

T. E. Lawrence Society Symposium 2008

**St. John's College, Oxford
26-28 September 2008**

Programme

Friday 28 September

Mindful that many members live some way from Oxford, and many come to the symposium from overseas, we are organising a day out to Dorset to combine both a social event and the opportunity to visit some places of interest to members. The itinerary will be as follows:

Coach departure outside St John's College for Wareham in Dorset, where we will have the opportunity of visiting St. Martin's Church to see the Eric Kennington effigy of Lawrence; this will be followed by a buffet lunch.

Private viewing of Lawrence's home, Clouds Hill, led by the National Trust Curator, Peter Preen. There will also be the opportunity of a visit to the churchyard and grave at Moreton.

Visit to the Tank Museum, which is just around the corner from Clouds Hill in Bovington, where there will be an opportunity to view some Lawrence-related objects from the Siddons collection.

Return to St John's College, Oxford.

Saturday 27 September

Welcome from Symposium Chairman

Charlotte Shaw and Lawrence
Dr Rhoda Nathan

Charlotte's relationship with Lawrence predates that of her husband, George Bernard Shaw. In her paper, Rhoda Nathan will explore that friendship and look at its consequences.

Rhoda Nathan is the president of the Bernard Shaw Society and a Professor Emerita of English at Hofstra University. She was a Fullbright Fellow in New Zealand in 1990, has been a Lilly Fellow at Indiana University, a Ransom Fellow at the University of Texas and a National Endowment Fellow for the Humanities at Columbia University. Apart from the many books which she has authored and co-authored, she has written over 50 articles on GBS in professional journals. In 2003, she was the recipient of the Alumni Achievement Award of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

T. E. Lawrence and Brough Superior Motorcycles

Alan Payne

Alan Payne will put Lawrence's ownership of the various Brough motorcycles into the context of the times, explore how important these machines were in his life and how a private soldier/airman would have been regarded for owning an item considered beyond most people's dreams. His paper will also explore the practical difficulties of maintaining these machines and explain what they are like to ride.

Alan has owned six Brough Superior motorcycles since 1965 and is now collecting bits for his seventh. Alan lives on Dartmoor which gives him easy access to empty roads. He works part-time as a planning consultant and is also Chairman of a building preservation trust (The Poltimore House Trust). Apart from an interest in Broughs, he is a keen long distance cyclist and has trekked in the Nepal Himalayas. He can claim to be one of the few people to have ridden the last Lawrence Brough Superior – albeit, as he says, not very far.

Trains, Trenches and Tents: The Archaeology of Lawrence of Arabia's War

Dr Neil Faulkner

At the 2004 Symposium, Matthew Hughes argued that the Arab Revolt of 1916-1918 was militarily unimportant. This view is not supported by the evidence of the modern conflict archaeology in Southern Jordan. Two seasons of fieldwork have shown that the entire landscape was militarised, implying a huge investment of manpower and material by the Ottoman Empire to contain the Revolt. Neil Faulkner will argue that the effectiveness of guerrilla warfare cannot be measured using criteria applicable to conventional warfare in the way that Matthew Hughes tried to do. He will also demonstrate that the Arab Revolt had a profound strategic impact on the outcome of the campaign in Palestine and Syria during the First World War, and that it helped in the launch of Arab nationalism as a major force in modern global politics.

Neil Faulkner is co-director of the Great Arab Revolt Project at the University of Bristol.

The Building of the Edwards H. Metcalf T. E. Lawrence Collection

Dr Philip M. O'Brien

Edwards Metcalf formed one of the outstanding T. E. Lawrence collections over a period of some 40 years. Using Edwards' papers in the Huntingdon Library, a behind the scenes look at the development of this remarkable collection will be presented.

Emeritus Director of Libraries at Whittier College, California, Dr Philip M. O'Brien is author of *T. E. Lawrence, A Bibliography*. This award-winning work involved assembling a noted bibliographical collection. Phil was also a friend of one of the greatest of all T. E. Lawrence collectors, the late Edwards H. Metcalf. The Metcalf T. E. Lawrence collection, now in the Huntingdon Library, is currently being catalogued.

Symposium Dinner in St John's College dining hall

The Society is delighted to have Dr Rhoda Nathan as after-dinner speaker

Sunday 28 September

T. E. Lawrence and the French

James Barr

T. E. Lawrence's famous desire to 'biff the French out of all hopes of Syria', which he confided to D. G. Hogarth in 1915, was the driving force behind his determination to reach Damascus before the end of the Great War. James Barr's paper will investigate how and why Lawrence had reached that view, how widely it was shared among his colleagues in Egypt and what his impact was on the history of the Middle East. It will also review the contemporary French view of Lawrence.

James Barr read Modern History at Oxford University. Since then he has worked in politics, for the Daily Telegraph, and latterly in the City of London. His book, *Setting the Desert on Fire: T. E. Lawrence and Britain's Secret War in Arabia*, was published by Bloomsbury in 2006 and will be published by W. W. Norton in the United States in 2008.

T. E. Lawrence and the Garnetts – A Literary Friendship

Philip Neale

T. E. Lawrence began his relationship with the Garnett family following Edward Garnett's promotion of C. M. Doughty. Edward, a publisher's reader, became involved with *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and a literary friendship began which continued with his son David. Philip Neale will examine the lives of both Edward and David Garnett and look at the literary encouragement and discussion which developed with Lawrence, through their correspondence.

Philip Neale is a registered pharmacist by profession and since university has worked all his life in the pharmaceutical industry. Philip first became interested in Lawrence following the National Portrait Gallery exhibition in 1988, but also has a strong interest in the Bloomsbury Group and organises events for the Charleston House Trust, the house and arts centre based in Sussex. He is the author of a book published as part of the Bloomsbury Heritage series

T. E. Lawrence and the Imperial Camel Corps

Joe Berton

Joe will be using photographs, war diary excerpts and letters to show what life was like for a soldier in the Camel Corps, and explain how Lawrence used them in the attack on Mudawarra Station and the roles of Buxton, Winterton and Marshall. Part of the paper will also include information on ephemera such as Camel Corps badges, saddles, postcards, books etc for the collector.

Joe Berton has researched extensively in the Lowell Thomas archives at Marist College and in other major Lawrence collections in Britain and the US. He is currently working on a book of the Harry Chase photographs of Lawrence, Palestine and Arabia. He has lectured in the US on the Chase photographs, on the uniforms worn by the British troops in the Hejaz, and on Bedouin dress. He teaches art at Oak Park, Illinois, and is also a well-known sculptor of military miniatures. Examples of his work are in collections in Europe, the US and the Middle East. This is Joe's second visit as a speaker to the Society's Symposium.

An Eternal Triangle

Gordon Atkin

Victor Yeates, Henry Williamson and T. E. Lawrence will always be linked together as it was after replying to Williamson's suggestion of a meeting at which Yeates' unfinished novel *Family Life* was to be discussed that TEL had the fatal accident. Yeates' novel, *Winged Victory*, was published in 1934 shortly before his tragic death and T. E. Lawrence endorsed the book, describing it as 'admirable: admirable; admirable. One of the most distinguished histories of the war...masterly'. Gordon Atkin will give an insight into how *Winged Victory* came to be written, the encouragement Yeates received from Williamson and the help received from Lawrence following publication.

Gordon Atkin, a retired bank manager, was born in Kingston-upon-Hull but has lived in Lancashire for the past 40 years. He became interested in T. E. Lawrence following his National Service in the Middle East. He has been a member of the Society for many years: his biography of Yeates was published in 2004. He is also Treasurer of Cross & Cockade, the First World War Historical Society.

T. E. Lawrence Society Annual General Meeting