacular escarpment to the Dead Sea for a brief overnight stop within easy reach of the airport.

Accommodation: Dead Sea

Day 10

Departure: **Amman**

Tour Leaders

Dr Neil Faulkner, FSA

Research Fellow, University of Bristol

Co-Director, Great Arab Revolt Project

Neil, a leading conflict archaeologist and military historian, works as a writer, editor, lecturer, and occasional broadcaster. He is the editor of *Military History Monthly* and the author of ten books, including: *Apocalypse: the great Jewish revolt against Rome, AD 66-73*; *In Search of the Zeppelin War: the archaeology of the First Blitz*; *Rome:*

empire of the eagles; and *Lawrence of Arabia's War: the Arabs, the British, and the remaking of the Middle East in World War I*. He is currently working on a new book provisionally entitled *The First Modern Jihad, 1870-1920*. His many TV appearances include Channel 4's *Time Team*, BBC2's *Timewatch*, and Sky Atlantic's *The British*. An active fieldworker, he has directed projects at home and abroad, including the Great Arab Revolt Project between 2006 and 2014, an investigation of the evidence for 'Lawrence of Arabia's War' in the deserts of southern Jordan.

Mr Roger Ward, CPhys, MInstP

Head of Field Survey, Great Arab Revolt Project
Communications Manager

Roger is a former academic scientist, with specific expertise in IT and other related technologies. He is a multi-skilled expert specialising in archaeological metal-detecting in conflict landscapes. He played a leading role in the Great Arab Revolt Project between 2007 and 2014. Throughout this period he also compiled and edited the blog of the project. He has worked on similar archaeological programmes in the UK relating to both WW1 and WW2.

About Military History Live

Military History Live is an initiative designed to enhance the experience of military history for dedicated enthusiasts. Our aim is to build knowledge and understanding of war by offering a programme of comprehensive, hands-on, even visceral events and tours. We want to transport participants to the very heart of strategy, tactics, and the combat experience.

Central to the ethos of Military History Live is the adversarial approach. Whether touring a military landscape, reconstructing a battle on the tabletop, or debating opposing strategy and tactics, we favour dual presentation and we encourage participants to 'take sides' in working out military problems.

Central to our practice is 'hands-on'. The military-history experiences we offer include archaeological excavation, battlefield reconnaissance, landscape exploration, table-top reconstruction, and participatory re-enactment.

Military History Live is a small company run by dedicated conflict archaeologists and military historians. Its mission is to bring military history to life. It can be found at www.militaryhistorylive.co.uk and contacted via info@militaryhistorylive.co.uk

Cost and Terms

The cost will depend on number of participants for the tour. The prices shown below are for 12 persons signing up for the tour (as per last year), and are correct at the time of writing.

The cost per person will be £3145, or, with single supplement, £3,688.

These figures represent a 10% reduction on our commercial tour rate of £3495, £4045 respectively, exclusively for TEL Society members.

Please note that these discounts will increase, and costs will reduce, as follows if we attract more participants:

With 16 participants the cost per person will be £2,995, or, with single supplement, £3,538.

With 20 participants the cost per person will be £2,795, or, with single supplement, £3,338.

Costs are inclusive with the following exceptions:

- Flights
- Departure tax
- Personal travel insurance
- Additional personal expenses (not water and meals: these are *included* in the price)

Military History Live will provide detailed advice on booking flights, but travellers will need to book and pay for their own tickets once they have received this.

Note that some changes in the published itinerary may be necessary due to circumstances that we cannot predict or control.

Booking

You can secure your place on the tour by placing a deposit of £300 with Military History Live Ltd. This will be non-refundable unless we are forced to cancel the tour. You should send this, with full contact details (name, postal address, email, and phone contact), to: T E Lawrence Society Tour, Military History Live, Skegby Manor, Skegby, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG23 6SA. You will soon after receive a request for more detailed information and preliminary practical information.

Closer to departure, all travellers will receive a full information pack, with detailed practical information, historical background notes, a set of maps, plans, pictures, and associated documents, and notes for further reading.

Booking Conditions

1. You secure your place on a tour by submitting your contact details (name, postal address, email, and phone number) with your deposit of £300 (payable to Military History Live Ltd) to Military History Live, Skegby Manor, Skegby, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG23 6SA.
2. Full payment is due two months before departure. You will receive a polite reminder about two weeks before this date if we have not yet received payment.
3. Deposits will be fully refunded if we are forced to cancel a tour. They are not refundable in the event that you are forced to cancel, since we must endeavour to cover our administrative costs.

4. We may be forced to cancel a tour for reasons beyond our control. In the event of this, we will make full repayment of all monies advanced.

5. If you are forced to cancel after making full payment, we will endeavour to make such reimbursement as we can, minus your £300 deposit to cover our administrative expenses. We cannot, however, offer any guarantees, since we will be committing to making forward payments and incurring additional costs well in advance of departure.

6. It will also be your responsibility to book your flight, though we will provide detailed advice to enable you to do this. This means, of course, that we cannot accept responsibility for any problems arising from this aspect of the tour.

7. It will be your responsibility to ensure that you have a valid passport and travel insurance to cover such things as cancelled/disrupted flights, medical treatment, repatriation, and loss of property. We will require personal insurance details in due course.

8. Very occasionally someone joins a tour and behaves in a way that disrupts the group and undermines the experience. In the interests of all, we reserve the right, in exceptional circumstances, to ask someone to leave the tour. No refund would then be due.

9. We are committed to making the best possible arrangements we can to achieve a high standard of comfort and convenience on our tours, and for delivering an enjoyable, exciting, informative military-history experience. We are here to facilitate, accommodate, and guide. Do not hesitate to contact us directly in relation to any uncertainties or problems, either by emailing info@militaryhistorylive.co.uk, or by phoning Cait on 07811 355702. If she does not know the answer, she will endeavour to find out or pass you on to Neil, Patrick, or Roger.