

# SYMEON

Issue Twelve



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Durham University.

2022



**Front cover:** This issue's bookshelf (and Theo!) belong to Dr Nadine Viermann, Assistant Professor of Late Antique and Early Byzantine History. Nadine's research focuses on political decision making and communication, especially in the East Roman monarchy of the sixth and seventh centuries. She is also interested in sacred space and religious connectivity in the Late Antique Mediterranean realm.

**This page:** Durham Cathedral. (Image courtesy of Durham University).

After another year in which the only thing that travelled widely was the virus, it was with excitement, and, admittedly, a little trepidation, that we welcomed the reopening of borders and resurgence of worldwide travel. As we look forward to the transmission of more positive outcomes between peoples and places, this year's issue of *Symeon* celebrates the movement of people, objects and ideas past and present.

Movement is pivotal to the past. The spread of people and objects produce the cultural variants or 'strains' that compel historians to specialise, whilst travel enables scholars to study history at its source. Alexander Hibberts reminds us, however, that such travel is becoming less frequent for historians as he ponders the pros and cons of the archival digitisation hastened—even if not initially precipitated—by the pandemic.

Alumna, Alice Keith, meanwhile, reflects on her own research journey from postgraduate to American Conservation Experience archaeology member and, by extension, from Durham to the diverse landscapes of Fort George Island in Florida, where she plays a pivotal role in revealing the stories of those forced from their homelands, including African slaves and French Huguenots whose dire fates all too well recall those of the civilians fleeing Ukraine at present.

Problematic claims over ownership of place and colonial activity not unlike that which shaped the history of Fort George Island also concern Christian Drury in his exploration of the often-overlooked role indigenous guides played in European exploration of the

Arctic. These themes run, too, through narratives of navigation on the opposite side of the globe in Rosie Leeming's discussion of the monsoon season and its implications for movement in and around the Indian Ocean. Specifically, she reveals that the preferential sailing routes and profitable hinterlands the winds provided appealed to imperial powers from the sixteenth century onwards.

Also concerned with navigation but closer to home, alumna, Linda Godden, reveals the role that roads played in facilitating the movement key to daily life in the Late Middle Ages in her research on the earliest extant map of Great Britain. Movement in medieval life also informs Florence Swan's fascinating exploration of culinary verbs from clerical texts to the *Canterbury Tales*. Laura Mireanu, meanwhile, relates the role of movement in shaping other senses of taste in her article on Americanization in Europe and the place of American products in this process of cultural change.

Kelly Clarke-Neish also explores the movement of objects, too, in her narrative on the now rightfully recovered Norfolk Hoard. Having made many journeys—from early medieval

France to early England as currency and, subsequently, as treasure sold to modern-day, black-market collectors—the gold coins that constitute the hoard promise to transform our understanding of trade in this pivotal period.

Movement, however, is not always by choice, as recent events in Ukraine demonstrate beyond doubt. Alex Brown, for instance, discusses the reality of late medieval and early modern stepchildren experiencing downward social mobility following the Black Death in a piece that feels especially poignant at a time when the cost of living is soaring, and many are struggling to cope. Tellingly, though, he also highlights glimpses of hope, where movement to new households provided support for children displaced by death. It is our hope that, in the same way, movement might also enable us to unite across divides today and offer the support and safe haven needed by our neighbours.



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## Department news



(Image courtesy of Durham University).



Professor Len Scales  
Head of the Department of History

**It has been a year like no other—a year of contrasts, at times, a year of high drama, and one that those of us who lived through it in the Department will never forget. But above all, perhaps, this year has been one in which, after the limbo and remote-working while the pandemic was at its height, the Department began to inch its way back to a tentative normality and slowly rediscover its old spirit and buzz.**

Teaching returned to North Bailey for the first time in a year and History lectures were once again delivered to live audiences in the lecture rooms of Elvet Riverside. There have been plenty of bumps along the way, with a brief move back to online lectures when the Omicron wave hit Durham in January and with temporary recourse to online teaching for individual modules when tutors tested positive for COVID-19. But, of course, we are old hands at that by now. Crucially, with the support of our terrific students, we have kept going, and we now dare to hope that the worst may be behind us.

It was also a year of arrivals and departures. Imogen Barton, our long-serving departmental manager, left Durham last spring and was succeeded by Audrey Allas. Audrey guided the Department brilliantly through a variety of storms and surprises at the start of the year, including our ongoing adaptations to coping with COVID-19, but then decided to pursue ambitions outside of the Higher Education sector. We said goodbye to Audrey, with our thanks and good wishes, in January. By the time this magazine goes to print, we expect to have a new departmental manager in post. Other members of the PS team also moved on to opportunities elsewhere in Durham, including our learning and teaching manager, Abby Shovlin, who is now departmental manager in Classics (congratulations Abby!) In November, Abby's role was taken up by Lucy Bush, who has brought to the department a wealth of experience from elsewhere in the university.

We were joined at the start of the new academic year by Rebecca Clifford, as Professor of European and Transnational History and by Amanda Herbert and Liam Liburd, as Assistant Professors of Early American and Black British History, respectively. We have said goodbye to Drs Mekhola Gomes and Theresa Jäckh, both of whom left Durham for posts elsewhere. The Department is currently in the process of appointing a historian of the medieval Islamicate to replace

Theresa and a South Asian historian to fill Mekhola's role. We are also recruiting a specialist in modern economic history. Our commitment to offering an increasingly diverse, global, interconnected and decolonised History programme therefore continues.

Last August saw a spectacular set of A-level results across the country, and with it our biggest-ever first-year intake—of 263 new undergraduates—to welcome to Durham. This brought its challenges, all the greater since this was by now the third year in which our undergraduate numbers had risen significantly. Above all, we urgently needed to recruit more teachers, and we are delighted to have been joined by seven new fixed-term colleagues: Drs Ana Dias (early medieval), Erika Graham-Goering and Rachel Harkes (late medieval), Marc Jaffré (early modern Europe), Bryan Kauma (modern Africa), Nick McGee (modern China), and Antonia Perna (modern Europe). We also needed to find somewhere to put everyone—a challenge not lessened by COVID-19 regulations limiting the maximum occupancy of our teaching rooms. It has felt at times as if the Department was bursting at the seams. Help is fortunately on hand for next year, when we will move into additional new departmental spaces at 58 Saddler Street, with staff offices and seminar rooms on two floors above the former La Tasca restaurant.

The easing of pandemic restrictions allows us all—academics, research postgraduates and undergraduate dissertationists—to once again start planning trips to archives and libraries, something that has been difficult or impossible for much of the past two years. Thankfully, the pandemic has not prevented members of the Department from continuing to publish major works of historical research. James Koranyi's book *Migrating Memories: Romanian Germans in Modern Europe* appeared recently with Cambridge University Press and Christina Riggs' study of Tutankhamun, *Treasured*, with Atlantic Books. At the time of writing, meanwhile, Alex Barber's *The Restraint of the Press in England, 1660-1715* was about to be published by Boydell. A particular stir was caused by the appearance of Helen Roche book on *The Third Reich's Elite Schools* (Oxford University Press) which, with its picture of links and exchanges between English public schools and elite Nazi educational institutions in the 1930s, attracted widespread press coverage.

The work of members of the Department continues to be recognised and rewarded. Tom Stammers won the Royal Historical Society's Gladstone Prize—awarded for the best first book in non-British history—for his *The Purchase of the Past: Collecting Culture in Post-Revolutionary France*. Rebecca Clifford's *Survivors: Children's Lives*

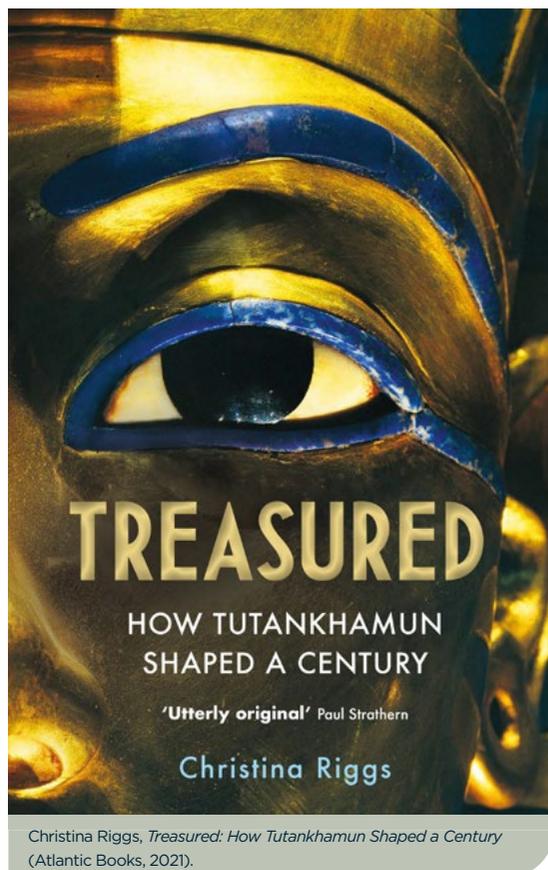
*after the Holocaust* was shortlisted for two of the most prestigious history book prizes: the Wolfson and the Cundill. Kevin Waite's *West of Slavery: The Southern Dream of Transcontinental Empire* reached the shortlist for the Gilder Lehman Lincoln Prize, for the best book on the American Civil War era. It has been a bumper year for promotions, too, with Adam Bronson, Chris Courtney, Tom Hamilton, James Koranyi, Joe Martin, Markian Prokopovych and Helen Roche all gaining Associate Professorships and with Cherry Leonardi being promoted to full Professor. We are delighted that the university continues to recognise the achievements of members of the Department in this way.

It has been especially exciting to see members of our academic staff winning major research awards. Coreen McGuire recently gained a Wellcome Trust University Award in Humanities and Social Sciences for her project, 'When Categories constrain Care: Investigating Social Categories in Health Norms through Disability History 1909-1958'. This brings Coreen five years of research funding followed by a permanent academic appointment. Helen Foxhall-Forbes, meanwhile, has been awarded an eye-watering two million Euros by the European Research Council as lead researcher on a project on 'Science, Society and Environmental Change', looking at long-term environmental and climatic change in

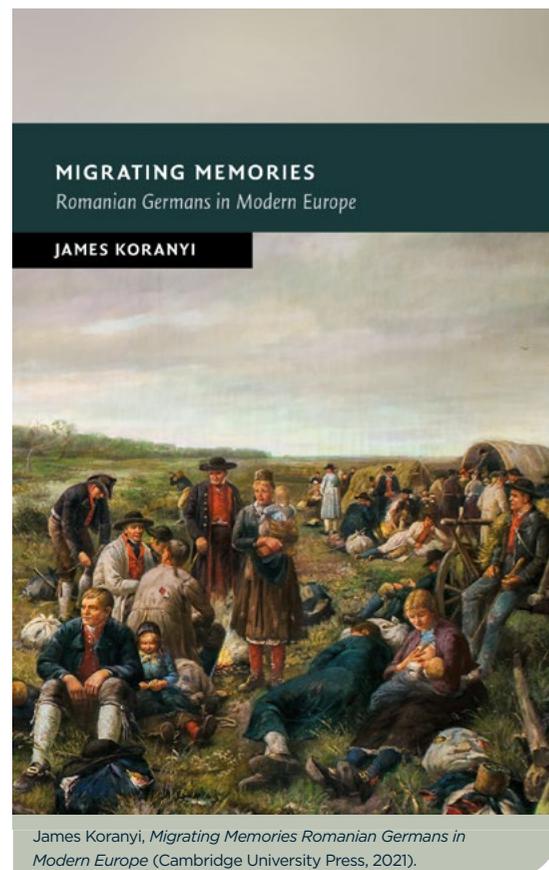
the Mediterranean world between 1 and 1000 CE. Both of these awards are hugely competitive, and Coreen and Helen deserve warm congratulations on their successes.

We remain committed to doing all that we can to make opportunities to study History at Durham available to the widest possible spectrum of students. We were therefore delighted to be able to offer this year for the first time the Thebes Scholarship to support a student from a low-income household to study in the Department. We are very grateful to Mr Angus McLaren, a Durham alumnus, whose generous gift enabled us to establish this scholarship, as well as, this year, to fund bursaries to support students already here. Members of the Department have also been active in initiatives to support widening participation. Alex Barber and Amanda Herbert have revived the First Generation student network—which had broken down while the pandemic was at its height—through a series of social and academic events in the Department. We are keen to build on these with further initiatives to support our First Generation scholars, broadly defined, to include all our students who wish to participate. We would love to hear from any of our alumni who would like to be involved in these activities.

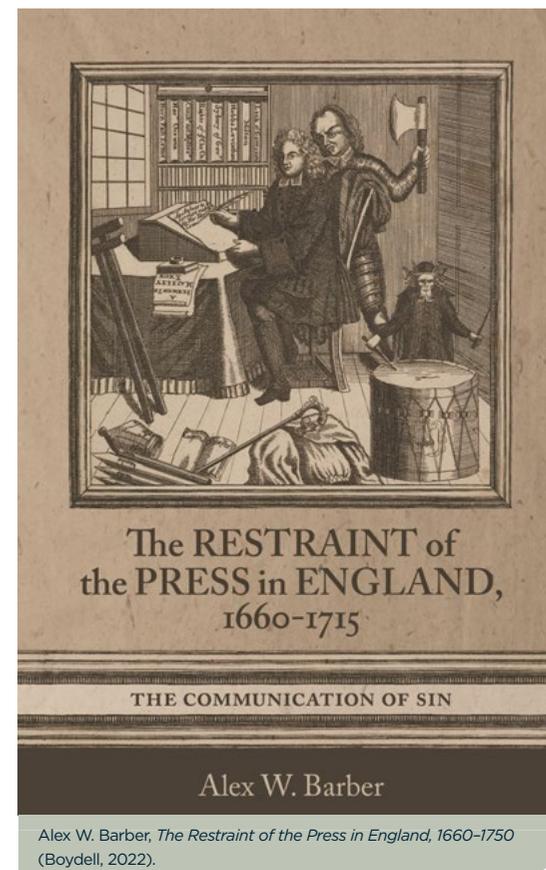
Whilst the times we are living through are interesting, they are troubling too, when, as historians, we look out on the wider world. Members of the Department recently took part in a student seminar at the Castle to discuss the history of Ukraine from the early Middle Ages to the present day, against the backdrop of the current war. In Durham, too, things are changing. We gained, in January, a new Vice Chancellor, Professor Karen O'Brien, and we look forward to learning more about Professor O'Brien's plans for the university and for the History Department. Student numbers in the Department are buoyant, but we cannot expect our current high recruitment to last indefinitely or undergraduate fees to support the Department to the extent that they have done in recent years. We will need to be ready to change and explore new opportunities. But we will remain the same History Department, committed as always to teaching and supporting each of our students as well as we can. And we want our alumni to feel part of our community. There will always be a welcome for you in the Department, so do stay in touch with us. Feel free to follow us on Twitter (@durham\_history) and join our alumni group on Facebook (Durham University History Alumni). Finally, if you are coming to Durham, do call in and say hello!



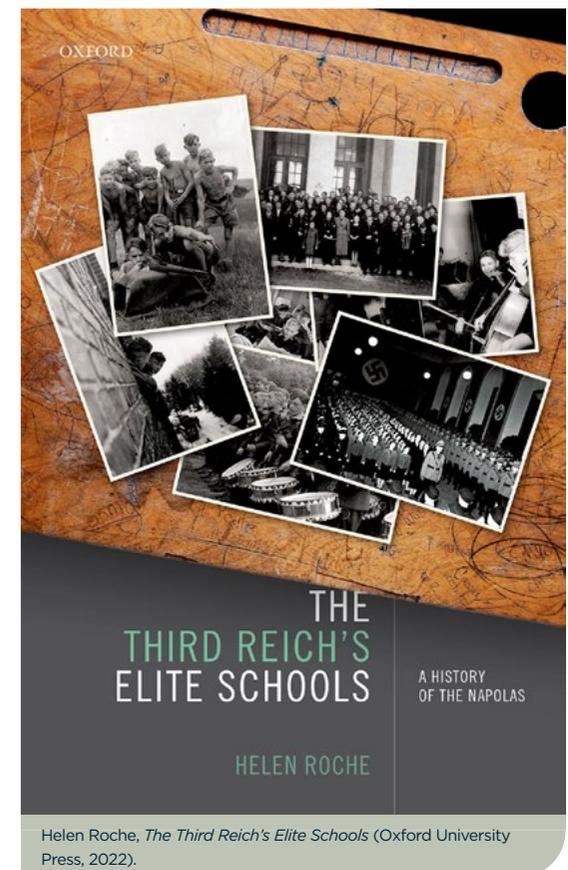
Christina Riggs, *Treasured: How Tutankhamun Shaped a Century* (Atlantic Books, 2021).



James Koranyi, *Migrating Memories Romanian Germans in Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).



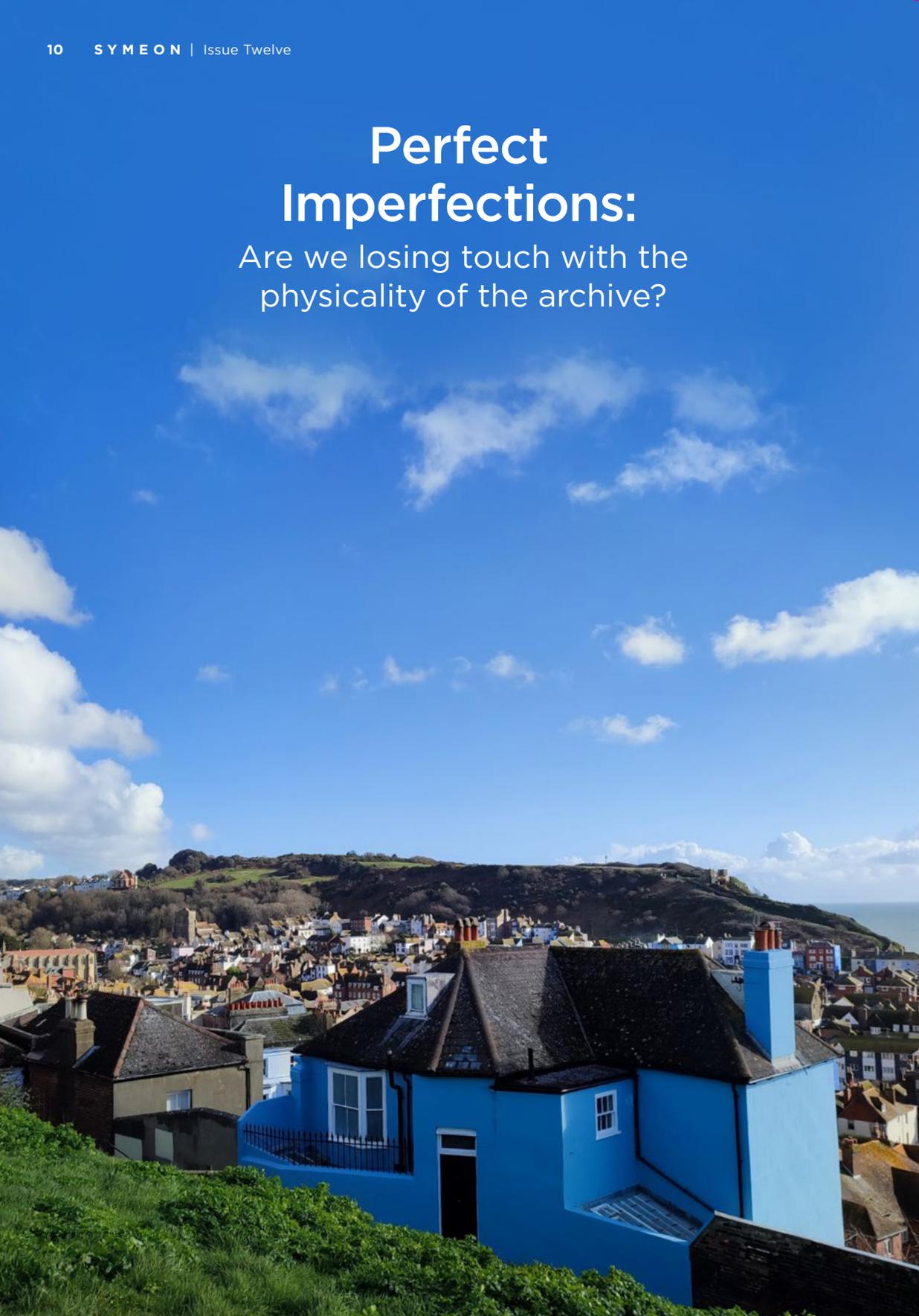
Alex W. Barber, *The Restraint of the Press in England, 1660-1750* (Boydell, 2022).



Helen Roche, *The Third Reich's Elite Schools* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

# Perfect Imperfections:

Are we losing touch with the physicality of the archive?



## Alex Hibberts

Alex Hibberts completed his BA in the History department and liked it so much that he stayed for his MA and is currently undertaking a PhD. His current research, funded jointly by the AHRC and ESRC, explores the vulnerability of low-lying coastal wetlands, such as marshes, to historic climate change between c.1350-1650. Focusing on four communities of Augustinian canons and their post-dissolution successors, he explores whether the late medieval to early modern socio-economic transition mirrored broader environmental changes.

Oscar Wilde once said, 'nothing that is worth knowing can be taught.'<sup>1</sup> He should have added, 'it must be experienced.' Whilst Wilde was referring to the wisdom acquired from life's lessons, his witticism can also be applied to historical research. Since my research explores buildings and landscapes, wherever possible, I visit and experience the places that I am writing about. Most recently, for example, I found myself scrambling up a steep hillside in Hastings (figure 1) to examine the significance of topography in shaping settlement patterns. Spending time outdoors fits perfectly with the environmental history ethos to which I subscribe. One of the earliest proponents of this approach, Donald Worster, maintained that historians must go beyond conventional sources, such as those found in the archive, and 'get out of doors altogether' to 'ramble' in the 'fields, woods, and the open air'.<sup>2</sup> His message seems to have been heard for there is a growing number of environmental historians and related courses at UK universities. But even amongst more traditional scholars of history, there is an increasing tendency to spend less and less time *in* the archive. This is the result not only of a desire to seek alternative sources but also a revolution in accessing archival material. Although accelerated over the past two years by the pandemic, this transformation has been underway since the late 1990s. Though welcomed by most, this shift in studying sources has concerned some.

In 2013, Tim Hitchcock published a provocative article in which he claimed there was a growing divide between the practice and apparatus of historical scholarship.<sup>3</sup> Historians, he argued, insist on referencing hard copies of books and articles in their footnotes though most journals are now accessed online, and many scholars increasingly use e-books.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, whilst I researched and wrote this article entirely on my computer, I referenced my sources as if I had sought them out in the library. Hitchcock goes on to describe hard copies found in libraries as 'empty skins sloughed off by a long-departed animal'.<sup>5</sup> According to him, these objects pay lip service to an academic tradition rooted in a world of hardback publishing that has since ceased to exist.<sup>6</sup> This new virtual world, however, in which historians research and publish, has been largely created not by historians and other academics and to ends other than historical scholarship.<sup>7</sup> The charge of digitisation has instead been led by publishers and multinational corporations: Google Books alone has digitised an estimated ten million works to date.<sup>8</sup> This process has had unforeseen consequences. Since certain items are easier to digitise—compare easily portable, printed eighteenth-century books with delicate and unwieldy medieval manuscripts—digitisation has largely benefitted historians of the early modern period through to the long nineteenth-century.<sup>9</sup> Those working on earlier historical periods do not always enjoy the same advantages when accessing their primary sources.

1. Josephine Guy (ed.), *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde: Volume 4: Historical Criticism, Intentions, The Soul of Man* (Oxford, 2007), p. 136.

2. Donald Worster, 'Appendix: Doing Environmental History', in *ibid* (ed.), *The Ends of the Earth* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 289.

3. Tim Hitchcock, 'Confronting the Digital, or how academic history writing lost the plot', *Cultural and Social History*, 10:1 (2013), 11–15.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–13.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10; Google Books, About Google Books: [https://books.google.com/googlebooks/about/free\\_books.html](https://books.google.com/googlebooks/about/free_books.html) (accessed: March 2022).

9. Hitchcock, 'Confronting the Digital', p. 9.

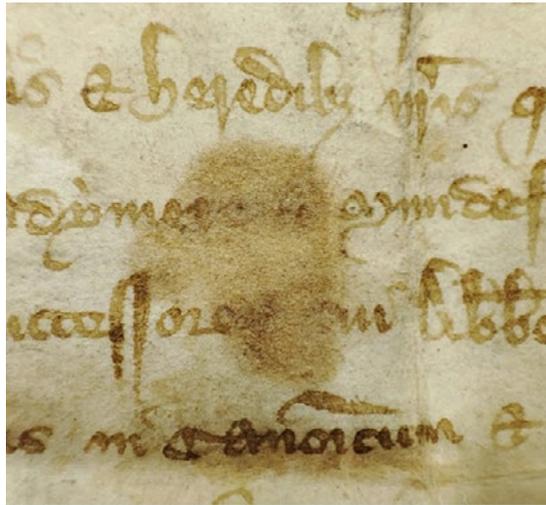


Figure 2: A blemish on the vellum surface of a Hastings charter (Hatton Wood M72/46/2 deeds 8). Image courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Keele University Library.

and printed sources ranging from the medieval records of the Tamworth Frankpledge, Portmanmootwhich and Piepowder courts to the Arnold Bennett Collection (1867-1931).<sup>10</sup> Like so many other public places, Keele's archives were affected by the restricted access that came with the first lockdown in March 2020. In attempt to mitigate the impact of restrictions on researchers, Keele waived charges for documents already available online as well as for copying archive materials for researchers and supplying low-resolution, preliminary inspection-quality scanning and photography once staff were allowed limited access to collections onsite. However, according to Burton, 'just a fraction of the material held in [Keele's] archives is online', and there is much work to do to make more 'digital images and quality descriptive metadata' available. Moreover, at Keele, digitised material has been collated ad-hoc from individual requests by researchers unable to visit in-person, and, crucially, their Special Collections do not have sufficient resources to undertake more comprehensive digitisation projects at present.<sup>11</sup>

Burton is adamant that there is 'still a future for physical archives and there is still going to be a need to examine the physical item.' As the blot on the Hastings Charter (figure 2) demonstrates, digital copies of historical documents are no substitute for in-person inspection of their physical counterparts. Archives and Library Manager at Canterbury Cathedral, Cressida Williams, agrees. She advocates handling the 'physical item' since this, she argues, is 'still [...] the key primary object' and access is needed to understand 'physicality' and 'methods of production.' Certainly, the several charters connected to my research at Hastings, which have made their way into Keele Special Collections courtesy of nineteenth-century antiquarians, bear out this belief. Although I have done my best to photograph them, (carefully!) handling these land grants—adorned with the great wax seals of East Sussex nobility and the occasional English monarch—allows closer analysis of their relative size, fragile condition and weight as well as revealing how they are attached to their respective documents (figure 3).

It was not until February 2022 that visitor numbers to Keele's Special Collections returned to their pre-lockdown levels. At Canterbury, Williams concedes that their current



Figure 3: Seal attached to letter sent to St Mary-ad-castrum, Hastings dated 6 November 1333 (72/46/8 (2)). A knight on horseback can be seen in the centre. Handling this seal allows us to examine how the wax has been attached to the vellum and study the damage to the rim (Image courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Keele University Library).

opening hours are still less than before 2020, with demand having reduced since the pandemic. Burton, however, thinks digital technology will continue to be useful for archives, stating 'I expect to see increased use of Virtual Reading Rooms (VRR).' Virtual reading rooms, in which archival contents are live-streamed by archivists to researchers, are especially beneficial for collections like those at Keele that are not yet—and may never be—fully digitised. Crucially, though, VRR still relies on the physical archive: the archivist handles the physical item on behalf of the researcher, unable to inspect it themselves in-person.

The universities of Leeds and Manchester have made extensive use of VRR, and archivists at both universities were asked by Research Libraries UK to provide feedback on the technology. Tim Proctor, Collections and Engagement Manager (Archives and Manuscripts) at Leeds University Library, lauds the positives of VRR, citing increasing participation of academics previously unable to access the physical archive and its potential to enable

students to overcome 'threshold fear' as key benefits.<sup>12</sup> Archivists at Manchester University Library, Kate Miller and Susana Sanchez-Gonzalez, meanwhile, acknowledged some of the challenges associated with the technology.<sup>13</sup> Some researchers, they suggest, have found it difficult, for example, to examine items of great size or inspect large quantities of documents via a livestream.<sup>14</sup> In these cases, if used, VRR enables a preliminary inspection prior to an in-person visit.<sup>15</sup>

As historians, we must admit that without digitisation and its associated technology, much historical scholarship produced over the last two years would not have been possible. Though some commentators conflate the incoming tide of online archives with the increasing obsolescence of their physical forebears, it is clear that both mediums serve different purposes and can—and indeed should—be used together. In fact, combining both enhances the research we undertake. As Williams notes, digitisation is invaluable since it can in fact reveal key details not previously visible to the naked eye. On the other hand, certain aspects of archival sources, from seals to scribes, can only be understood through physical contact. One thing is for certain, though: in the coming decades, future scholars of the late-twentieth and early twenty-first century will face fresh problems analysing written sources—from websites to social media—produced entirely online. This new world of digital history will raise exciting questions about source type, validity and, indeed, what constitutes the archive itself.

Thank you to Cressida Williams, Archives and Library Manager at Canterbury Cathedral, and Helen Burton, Special Collections and Archives Administrator at Keele University, for answering questions about their archives.

10. Keele University, Special Collections and Archives: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/library/specialcollections> (accessed: March 2022).

11. Most of Keele's digitised archive material is securely stored and made available to individual researchers upon application rather than being freely available online. This is due to both copyright and data protection considerations as well as Keele's limited resources and funds.

12. Tim Proctor, 'The Virtual Reading Room (VRR) & Virtual Teaching Space (VTS) at Leeds University Library', *Research Libraries UK* (2021): <https://www.rluk.ac.uk/the-virtual-reading-room-vrr-virtual-teaching-space-vts-at-leeds-university-library/> (accessed: March 2021).

13. Kate Miller and Susana Sanchez-Gonzalez, 'The Virtual Reading Room (VRR) at the University of Manchester Library', *Research Libraries UK* (2021): <https://www.rluk.ac.uk/the-virtual-reading-room-vrr-at-the-university-of-manchester-library/> (accessed: March 2021).

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

# Of Salt Marshes and Woodlands:

## A stroll through History at Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve



### Alice Keith

Alice Keith attended Durham from 2019–2020, earning an MA with distinction in History. Her dissertation examined how Henry VIII used the *1533 Act for Printers and Binders of Books* to shape England's printing industry. Her research interests include sixteenth-century book history, colonial North America and humans in coastal environments. She has worked in living history, libraries, historic house museums and archaeology. Alice is currently an ACE AmeriCorps archaeology member at Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve in Jacksonville, Florida. She is also a palaeography volunteer with Durham University Archives.

*'People have to work in the cities, they can't live in the woods anymore. But they ought to have a place in the woods they can go to.'*

Willie Browne, 1889–1970<sup>1</sup>

Willie Browne spent his days on six-hundred acres of wilderness along the St Johns River in Jacksonville, Florida. He preferred nature to society and at the end of his life, Browne donated the land he had called home to be conserved for future generations. He understood the importance of place, of the earthy roots that connect us—human and nature, past and present. Named the Teddy Roosevelt Area after Browne's personal hero, today the land is part of the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, where I find myself today.<sup>2</sup>

In June 2021, I began my one-year term as an American Conservation Experience (ACE) AmeriCorps archaeology member with the US National Park Service (NPS) at Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve in Jacksonville, Florida. ACE is one of many volunteer conservation corps in the United States. Specifically, I am part of ACE's Emerging Professionals in Conservation programme, which provides recent graduates with individual placements in conservation and preservation-focused agencies. These placements partner with AmeriCorps, a federal volunteer programme often described as the domestic Peace Corps.<sup>3</sup> For my project, I am cataloguing archaeological materials recovered from field school excavations that took place at Kingsley Plantation between 2012 and 2013.

Encompassing over forty-six thousand acres of coastal habitat, the Preserve's lands and waters tell the stories of six-thousand years of human life. The salt marshes are full of oysters, hidden at high tide but rising in jagged beds from the mud when the waters ebb.<sup>4</sup> Giant mounds of discarded oyster shells—sometimes tens of feet high—called middens dot the landscape along wooded coasts. It is not uncommon to see tall trees rooted in middens, and, in some instances, a small island might consist entirely of oyster shell. The middens stand testament to millennia of oyster consumption by the Timucua: the Native American peoples who spoke the

Timucuan language and lived throughout northern Florida and southeast Georgia.

The Preserve is largely inaccessible to the public. This is both a practical matter, due to the treacherous nature of salt marshes, and by design, to protect fragile ecosystems from human impact. There are, however, four main areas open to the public and administered by the NPS: Fort Caroline National Memorial, Teddy Roosevelt Area, Kingsley Plantation and Cedar Point.<sup>5</sup> Other areas within the Preserve are managed by Florida State Parks and the City of Jacksonville.

Kingsley Plantation sits at the north end of Fort George Island.<sup>6</sup> Around 1587, Spanish Franciscans established a mission on the island near a Timucua village.<sup>7</sup> The British subsequently destroyed it in the early eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Florida changed hands several times from 1763–1821: from Spain to Britain and back to Spain again before being finally ceded back to the Americans and becoming part of the Confederacy during the US Civil War.<sup>9</sup> The British had introduced plantation agriculture to Fort George Island and agriculture remained the island's primary use until the Great Freeze of 1894–1895 ended northern Florida's citrus industry.<sup>10</sup> In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, military officers and wealthy northerners built vacation homes and established hotels and exclusive clubs on the island.<sup>11</sup> Kingsley Plantation was home to one such club.<sup>12</sup> The Great Depression of the thirties, though, marked the Club Era's decline, and in the 1950s Florida State Parks acquired the island.<sup>13</sup> In 1991, Kingsley Plantation came under NPS management.<sup>14</sup>

Today, it is hard to imagine the island cleared for cultivation. A narrow road loops the island, passing under beautifully gnarled and arched live oaks fuzzy with ferns and dripping with Spanish moss. The pothole-ridden dirt road has a tendency to flood during very high tides or storms. The island is dotted with overgrown ruins, Native American middens

1. NPS, 'Outdoor Activities', *National Park Service* (2018): <https://www.nps.gov/timu/planyourvisit/outdooractivities.htm> (accessed February 2022).

2. To learn more about the Preserve visit <https://www.nps.gov/timu>. For an excellent dive into the Preserve's history, see Daniel W. Stowell, *Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve: Historic Resource Study* (Atlanta, 1996). This is also accessible freely online: <http://npshistory.com/publications/timu/index.htm>. (accessed: February 2022).

3. For more on these programs, see <https://www.usaconservation.org> (ACE) and <https://americorps.gov> (AmeriCorps) (both accessed: February 2022).

4. The tides are semidiurnal, or two high and two low tides per day, with an average tidal range of six feet.

5. The NPS also owns a strip of land outside the main Preserve boundaries called American Beach. Abraham Lincoln Lewis, Florida's first African American millionaire, established American Beach in 1935 so that the African American community could have a beach resort town of its own during segregation.

6. The island's name comes from Fort St. George, erected by the British General Oglethorpe in the 1730s. Stowell, *Timucuan*, p. 128.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 19–21.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 27, p. 63.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 88–107.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 60–63, p. 67.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

14. *Ibid.*

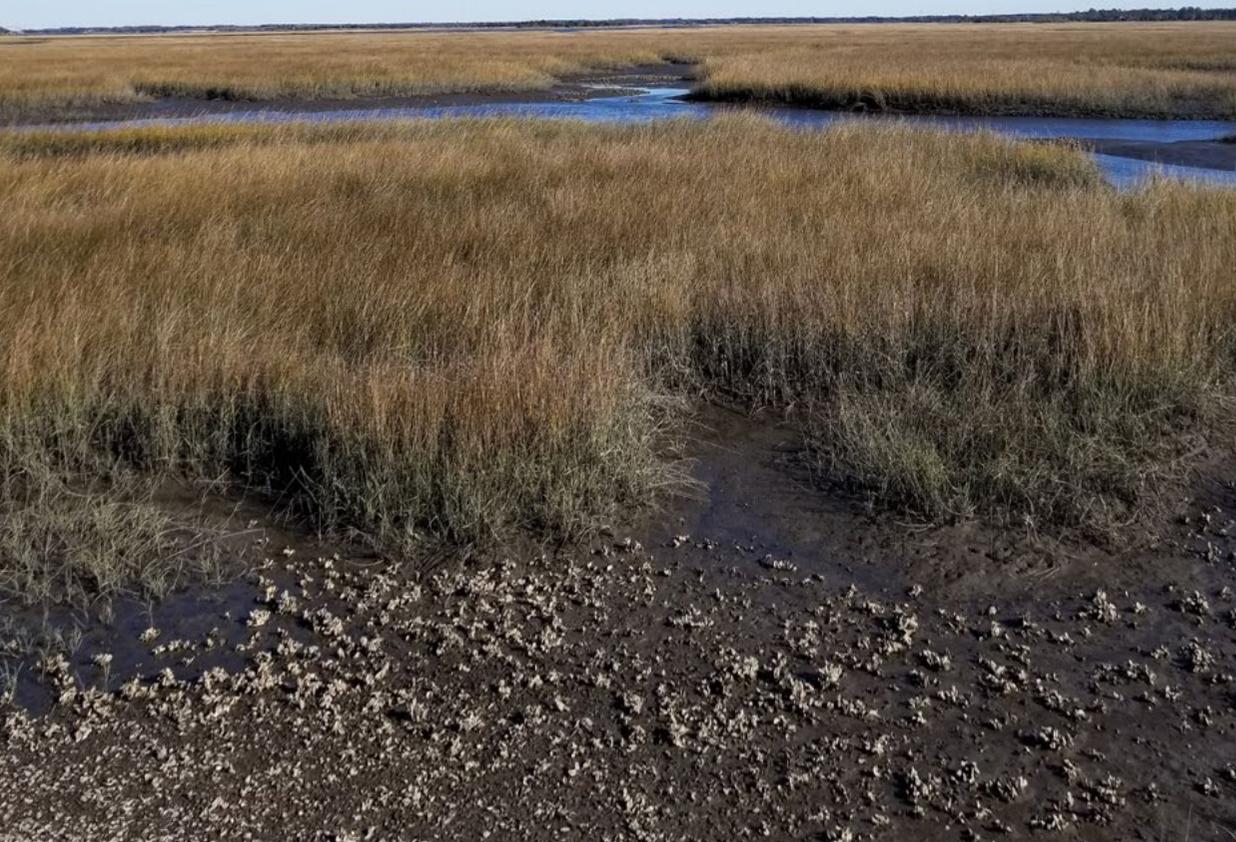


Figure 1: Round Marsh at low tide in winter, with oysters (Image: Author's own).



Figure 2: Tabby slave cabin ruins at Kingsley Plantation on Fort George Island (Image: Author's own).

and burial grounds, and it is through archaeological research that we may better understand these different and diverse cultural periods on Fort George Island.

Kingsley Plantation is named after Zephaniah Kingsley, the plantation's second owner from 1817–1839.<sup>15</sup> Kingsley made his fortune in the slave trade and owned several plantations in northeast Florida on which sea island cotton, rice, citrus and timber were grown.<sup>16</sup> Today the main house, kitchen house, tabby barn and twenty-five of the original thirty-six tabby slave cabins survive. Tabby was a popular construction material—similar to concrete—made from oyster shell mined from the prehistoric shell middens abundant on the island (figure 2). The cabin ruins' survival and arrangement in an arc facing the main house have been of great interest to researchers. Across the marshes lies Cedar Point, with its wooded hiking trails and tabby ruins of a plantation contemporary with that of Kingsley, and the archaeological remains of Sarabay, a large Timucuan village.<sup>17</sup> Archaeology

at Kingsley Plantation has been especially important for revealing the lived experiences of the enslaved Africans: in particular, how they maintained cultural identities and supplemented their diet with hunting and fishing. I have also catalogued ceramics dating back to 3,000 BC; a sixteenth-century Spanish military button; nails and ceramics from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as an automotive valve stem from the Club Era.

Cataloguing is not my only task, however. My supervisor is the museum curator for our collections and those of the Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Matanzas National Monuments in St Augustine. In July 2021, we supervised the return of twenty-five iron cannons that had received conservation treatment. I have also taken training courses on integrated pest management and federal cultural resource management laws. I answer research requests and assist in-person researchers using our archives. Occasionally, I even get muddy, helping our wetland ecologist with mangrove research

15. *ibid.*, p. 40, p 46.

16. Kingsley and his wife Anna Madgigine Jai are fascinating individuals worth reading about. Others have written their stories better than I can do them justice here.

17. Not long after I moved to Florida, Dr Keith Ashley and students from the University of North Florida announced the discovery of Sarabay: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/researchers-may-have-rediscovered-long-lost-indigenous-settlement-florida-1-180977973>. (accessed: February 2022).



Figure 3: Sunset over Fort Caroline National Memorial (Image: Author's own).



Figure 4: Round Marsh at high tide with a container ship in the distance (Image: Author's own).

or our biology technician collect dragon fly larvae or water samples for pollution monitoring. Above all, I learn daily from my co-workers how we can better protect our natural and cultural resources and tell their stories.

So how did I get here? After graduating with a BA in History and French from Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia, I attended archaeology field school and then worked as a field technician at George Washington's Mount Vernon University, also in Virginia. I appreciated how archaeology and history could work together to give us the fullest possible picture of the past. As much as I enjoyed this work, I wanted to build upon undergraduate research I undertook on early Lyonnais book printing. I came to Durham to study for an MA in History. My research centred on the English printing industry during the religious and political turmoil of Henry VIII's reign. My time at Durham gave me confidence in my newly expanded research skills and analytical capabilities. I loved the close scrutiny of primary source analysis—an endeavour well-suited to explaining the significance specific artefacts hold for our understanding of daily lived experiences. Likewise, my palaeography course with Professor Richard Gameson and palaeography volunteer work with the Durham University Archives and Special Collections have given me an invaluable skillset as I move forward in a research-focused career.

Perhaps above all, my time at Durham taught me how to immerse myself in my surroundings. The COVID-19 pandemic hit just as I began my dissertation research in earnest. I found solace while watching the seasons change from my window in St John's College and by soaking up the river trails a hundred times over. Now, I live in park housing at Fort Caroline, a site which commemorates the French Huguenots who, in the 1560s, established a brief settlement in the area before the Spanish massacred them.<sup>18</sup> Outside my door, I have instant access to the Teddy Roosevelt Area trails, which wind through the hundreds of acres of salt marsh, maritime hammock, pine and live oak forests and scrub. In the evenings, I walk down to the river to watch the sunset and any passing dolphins or cargo ships. On warm sunny days my screened-in porch is alive with anole lizards, and the gopher tortoises leave their burrows. The daily afternoon thunderstorms of summer, meanwhile, awaken all the rich forest smells. At night, the barred owls call to each other. It is a grounding and humbling place, detached from the encircling suburbs, where nature knows and answers only to itself, and we are merely fortunate passers-through.

18. Stowell, *Timucuan*, p. 5.

# Guides and Guiding in Late Nineteenth-Century Arctic Travel



**Christian Drury**

Christian Drury is a PhD student in the History department and a member of the Durham ARCTIC Doctoral Training Centre. His research looks at British exploration, travel and tourism in the Arctic in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly representations of modernity and landscape. Before joining Durham, Christian studied for a BA in History at the University of York followed by an MA in History at University College London (SSEES). His previous research also looked at histories of travel and exploration, particularly mountaineering.

Claiming to know a place can be contentious. Positioning oneself as an authority, or announcing a discovery, requires bold statements of certainty and knowledge. When the person making these claims has no obvious connection to the place in question, this is even bolder since such claims often undermine or ignore the existing knowledge and opinions of others.

Such rhetorical sweeps and pronouncements of certainty from the outside were a frequent feature of travel in the nineteenth century, especially when European explorers reached places previously unknown to them. They undertook journeys entangled with colonial projects of discovery, mapping and collection. Historians today, however, are increasingly seeking to explore and understand how European travellers were influenced, aided and challenged by the people who already inhabited the places that they visited.

The use of guides, in particular, demonstrates how colonial imaginaries and territories were formed and resisted. The study of European exploration in the arctic and the role of guides therein has prompted historians to ask important questions around race, gender and class. The experiences of these guides have highlighted issues concerning who received credit and who was deemed credible when it came to successes and failures of exploration. A central problem faced by those claiming to discover unknown places was the presence of existing knowledge about these places as well as the people who were already there. Maps that existed had to be discarded, and the knowledge that produced them rendered untrustworthy.<sup>1</sup> Explorers had to erase the presence of local people, as well as their reliance on local knowledge and labour.

Receiving support posed an issue for explorers and their reputations—how much could they be seen to rely on others? Tensions arose between their claim to be authoritative observers and their human frailties, as well as concerns over how much support from others, often

Indigenous peoples who were regarded as racially inferior in colonial discourse, could be considered legitimate. For the (mostly) male explorers, there also existed the issue of maintaining appearances. The need to affirm one's masculinity and status through exploration clashed with the acceptance of assistance, which could be perceived as a sign of physical and intellectual frailty. Sometimes the labour of guides was hidden; at other times, it became an extension of the explorer, especially if mountaineering.<sup>2</sup>

One place where these tensions around knowledge and place were particularly evident was the Arctic. The region was a popular destination for European and American explorers throughout the nineteenth century, with depictions and accounts of journeys widely disseminated in popular culture. The purpose of these expeditions varied, but they usually involved mapping, the collection of scientific data and geographical achievement, such as attempts to reach the North Pole. Success in the eyes of the public, though, was not always guaranteed. The narratives produced and published concerning the expeditions were therefore crucial.

These narratives, however, could be slippery. The information contained within did not always tell the whole story, especially when it concerned the support given by Arctic Indigenous peoples. Moreover, representing the Arctic as a hostile 'blank space' was crucial for explorers seeking to present themselves as heroic. That which did not fit tended to be excluded—especially people who did not behave or appear in the ways expected. Given these oversights, it can be useful to turn to the accounts produced by guides themselves. One notable figure was an Inuk named Suersaq, who published an account of his travels with British and American explorers from the 1850s to 1870s. Its translation from Greenlandic into English by Hinrich Rink, a prominent Danish colonial administrator, adds a layer of cultural mediation that must be considered carefully, but the text offers many insights into European exploration from the perspective of an Indigenous guide and crewmate.

1. Dane Kennedy, *The Last Blank Spaces: Exploring Africa and Australia* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 12.

2. Michael S. Reidy, 'Mountaineering, Masculinity, and the Male Body in Mid-Victorian Britain', *Osiris*, 30:1 (2015), p. 173.



Figure 1: Spiterstulen, a cabin built in Jotunheimen in the 1870s to support mountaineering in the region (Image: Axel Lindahl, Norsk Folkemuseum, NFWL01384).

Suersaq, or Hans Hendrik as he was known to the British and Americans, provided an interesting account of the British Arctic Expedition of 1875–1876, commanded by Captain George Strong Nares.<sup>3</sup> The Expedition was regarded as a disappointment on its return; the crew suffered from scurvy and failed to travel as far north as hoped, despite reaching a new record northernmost point.<sup>4</sup> Suersaq's help was valuable—his skill in hunting meant that the men suffering from scurvy could be fed fresh meat, a crucial source of vitamin C. However, Suersaq was treated poorly by the crew, despite his skills and knowledge, being employed merely as a 'hunter, sledge-driver and dog feeder'.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the failures of British expeditions to at times adequately feed or clothe themselves, the text Suersaq published was largely disregarded as an authoritative source on the Arctic. As the historian Nanna Kaalund has shown, Suersaq's text was a 'highly political piece', challenging the authority of Europeans to write about and know the Arctic.<sup>6</sup> Suersaq is mentioned sporadically in Captain Nares' official account of the Expedition, but his value was clearly greater than he was given credit for. The failure of modern British technologies, seen most famously in the disappearance of the Franklin Expedition in the late 1840s, demonstrates the reluctance of explorers to engage with local ways of understanding and living in the Arctic. Whilst it is always important to remember the scale of the Arctic—Suersaq was hardly a local on the expeditions he joined—we can link these issues around how Indigenous knowledge was overlooked to current issues in the Arctic and the persistence of colonial framings of the region.

Elsewhere in the Arctic, guides played different roles. One particularly popular nineteenth-century destination was Norway, which offered British travellers a taste of Arctic landscapes, weather and experiences on a smaller scale and in a more accessible location. Norway was popular with mountaineers in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, and British climbers like William Cecil Slingsby made a number of first ascents, often working alongside Norwegians. Slingsby, a lover of all things Norwegian, relied on local people who, in his words, 'took to glaciers as a duck takes to water'.<sup>7</sup> He provided skill whilst guides like Knut Lykken provided strength and knowledge of the area. Another mountaineer who visited Norway, however, took a quite different approach. Elizabeth Le Blond was a pioneering female climber but, when in Norway, chose to bring her experienced Swiss guide, Joseph Imboden, with her. For Le Blond, this was a question of risk. She wrote that 'any fool may have local knowledge coupled with

sound muscles, but it takes skilled labour to lead a party unharmed'.<sup>8</sup> For her, mountain skill was transferrable and preferable to local knowledge.

The professionalism of Alpine guides may have been appreciated, but it was not always respected. Slingsby wrote about 'a pernicious system of trades-unionism' in the Alps, and issues of pay were a problem for other travellers.<sup>9</sup> The writer and novelist Cutcliffe Hyne attempted to travel across the bogs of Sápmi in 1896 but struggled with the insects and bogs of an Arctic summer. He took his frustrations out on his local guides, arguing over the pay he had promised them. In Hyne's account of the journey, *Through Arctic Lapland*, he proudly proclaims his ignorance of the region before setting off, and, despite requiring the help of local Sámi to make his journey, he is dismissive of their skill and society. Instead, Hyne imagines displaying his guide, Johann, as a 'curiosity' for London society.<sup>10</sup>

For travellers to Norway with less intrepid expeditions in mind, the place of the guide was disappearing. Improved travel infrastructure, especially faster and more regular coastal steamships, made travel to an increasingly accessible Arctic much easier in the form of a Norwegian coastal cruise. These travellers stopped at certain landmarks but were also led in their travels by guidebooks. Whilst travellers were also often informed by the travelogues of previous visitors, they also used the guidebooks published by Thomas Cook, John Murray, Baedeker and, for Norway specifically, Thomas Bennett.<sup>11</sup> New types of travel, such as the tourist cruise or the railway excursion, tended to rely on the timetable and guidebook over local guides.

Despite the increased ease in accessing information about the Arctic, the problems of knowledge remained. Guidebooks could direct, but the information in them was often challenged by local people. Places themselves also changed, refusing to be pinned down and classified by guidebooks. Whilst a cruise along the Norwegian fjords and manhauling a sledge across pack ice near the Pole are very different types of Arctic travel, they both rely on certain kinds of knowledge being imparted before the journey is made, as well as presenting the traveller as independent and intrepid. The ability to travel, however, was often dependent on the skills, services and knowledge of local people who flicker in and out of the narratives detailing these trips. Sometimes they remain hidden and suppressed, their labour and guidance elided, but often they write back or appear between the lines, offering alternative narratives of travel and exploration.

3. George Stephens (ed.) and Henry [sic] Rink (trans.), *Memoirs of Hans Hendrik, the Arctic Traveller, Serving under Kane, Hayes, Hall and Nares, 1853-1876: Translated from the Eskimo Language* (London, 1878; reprinted Cambridge, 2014).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 89.

6. Nanna Katrine Lüders Kaalund, *Explorations in the Icy North: How Travel Narratives Shaped Arctic*

*Science in the Nineteenth Century* (Pittsburgh, 2021), p. 144.

7. William Cecil Slingsby, *Norway, The Northern Playground. Sketches of Climbing and Mountain Exploration in Norway between 1872 and 1903* (Edinburgh, 1904), p. 149.

8. Elizabeth Le Blond, *Mountaineering in the Land of the Midnight Sun* (London, 1908), pp. 19–20.

9. Slingsby, *Norway*, p. 420.

10. Cutcliffe Hyne, *Through Arctic Lapland* (London, 1898), p. 203.

11. Kathryn Walchester, *Gamle Norge and Nineteenth-Century British Women Travellers in Norway* (London, 2014), p. 108.



Figure 2: An ascent of Glittertinden in Jotunheimen in 1910 (Image: Anders Beer Wilse, Norsk Folkemuseum, NFW12125\*A).

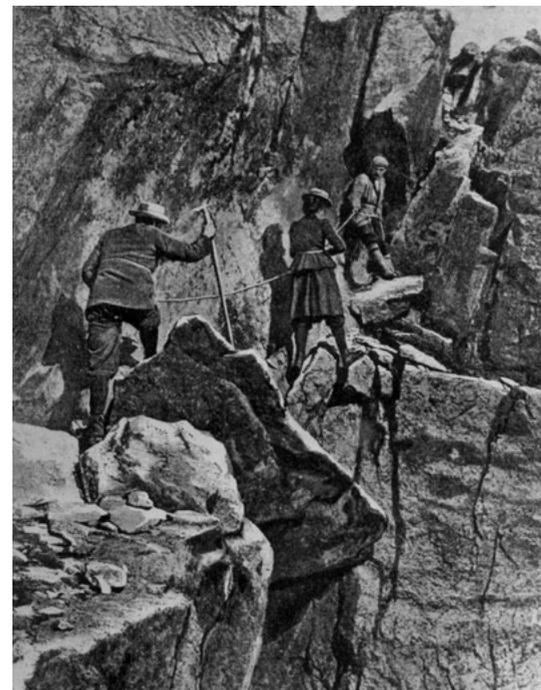


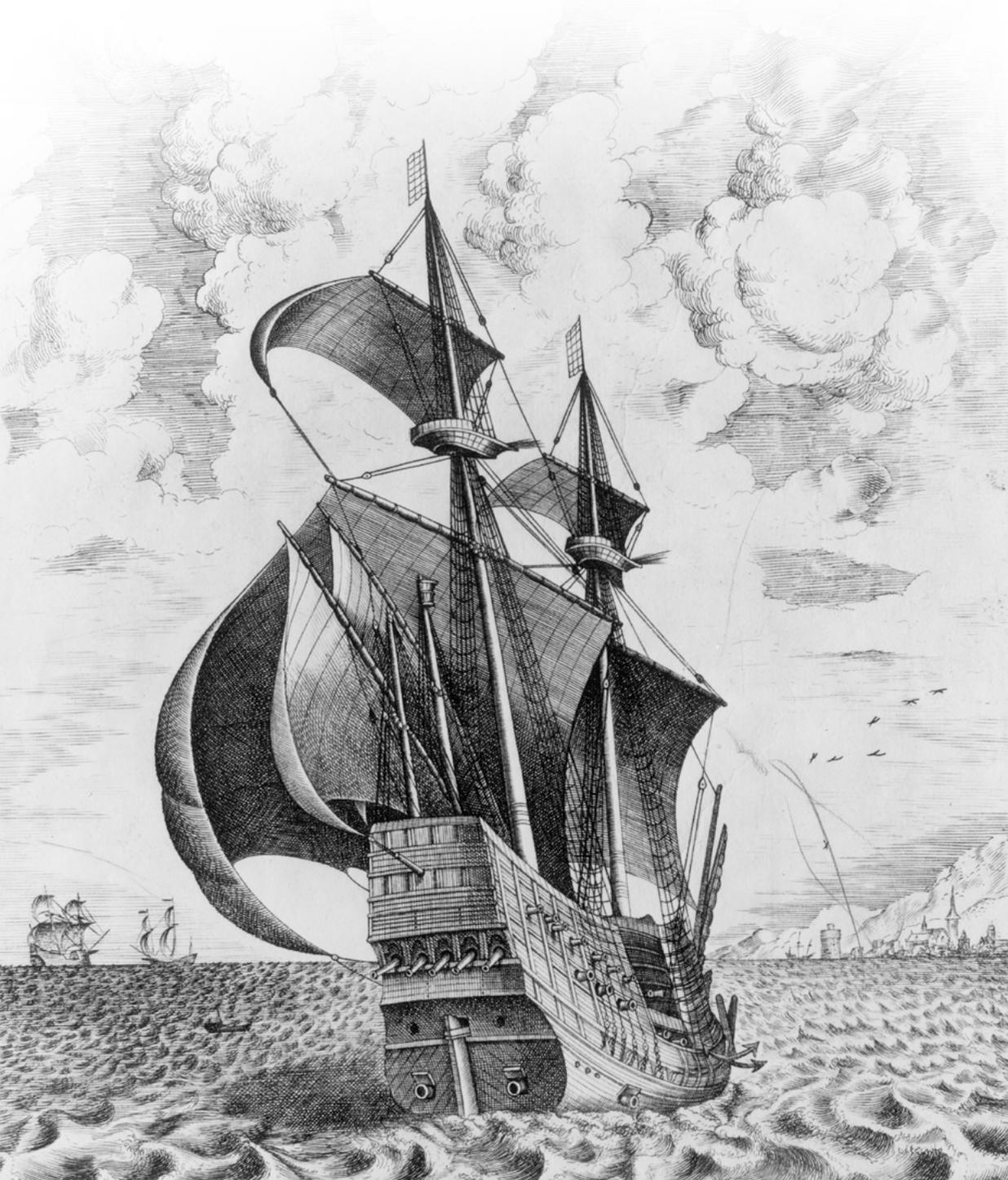
Figure 3: William Cecil Slingsby climbing in 1900 with the pioneering Norwegian female mountaineer Therese Bertheau and their guide Ole Berge (Image: Norsk Folkemuseum, NF.05898-011).



Figure 4: Portrait of Suersaq in 1883 by Ida Falander (Reprinted from Wikimedia Commons, 2022).

# The Indian Ocean:

## Tides and transit



### Rosie Leeming

Rosie Leeming is a final-year undergraduate student in the History department. During her time at Durham, Rosie has enjoyed studying a wide range of historical periods, themes and places and considering connections between them. She is excited to continue exploring these ideas and issues as part of her forthcoming MA in Modern European History at Cambridge University.

No other ocean is as potentially conducive to mobility as the Indian Ocean. Its reliable monsoon facilitates seasonal transit. And in the months when these winds and rains make transit precarious, this *edavapathi* re-stocks the hinterland with agricultural goods that make transit profitable for the next season. Predictable plain-sailing in and around this vast body of water, though, evolved through centuries of seafaring trial-and-error. Mobility, in relation to oceans, is a real-life relationship between humanity and thalassic space. The history of mobility is the history of the Indian Ocean.

In the following exploration of human movement and the Indian Ocean's role in relation to this, I follow in the footsteps of scholars that have emphasised the role of the environment in the history of human mobility. In particular, my understanding of the Indian Ocean's role in our history has been shaped by the works of Fernand Braudel, who advocated for both the history of human beings in relation to their environment as well as the inseparability of different environmental processes, especially those involving water and wind.<sup>1</sup> At the heart of my discussion is the tension between mankind's ambition and geographical realities. As we shall see, mobility was both enabled and curtailed by the monsoons intimately linked with the Indian Ocean as well as humankind's relationship with these natural phenomena.

The importance of the Indian Ocean's monsoon season in shaping the fate of economies is well-attested. Roxani Eleni Margariti, for instance, attributes the wealth of Dahlak Kabir, an island in the Red Sea, to its positioning in relation to wind since it enables it to serve as a stepping-stone between the port cities of Aden, in present day Yemen, and Suwakin, in Sudan.<sup>2</sup> The enduring existence of a Sultanate in the archipelago throughout the medieval period is an indication of the commercial profitability provided by Dhalak's opportunity to re-supply the merchants avoiding the arduous sail up the Red Sea or the treacherous waters of the Bab al-Mandab.<sup>3</sup> Its advantageous geographical positioning, then, meant that Dhalak became a beneficiary of mobility. Likewise, Aden's favourable environment, its absence of treacherous shoals and manageable local winds, provided 'frail humanity' reprieve, 'where the bright heavens cease to vent their rage.'<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, though, because the monsoons were localised, they not only promoted but also restricted the potential of mobility. Aden waxed because the winds waned.

As these examples indicate, the monsoon season necessitated lengthy stopovers. These 'crossroads-and-hinges' were ubiquitous, from Kaleh to Qishn, and, as Dhalak's fortunes show, prolonged anchorage, often of diverse merchant groups, encouraged trade.<sup>5</sup> A sixteenth-century Portuguese account, for instance, attests to eighty-four languages in Melaka alone.<sup>6</sup> These adjournments also encouraged localised industries such shipbuilding and repair, as in the port of al-Mabah in Aden, and, in this way, the monsoons also reinforced the role of trading ports.<sup>7</sup>

In his landmark study, Kirti Chaudhuri substantiates the idea that monsoons produced preferential and profitable routes.<sup>8</sup> Whilst some offered shelter, especially the western Indian littoral, he demonstrates that others were nodal-points for productive hinterlands. Sebastian R. Prange highlighted Malabar's well-connected hinterlands, explaining its success as the happy accident of its immunity from the 'hazards of the sea'.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, as 'the land of pepper', Malacca became the so-called 'throat of Venice', a lucrative node in the spice trade route and consequently fought over by colonial groups

1. Roxani Eleni Margariti, *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade: 150 Years in the Life of a Medieval Port* (Chapel Hill, 2002), pp. 38–41.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Milo Kearney, *The Indian Ocean in World History* (Oxford, 2004).

4. Luis de Camoes, cited in Edward A. Alpers, *Indian Ocean in World History* (Oxford, 2013), p. 5.

5. Philippe Beaujard and S. Fee, 'The Indian Ocean in Eurasian and African World-Systems before the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of World History*, 16:4 (2005), p. 437.

6. Cited in Om Prakash, 'The Trading World of India and Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Period', *Archipel*, 56 (1998), p. 34.

7. Karl Polanyi, 'Ports of Trade in Early Societies', *The Journal of Economic History*, 23:1 (1963), pp. 30–45.

8. K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge, 1985).

9. Sebastian R. Prange, 'Measuring by the bushel': reweighing the Indian Ocean pepper trade', *Historical Research*, 84 (2011), p. 214.

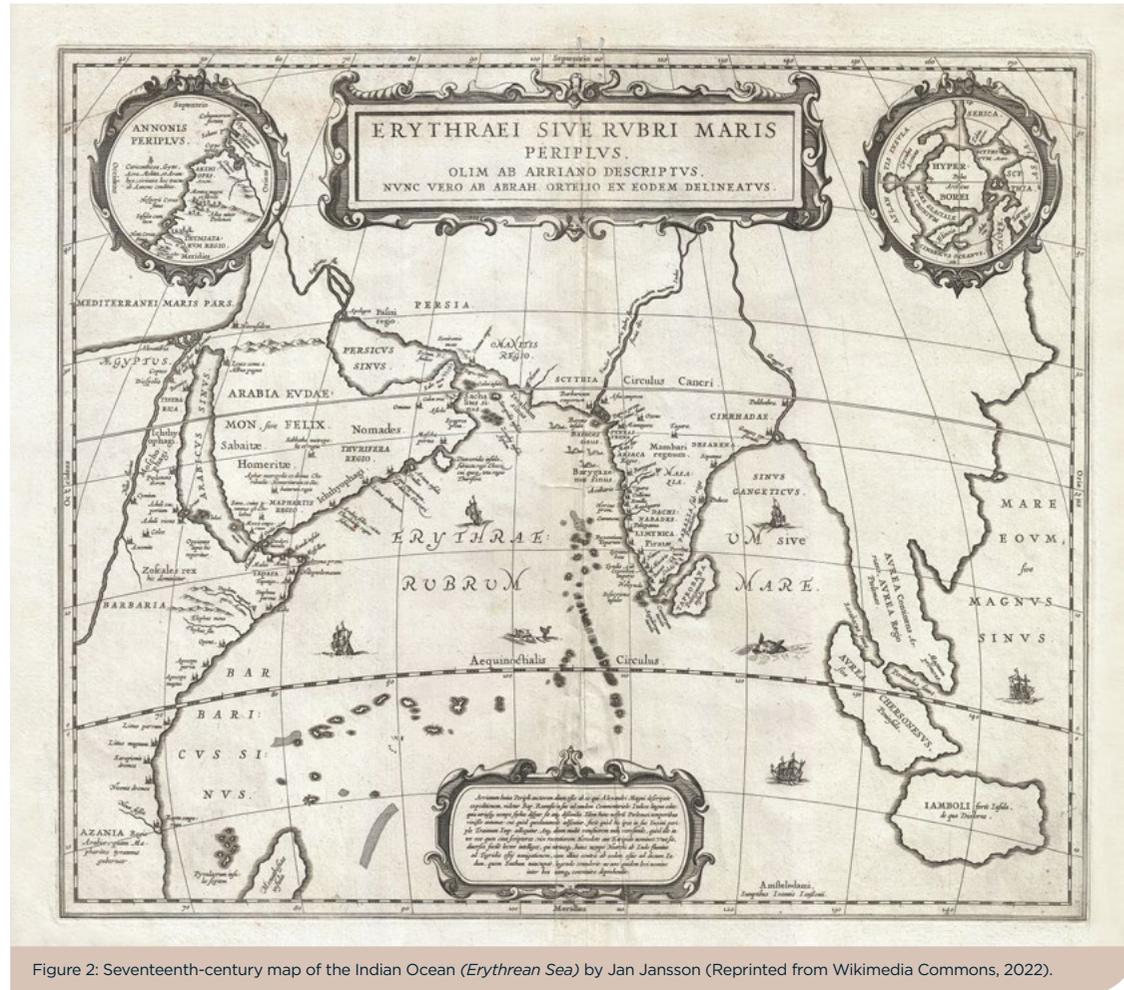


Figure 2: Seventeenth-century map of the Indian Ocean (Erythraean Sea) by Jan Jansson (Reprinted from Wikimedia Commons, 2022).

including the Portuguese, Dutch and British.<sup>10</sup> Certainly, contested territorial control also points again to its geographical relevance. Having weathered the weather, European interest in an area so reassuringly insulated is unsurprising.

Bearing these examples in mind, it would be hard to challenge the influence of geography and environment on human mobility. Nevertheless, some scholars have tried. Martins, for instance, places mercantile activity and political security above geography as an impetus for human movement.<sup>11</sup> Whilst it is likely that the scale and scope of trade expanded as distances became less

threatening, the elevation of traders above the environments they faced in shaping the history of movement in this region attributes to them technological capabilities that in fact came later. However problematic Martins' thesis is, though, travel in and around the Indian Ocean did grow more ambitious in the face of

trading impulses.<sup>12</sup> Longer-distance trade and exposure to wind without the protection of the littoral did lead to an increase in navigational sophistication as a necessity. Navigability of the Indian Ocean predates this period of study. Whether motivated by profit or Prophet, the two hundred ships that left the Nile Delta in AD 655 to cruise off the Lycian coast demonstrate developing insight into seafaring.<sup>13</sup> Certainly, the codification of optimal sailing times, the *mawasim*, began in the tenth century, but the existence of *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a first-century AD text describing voyages through the Indian Ocean, flies in the face of the oft-cited premise that 'precolonial India was nearly static.'<sup>14</sup>

With experience, moreover, navigation improved. Ahmad ibn-Majid's fifteenth-century guide *The Navigator* demonstrates this development. His warning of 'evil waves' on India's west coast in June, for example, was a truth realised too late for the Red Sea merchants ignorant of *waq waq* winds but became common knowledge by the time Ali al-Muvakkit offered supplementary insight into important cities worth visiting in his *A public announcement of the milestones of countries* a century or so later.<sup>15</sup> During this time, ships became more durable given changes in the material they were made from, port-cities became well-established stop-over places, and rulers took more strategic advantage of the 'monsoon-traffic-light', mastering previously 'discrepant timelines' in quasi-toll-tax fashion.<sup>16</sup> Gradually, although never able to placate the tempest, mankind adapted to 'environmental determinism' with prudent pragmatism. Winds were fierce but also reliable and, once that reliability was understood, mobility became an ever-profitable process for all who participated.

In some ways, the entry of the European colonial expansionists into the Indian Ocean littoral offers a condensed version of this symbiotic education. Initially, the winds frustrated the ambitions of successive European quests. It took Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama (c. 1460s–1524), ninety-three days at sea before reaching St Helena, and his innate sense of mission was often tempered by 'wind that failed us.'<sup>17</sup> Adaptability and the appropriation of existing tactics, though, allowed for increasing adaptability to geography. Ultimately, with the introduction of the steamship in the nineteenth century, mankind reversed their deference to 'not so much a contest, as the disdainful ignoring of the sea.'<sup>18</sup>

Never in the history of the western Indian Ocean has humankind rendered the environment immaterial, however. Indeed, climate change indicates a relational reset: deltas are sinking, reservoirs are swelling and cyclones are more frequent. The steamship will not restore the agricultural deficit that has left forty-five million people in food insecurity in the Indian Ocean region.<sup>19</sup> As I have attempted to reveal in this article, however, as the relationship between humans and their environment has evolved, so too has our capacity for mobility. The power dynamic between people and the environment has been just that—dynamic. Discovery, technology and adaptability all have

impacted the intimacy between man and movement. This relationship has not always been antagonistic. Indeed, the 'world's most benign environment for long-range voyaging' promised considerable utility once its benignity was understood. In sum, the western Indian Ocean has long been the site of movement in both a conceptual and physical sense.

10. Ibn Battutah cited in Prange, 'Measuring by the bushel', p. 214; Tome Pires cited in Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, p. 113.

11. Nuno Ornelas Martins, 'Adam Smith on Power and Maritime Trade' *Mediterranean Studies*, 22:1 (2014), pp. 38–42.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

13. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, p. 43.

14. Eric Gilbert in Stephanie Wynne-Jones and Adria LaViolette (eds.), *Swahili world* (Oxfordshire, 2018), p. 381; John F. Richards, 'Early Modern India and World History', *Journal of World History*, 8 (1997), p. 208.

15. Ahmad ibn Majid, cited in Sebastian R. Prange, *Monsoon Islam: Trade and Faith on the Medieval Malabar Coast* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 27; Kenneth R. Hall, 'Ports-of-Trade, Maritime Diasporas, and

Networks of Trade and Cultural Integration in the Bay of Bengal Region of the Indian Ocean: c.1300–1500', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 53 (2010), p. 110; Giancarlo Casale in Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, Karen Wigen (eds.), *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges* (Hawaii, 2007), p. 98.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

17. Cited in E. G. Ravenstein (ed.), *A Journal of*

*the First Voyage of Vasco da Gama, 1497–1499* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 14.

18. Joseph Conrad, *The Mirror of the Sea: Memories and Impressions* (Salt Lake, 2017), p. 102.

19. Victor R. Savage and Lin Qi Feng, 'Climate change adaptation: the need for an Indian Ocean regional metamorphosis', *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 16, (2020), p. 10.

20. Prange, *Monsoon Islam*, p. 27.

# Moving around Medieval England:

## Evidence from the Gough Map



**Linda Godden**

Linda Godden (née Jefferson) graduated from Durham in 1982 with a BA in Modern History. After a career in computing and web development, she returned to academia to complete an MSc in History at the University of Edinburgh in 2018. The research data on which this article is based, along with an interactive version of the Gough Map, can be found at <https://goughmap.uk>.



Figure 1: *The Gough Map* (Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Gough Gen. Top. 16).

The Gough Map (figure 1) is the earliest sheet map of Britain, produced circa 1390–1410, but little is known about its purpose or patron. The map presents topographical features such as rivers, mountains and islands, as well as approximately six-hundred settlements. These are depicted as icons and range in status from single buildings to more complex arrangements including castle towers and church spires, buildings and walls. Figure 2, for instance, shows the city of Durham—complete with castle, walls and church—as evidently higher status than the neighbouring small village of Easington, depicted as a single building. Place names accompany these icons, although many are now faded and illegible. Attention, however, is more often drawn to a network of red lines, with distance markers, which link some of these settlements (figure 3).

Debate has centred on the meaning of these red lines, with some scholars suggesting that they represent a road network and that settlements depicted on the map were therefore located on important roads.<sup>1</sup> Certainly, there is a sense in which all the settlements depicted on the map are accessible and,



Figure 2: A section of the map with Durham at the centre. Note the topographically accurate, albeit exaggerated, loop of the river around the city. (Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Gough Gen. Top. 16).

therefore, on some kind of road network, whether a highway, byway, track or lightly trodden path. How significant, though, were medieval highways and movement along roads in the creation of the map and, by extension, to the traveller moving through late medieval England?

The most important settlements—major cities like Canterbury or York, or large towns with high populations such as Bristol—would have been on roads deemed to be important. It is likely, therefore, that there would have been a well-travelled road between, for instance, Bristol and Gloucester (figure 3), or York and Lincoln. If the Gough Map had simply shown the higher status places in late fourteenth-century England, such as cities, towns and ports, that would have been sufficient for route planning. Such a map would have shown that to get from London to York, a traveller in the late medieval period would have taken a road via Huntingdon and Doncaster. The actual road taken on all the various stages of the journey could have been completed in consultation with previous travellers, looking at an itinerary or asking a local for guidance.<sup>2</sup>

But it is clear that the Gough Map offers much more information than this and that this information is meaningful. Its defining feature, in comparison with its contemporaries, is its inclusion of many seemingly insignificant locations between higher status settlements. A good example is Cobham in Surrey, which lies between the towns of Kingston upon Thames and Guildford. The meagreness of Cobham's history is telling.<sup>3</sup> It is now a village with a single street of shops, an old watermill and a modern hinterland of suburban housing. There is nothing

1. E.J.S. Parsons and F.M. Stenton, *The Map of Great Britain circa A.D. 1360 Known as The Gough Map: An Introduction to the Facsimile* (Oxford, 1970), p. 16, footnote 1; Nick Millea, *The Gough Map: The Earliest Road Map of Great Britain?* (Oxford, 2007), p. 32;

David Harrison, *The Bridges of Medieval England: Transport and Society, 400–1800* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 1–7.

2. Catherine Delano-Smith, 'Milieus of Mobility: Itineraries, Route Maps, and Road Maps', in James R. Akerman (ed), *Cartographies of Travel and Navigation* (London, 2006), pp. 34–35.

3. *British History Online*, 'Parishes: Cobham': <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/surrey/vol3/pp442-447>. (accessed: January 2022).



Figure 3: A section of the Gough Map showing Bristol and Worcester connected by a red line with major settlements in between. (Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Gough Gen. Top 16).

in its history to suggest that in medieval times it had been larger—or enjoyed any more significance—than a small village. It has never had a market, been a borough or returned an MP to Parliament.

Its importance for medieval travellers, instead, came from its wooden bridge over the River Mole.<sup>4</sup> But was the bridge the key reason Cobham was marked on the Gough map? Perhaps not. Four miles north-west of Cobham is the small village of Weybridge, which, as its name suggests, also had a bridge over the River Wey, a tributary of the Thames.<sup>5</sup> If ease of travel using both rivers and roads had been a priority, then Weybridge would seem a more likely candidate for inclusion on the map. The most plausible reason for Cobham's inclusion over any other nearby settlement, then, was that it lay on the principal road that ran from London to Portsmouth—the modern A307.

Another significant feature of Cobham for the late medieval traveller is its equidistance between Kingston and Guildford, suggesting that it was a well-established stage on the Portsmouth Road. Three miles up the road from Cobham, and approximately four miles from Kingston, is the equally small village of Esher. Esher appears in the historical record, partly because the Bishop of Winchester, William of Wykeham (1367-1404), had a house there, and it is possible to track some of the journeys taken by the bishop's servants between his two residences using his Household Account Roll of 1393.<sup>6</sup> Esher would probably also have had a hostelry, and so the decision to include Cobham on the Gough Map suggests that the mapmakers were interested in providing guidance on road journeys that would be completed in daily or half-daily stages, depending on the distances and mode of transport taken.

Cobham, more crucially, is not an anomaly in its inclusion on the map. Rather, it is just one of 261 other English settlements marked on the Gough Map as a single building—the lowest status settlement-type depicted. These settlements

represent 58 percent of all the settlements marked in England, making them a highly significant component of the map. The inclusion of Cobham on the Gough Map, then, begs the question to what extent are settlements marked on the map stages or destinations on principal highways and, by extension, the role of the road network in the map's creation.

Helpfully, an analysis of road development between the fifteenth century and the late-eighteenth century suggests that no new roads were built in that period and that there was little modification of the existing medieval highways.<sup>7</sup> If settlements on the Gough map are, as scholars suspect, linked by a road network and this explains their inclusion therein, then settlements named on the map should match settlements on the highways and byways of road maps produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries before major road construction projects began in the mid-eighteenth century.

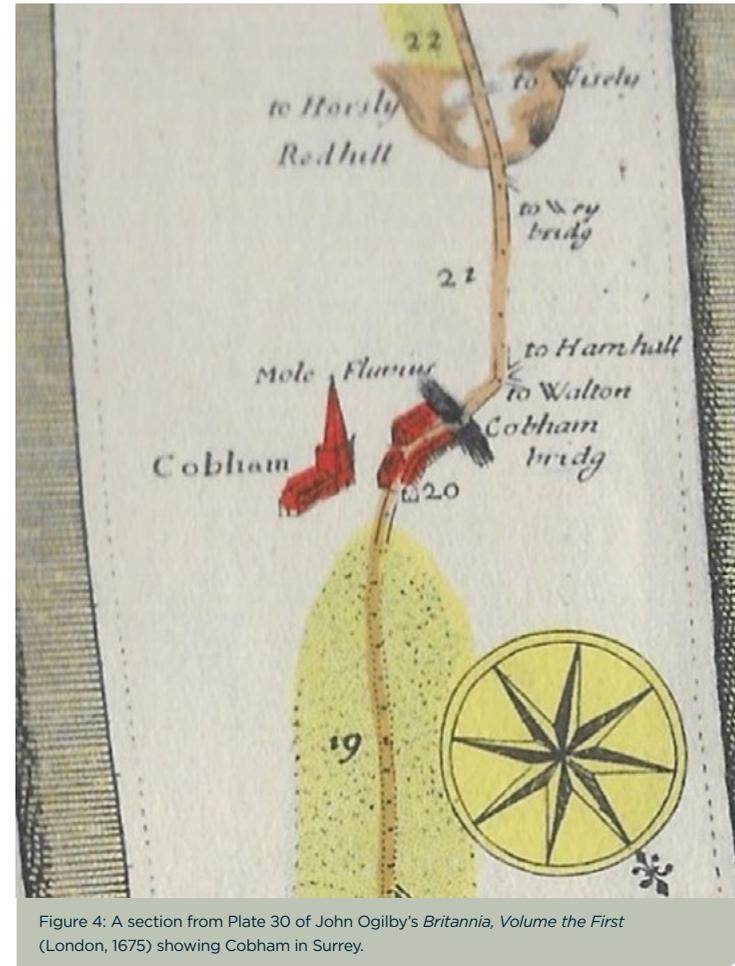


Figure 4: A section from Plate 30 of John Ogilby's *Britannia, Volume the First* (London, 1675) showing Cobham in Surrey.

Confirming this means comparing these settlements with those found on roads included in John Ogilby's *Britannia: Volume the First* issued in 1675 and Herman Moll's maps of England and the English counties, published in 1710 and 1724, respectively (figure 4).<sup>8</sup> Doing so is telling. It reveals that 79 percent of the Gough Map settlements were located on the main roads of England in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century and that these roads were indeed an integral part of the Gough Map's creation.<sup>9</sup> It is not just the number of settlements on main roads that matters, though, but also their location on these routes. Such settlements are not randomly dotted around the road network, as if by chance. Instead, the uniformity of their distribution along these roads is significant where the traveller through late medieval England was concerned. Tellingly, these distances reflect a day or half day's travel, depending on the mode of transport taken.

Whilst the findings of this study support the suggestion that most settlements included on the Gough Map reflect the principal lines of medieval English road travel—the 'red lines' that have preoccupied and puzzled historians—their implications for our understanding of travel and movement in late medieval England more generally are key. Critically, this comparison reveals that roads had been established and were vital for the movement of people and goods at least by 1400 and, likely, even a century earlier. Many questions about this enigmatic map remain to be resolved but it has already given us a unique insight into how individuals might have moved around and experienced England in the late medieval period.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the map might find the following online resources helpful. <http://goughmap.org> provides a zoomable interface and a search facility for finding locations, whilst my own site, (<https://goughmap.uk>), meanwhile, features a digital version of the map and displays settlement names as visitors scroll as well as enabling viewers to match medieval royal itineraries to locations on the map. Hopefully, this increased accessibility will enable future researchers of the Gough Map to gain further insights into medieval travel.

4. David C. Taylor, *The Book of Cobham* (Buckingham, 1982), p. 21.

5. *Weybridge Society*, 'Oatlands Palace History': <https://www.weybridgesociety.org.uk/local-info/history/oatlands-palace-history/>. (accessed: January 2022).

6. 'William of Wykeham's Household Account Roll, 1393', *Winchester College*: <https://winchestercollegearchives.org/> (accessed: January 2022). This item was previously available as a download from the website. The current link provides contact details for the College Archivist.

7. Linda Godden, 'Medieval Bridges and Roads', *The Gough Map* (2019): <https://goughmap.uk/permutation-network.php> (accessed: January 2022).

8. John Ogilby, *Britannia: Volume the First*, or, *An Illustration of the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales* (London, 1675); Herman Moll, *A New Description of England and Wales: with*

*the Adjacent Islands* (London, 1724); Herman Moll, *The South Part of Great Britain Called England & Wales*, (London, 1710).

9. Linda Godden, 'The comparison', *The Gough Map* (2019): <https://goughmap.uk/comparison.php> (accessed: January 2022).

# Choreographing the Kitchen:

## Movement and medieval cooking



Figure 1: Executive Head Chef Chris Wardale working in the kitchen at Blackfriars Restaurant (Image: Blackfriars Restaurant).



**Florence Swan**

Florence is a first-year Northern Bridge funded doctoral student in the History department. Her research examines taste in late medieval England in comparison with the continent and takes a collaborative approach, working with Blackfriars Restaurant in Newcastle on recipe analysis. Alongside this research, Florence helps produce medieval cookery classes, feasts, and lectures. Her other research interests include medieval horticulture and everyday life in London during the period c.1200 to 1600.

When I was told that the theme of this year's issue was 'movement', I pondered the ways this could relate to my research into medieval food and taste; behaviour and table manners; travel and trade of foodstuffs as well as the base but inevitable consequence of eating: bowel movement. Yet it was whilst researching at Blackfriars Restaurant in Newcastle, the collaborating partner for my doctoral research, and whilst watching the chefs at work that movement in the kitchen struck me as ever-present and intriguing. Whether it be heaving heavy pots from one hob to another, beating mixture together or slicing with care and precision, the gestures of the kitchen, no matter how simple, are an integral and fascinating part of food production. What is impressive in a commercial kitchen is not only the variety of movements but also the impressive speeds at which they take place. Given the pace that chefs must work at to provide food to customers, everyone's movements must be synchronised, like cogs in a machine. However, these gestures are not limited to restaurant kitchens. Instructions in recipes, for example, give specific movements to be performed by those cooking at home: whisk, stir, chop. Not all cooking needs to be stressful, but it is an undeniably physical activity.

I have become increasingly aware of these culinary gestures because my research includes reconstructing medieval recipes to understand better how they work regarding their texture, colour and taste. This reconstruction helps when looking chronologically at recipes. For example, by reconstructing green sauce as it is found in recipes from the Roman period through to the fifteenth century, I can trace subtle and significant changes in taste, texture and colour that might otherwise be overlooked when just reading the recipes. I have been forced to consider carefully culinary verbs—meaning instructions to carry out gestures like stir, prepare and grind—for two reasons. First, these are the only instructions in what would otherwise be, and sometimes is, a list of ingredients.<sup>1</sup> Second, instructions can alter the texture, taste or appearance of a dish and therefore require paid attention. What does grinding ingredients together do as opposed to, say, finely chopping? In this way, the movement and gestures of cooking are shown to be vitally important to scholars researching medieval food, something recognised primarily by linguistic scholars, for example in the work on Middle English culinary verbs over the past thirty years.<sup>2</sup> More recently, historian Bruno Laurioux has examined the gestures of cooking, and this continued interest, as well as my own findings, attests to the significance of culinary verbs, something supported by cross-reference to contemporary medieval literature.<sup>3</sup>

In Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, a fourteenth-century collection of tales told by pilgrims on their way to Thomas Becket's Shrine, an individual that sold church indulgences, the Pardoner, proclaims, 'Thise cookes, how they stampe, and streyne and grynde'.<sup>4</sup> Grind and strain are extremely common verbs in medieval recipes, especially sauces where ingredients are typically ground in a pestle and mortar and



Figure 2: A cook with cleaver in the Luttrell Psalter (British Library, London, Add 42130, f207v.).

1. Marcus Apicius' and Sidney Sussex MS 51's recipes for green sauce both consist of a list of ingredients, without instruction.

2. Most recently, see Magdalena Bator, *Culinary Verbs in Middle English* (New York, 2014).

3. Bruno Laurioux will be publishing a chapter on culinary gestures which was given at a conference in 2018. It is currently published in draft form: <https://corema.hypotheses.org/articles/corema-preprint> (accessed: February 2022).

4. Geoffrey Chaucer, 'Pardoner's Tale', in *The Canterbury Tales, Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Larry D. Benson and F. N. Robinson, 3rd edn (Oxford, 2008), pp. 196-202 (p. 197, l. 538).



Figure 3: Detail of a scene of people feasting and being served from the Luttrell Psalter (British Library, London, Add 42130, f208r.).

later strained once combined with broth or milk.<sup>5</sup> Here again is the question of what does grinding ingredients together do as opposed to finely chopping? The commonality between the three culinary gestures listed by the Pardoner is that they require strength, energy and perhaps might even be interpreted as violent when compared with more precise methods like finely chopping. It is the idea of violence that the Pardoner capitalises on in his tale, which acts as a kind of sermon preaching against the sins of the flesh. The Pardoner uses three energetic verbs to describe cooking, presenting it as something violent and sinful and, crucially, one that wastes energy that could otherwise be used on spiritual pursuits. Moments earlier in the Pardoner's Tale, for instance, there is a line referring to the gut that affirms the effort put into producing food, 'How great labour and cost is thee to fynde!' ('How great labour and cost it is to feed you!').<sup>6</sup>

The Pardoner's threatening and energetic depiction of cooking is not, however, exclusive to *The Canterbury Tales*. In the margins of *The Luttrell Psalter* (British Library, Add MS 42130), a fourteenth-century manuscript with illustrations of daily life, angry faced cooks are depicted as bearing large cleavers and ladles, dismembering meat and working over hot fires (figure 2). Whilst these are all necessary activities of cooking, they are depicted as unnecessarily violent. The violent activities of one Luttrell cook, who uses a large blade and swift, violent movements to dismember carcasses can be likened to butchery. This begs the question of the distinction between butchery and the work of the kitchen and corroborates the Pardoner's representation of cooking gestures as something aggressive.

An equally critical attitude towards elaborate cooking was taken by those who took monastic vows. Bernard of Clairvaux, a twelfth-century monk who called for reform within western European monasticism, wrote about the abuses of

diet by the monks at the monastery of Cluny in eastern France. In his *Apologia* he proclaimed, 'who could describe all the ways in which eggs are tampered with and tortured, or the care that goes into turning them one way and then turning them back'.<sup>7</sup> Contrary to the advised simple fasting diet suggested in the rule of St. Benedict, according to Bernard, the monks at Cluny prepared overly complicated dishes. The reason for encouraging a limited diet was a matter of sin: eating was necessary to sustain the body, but anything other than simple food diverted attention away from the soul and towards the physical, imperfect body; the same reasoning given by the Pardoner in his tale. Bernard's pointed words come from his understanding of monks as the pinnacle of religious life. Not only were they wasting resources in the preparation of elaborate food but also energy that could be put to good use elsewhere. Bernard's

words are important because he is not diminishing the skill of cooking. Instead, he emphasises the care that goes into working with food and acknowledges the variety of culinary activities. However, the skilled gestures of cooking are framed within the context of sin, where the care and energy exerted in these movements are understood as dangerous dedications to the imperfect body.

Yet, not all depictions of cooking and its various movements in medieval literature were primarily negative. Contrasting with *The Pardoner's Tale* is the description of sauces in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, a fourteenth-century English chivalric poem that tells the tale of Sir Gawain's journey to fulfil a promise made with an ominous Green Knight. The poem is brimming with descriptions of food and eating, and King Arthur's Christmas feast at the beginning of the poem contains amazing descriptions of the dishes served. Specifically, the term 'sleye', meaning skilful or expert, is used to describe the sauces served at the feast ('and ay sawes so sleye'), suggesting that a great deal of energy has been put into crafting them.<sup>8</sup> Within the context of the poem, the primary narrative is that these types of food are, in keeping with the chivalric code, suitable for the king's court at Camelot.<sup>9</sup> Sir Gawain indulges in various meals throughout his journey, but the Christmas feast at Camelot brilliantly demonstrates the skill and gestures involved in cooking.

It is understandable why associations between the gestures of cooking and sins of the flesh were made so frequently in the medieval period. Literary and religious texts were drawing from fact—working in a kitchen can be physically demanding and requires skill and dedication. Yet, these commonplace and relatable activities were also used as vehicles to express spiritual and social concerns, playing on the characterisation of the violent cook to evoke fear of sin. This is something exhibited in popular media today, albeit with a greater focus on entertainment rather than moral guidance. In the Monty Python sketch 'The Dirty Fork' in which a diner complains about dirty cutlery, John Cleese, dressed as a chef, emerges from the kitchen and threatens the diner by slamming his cleaver into the table. Gordon Ramsey has styled his public image around this stereotype, and his show 'Hell's Kitchen' maintains the perception of kitchens as something heated and violent.

Nevertheless, room was also given in medieval literature to appreciate the skill of cooking without overt admonishment. The Christmas feast of King Arthur in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* acknowledges both the skill and effort put into the dishes. Taking a step back from discursive sources and returning to medieval recipes, we begin to appreciate more fully the significance of culinary verbs. What might at first appear as an insignificant lexical feature is in fact fundamental to how we should appreciate and understand medieval cooking. This brief article has only explored one aspect of medieval food and the movement of cooking; these gestures of course extend outside of the kitchen and into the feast hall where the performance of taste occurred. I hope I have provided a taste of my own research and given you an appetite to go and explore the wealth that is medieval taste and cooking.

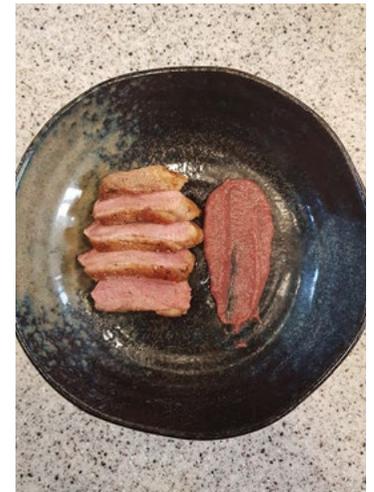


Figure 4: Saracen Sauce, reproduced by Florence Swan, from a description in the Sloane manuscripts collection (British Library, London, MS B.L Sloane 468).

5. For example, see 'Sauce Rous' in Constance B. Heiatt, *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes* (Turnhout, 2008), p. 153.

7. Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux*, 9 vols (Shannon, 1970), I, p. 56.

6. Chaucer, 'Pardoner's Tale' in *The Canterbury Tales*, p. 197, l. 537.

8. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, trans. by Larry D. Benson (Morgantown, 2012), p. 69, l.893. For these and the related meanings of 'clever' and 'wise', see 'sleigh' in the *Online Edition in Middle English Compendium*, ed. by Frances McSparran and others (2000–2018): <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary> (accessed: February 2022).

9. There are theological narratives in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and this is not to say that the feasts are unproblematic. However, framed within the chivalric context of King Arthur's gathering, these dishes are suitable. The Christmas feasting is later followed by fasting.

# The Americanisation of Europe: Exceptionalism and neo-imperialism or globalisation?

America emerged from the Second World War an economic superpower. Replacing its policy of Isolationism with Internationalism, America began exerting its economic and cultural power, proliferating consumption and consumerism across Europe. Its increased role in global affairs has encouraged historians to debate the nature, purpose and consequences of 'Americanisation'. Americanisation, as defined by Jessica Gienow-Hecht, refers to 'American cultural transfer abroad'.<sup>1</sup> This article explores whether Americanisation was fostered by neo-imperialism—specifically economic—or globalisation. Specifically, it explores the movement of culture and influence from America into Europe. According to Maier and Kramer, neo-imperialism relies on an asymmetric economic relationship and on 'unequal power resources and influence' that produce 'relations of hierarchy' between nations.<sup>2</sup> A distinction is made between economic neo-imperialism and economic domination. While the former requires intent—a nation and its multinational corporations *actively* and *self-interestedly* exert economic exploitation—the latter can be a passive, unforeseen consequence.<sup>3</sup> In this case, economic domination was a perverse effect of globalisation. Globalisation pertains to a more positive phenomenon that fostered cooperation and, according to James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer, created an 'interdependence' between nations.<sup>4</sup> Even if it sometimes manifested itself unequally, globalisation still facilitated mutually-beneficial exchanges and interlinked economic interests.<sup>5</sup>

1960s Consensus and neoconservative historians focused on American Exceptionalism, whilst Marxist historians stressed how America's free-market capitalism economically exploited Europe.<sup>6</sup> 1970s New Left historians, meanwhile, identified America's role as imperial and seeking to establish economic neo-imperialism.<sup>7</sup> Recent scholarship focused on how globalisation fostered Americanisation sees the process as mutually beneficial and uncoerced.<sup>8</sup> When historians analyse consumption patterns, though, they tend to focus on analyses of men, youths and working-class consumers at the expense of women's histories and rural populations.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, both globalisation and economic neo-imperialism fostered Americanisation, albeit at different times and ways.<sup>10</sup> While globalisation fostered Americanisation initially, its unforeseen by-product, economic domination, altered the global dynamic. By the 1960s, American policymakers such as Paul Hoffman re-oriented their strategy, taking advantage of this economic domination, adding *intent* and turning it into economic neo-imperialism.<sup>11</sup>

Globalisation initially fostered Americanisation, as American officials sought to rehabilitate the European economy to establish an interconnected global market, all while countering communism. Congress passed the Marshall Plan in April 1948, seeing a stable Europe as a precondition to safeguard American interest.<sup>12</sup> The USA injected \$17 billion into the sixteen participating countries to address Europe's dollar gap—which was \$1.25 billion in 1950 and said to grow



Laura-Elena Mireanu

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to 3 billion by 1952—and to prevent the rise of communism in France and Italy.<sup>13</sup> Liberal imperialists argued that the American empire existed for moral and humanitarian reasons.<sup>14</sup> Humanitarian agencies, such as the CARE program of 1946, operated in tandem with the Marshall Plan and journalists like Henry Luce argued that America had a moral obligation to help.<sup>15</sup> The main aim, however, remained economic reconstruction. Hoffman, the European Recovery Plan's (ERP) chief administrator, stressed that the plan was solely a 'business proposition' to turn 'Europe [into] a consumer of American goods'.<sup>16</sup> That being said, the claim that American businesses had neo-imperialist motivations is equally far-fetched.<sup>17</sup> Economic neo-imperialism was not actively sought. Mutually-beneficial economic integration remained the goal.

The ERP left the door open for US imports that Americanised Europe through a 'peaceful conquest'.<sup>18</sup> Germany was flooded with Twain's and Faulkner's literature and Austrian citizens listened to the American *Rot-Weiss-Rot* radio station.<sup>19</sup> Lundestad pointed out that this was an 'empire by invitation', widely welcomed and encouraged.<sup>20</sup> Europeans watched American TV programmes, such as *Dallas*, as well as Hollywood films.<sup>21</sup> The French alone witnessed the release of 338 movies in 1947, three hundred more than in 1946.<sup>22</sup> These examples highlight the widespread and uncoerced appeal of Americanisation. Burgeoning globalisation fostered an initial wave of Americanisation into Europe.



Figure 1: Advert for American product, 1950s: Blue jeans (Image courtesy of Bibliothèque Forney, Paris).

1. Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, 'Shame on US? Academics, cultural transfer, and the Cold War – A critical review', *Diplomatic History*, 24:3 (2000), p. 466.

2. Paul K. MacDonald, 'Those who forget historiography are doomed to republish it: Empire, imperialism and contemporary debates about American power', *Review of International Studies*, 35:1 (2009), p. 46; Paul A. Kramer 'Power and Connection: Imperial histories of the United States in the World', *The American Historical Review*, 116:5 (2011), pp. 1348–1349.

3. MacDonald, 'Those who forget historiography', pp. 45–67.

4. James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer, 'Globalisation or imperialism?', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 14:1 (2000), pp. 32–48.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

6. MacDonald, 'Those who forget historiography', pp. 47–49.

7. *Ibid.* p. 47.

8. Danielle Fosler-Lussier, 'Music Pushed, Music Pulled: Cultural diplomacy, globalization, and imperialism', *Diplomatic History*, 36:1 (2012), pp. 59–63; William Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalisation, US Intervention and Hegemony* (Cambridge, 1996); Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War*, trans. Diana M. Wolf (Chapel Hill, 1994); Richard F. Kuissel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley, 1993); Geir Lundestad, 'Empire by invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945–1952', *Journal of Peace*

*Research*, 23:3 (1986), pp. 263–277.

9. Alexander Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy and Anti-Americanism after 1945* (Oxford, 2006); Alon Confino and Rudy Koshar, 'Regimes of consumer culture: New narratives in twentieth-century German history', *German History*, 19:2 (2001), pp. 135–161; Jan Logemann, 'Americanization through credit? Consumer credit in Germany, 1860s–1960s', *The Business History Review*, 85:3 (2011), pp. 529–550.

10. Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, pp. 91–185.

11. Gienow-Hecht, 'Shame on US?', p. 475.

12. Stacy May, 'Measuring the Marshall Plan', *Foreign Affairs*, 26:3 (1948), p. 458.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 459–460.

14. MacDonald, 'Those who forget historiography', p. 48.

15. Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War*, p. 179.

16. Stephanie M. Amerian, "'Buying European": The Marshall Plan and American department stores', *Diplomatic History*, 39:1 (2015), p. 46.

17. Gienow-Hecht, 'Shame on US?', p. 475.

18. *Ibid.*

19. Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, p. 76;

Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War*, p. 234.

20. Lundestad, 'Empire by Invitation?', p. 264.

21. Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, p. 60.

22. *Ibid.*

Gradually, the competitive nature of American businesses intensified Americanisation, turning European nations into consumer-oriented societies.<sup>23</sup> Analysing domestic female consumers, de Grazia found that European women in the 1960s embraced American stoves, refrigerators and vacuum cleaners.<sup>24</sup> While Western Europe has been given considerable attention, Stephan used diverse case studies from Northern/Southern Europe, finding that, for example, Swedish audiences adored the 1959 film *Gunsmoke*, while American goods symbolised prosperity in Denmark and Greece.<sup>25</sup> Thus, he highlighted Americanisation's far-reaching popularity.<sup>26</sup> Complementing Stephan's view, Fosler-Lussier concluded that American music 'was not only pushed, but also pulled'.<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, many Europeans actively *demand*ed American culture. For instance, after Millikin University Jazz Band visited Ankara in 1969, students began protesting that the European curriculum needed updating.<sup>28</sup> De Gaulle could call US businesses the 'long arm of American imperialism', yet, proponents of American neo-imperialism cannot ignore that many European *freely* chose American imports.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, American corporations did not seek economic neo-imperialism. Rather, they pursued profit through the globalisation of trade, which indirectly led to economic domination—a perverse effect. Products like Arie's jeans, for instance, promoted the increasingly popular 'American style (figure 1)'.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the television set advertisements used celebrities so Europeans would associate American lifestyle products with glamorous luxury.<sup>31</sup> The fact that French appliance expenditure alone annually rose by 15 per cent highlights America's advertisement successes.<sup>32</sup> Hence, America's interventionism was mutually beneficial as it encouraged global inter-dependence that facilitated Americanisation.<sup>33</sup>

Yet, Americanisation was also present in Eastern Europe.<sup>34</sup> Hollywood movies, such as *The Naked Maja* (1959), became available in the USSR.<sup>35</sup> During Khrushchev's 'Thaw', Steinbeck's and Dreiser's works were translated and distributed amongst Soviets.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the Soviet youth counter-culture, *Stilyagi*, adopted American culture: they

had 'slicked-back Tarzan hairstyle[s]', wore *dzhins* (jeans) and danced the foxtrot.<sup>37</sup> Americanisation's popularity was widespread and was not, however, confined to the youth.<sup>38</sup> Surveying music culture, Fosler-Lussier found that elitist niches were not the only jazz enthusiasts.<sup>39</sup> *Voice of America*, for instance, enjoyed around 26 million listeners.<sup>40</sup> It presented programs like Willis Conover's USA Jazz Hour in Poland, thereby popularising jazz and its cultural ambassadors, such as Louis Armstrong and Charlie Parker.<sup>41</sup> Hence, we see that Americanisation was truly popular and widespread across Europe.<sup>42</sup>

Once American officials realised the powerful potential of Americanisation, they sought to use it to their advantage during the Cold War. As Rosenberg remarked, American policymakers *consciously* 'spread American culture', creating a 'cultural offensive'.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, America's fear of communism led them to deploy their economic hegemony and cultural appeal against the USSR. For instance, Hollywood created movies that demonised communism, such as *Red Snow* (1952) and *The Big Knife* (1953).<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the Cold War was fought on television, with shows like *Crusade in Europe* (1949) and *Pentagon U.S.A.* (1953).<sup>45</sup> The radio, as well, included 'five minutes of propaganda with two hours of sugar-coating'.<sup>46</sup> The United States Information Agency and Congress for Cultural Freedom established engagement using personal contact, such as Eisenhower's 1956 People-to-People program, American libraries abroad, Russian-language propaganda magazines in the USSR (including *Amerika*), technological conventions (for example, Vice-President Nixon's 1958 Kitchen Debates), and world's fair exhibitions promoting American Abstract Expressionism to foreign elites.<sup>47</sup> Everything was done to sell the American image. While American foreign policy and cultural diplomacy are distinct from Americanisation—as the former two involve state-led centralised planning, while the latter a bottom-up process—they were interlinked to counter communism.<sup>48</sup> Congress relied on American economic and cultural hegemony. They increased their spending on foreign cultural programs from \$19 million in 1947 to \$110 million by 1956, and they designed the 'Country X' scheme (figure 2),

which highlights how Americanisation flowed into Europe.<sup>49</sup> Its one-way flow indicates that the Cultural Division used America's hegemonic influence to their advantage in the Cold War struggle by further promulgating Americanisation.<sup>50</sup> However, this is not evidence of their ill-intent, rather, a desire for protection of ideological interests.

Continued globalisation and trade involuntarily led to American economic domination as businesses quickly took advantage of this situation. They re-adjusted their goals from globalisation to economic neo-imperialism, desiring to maximise their profits. For instance, they purchased shares in European businesses: American Universal Oil Products, in 1966, purchased a majority share in France's leading perfume producer, *Chiris*.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, on the Common Market, American multinationals' output constituted the largest single economy in Europe by 1967.<sup>52</sup>

Hence, American business slowly adopted a policy of economic neo-imperialism, consciously pursuing economic hegemony and fostering a new form of domineering Americanisation. This is clear evidence of American economic neo-imperialism, which was dominating Europe and constantly reinforcing Americanisation's persistence. By the end of the 1960s, Americanisation rested in the hands of American private corporations, seeking economic neo-imperialism.<sup>53</sup> This neo-imperialism, in turn, fostered a suffocating new kind of Americanisation.

The presence of anti-American counter movement strengthens the idea that a different kind of Americanisation fostered by economic neo-imperialism was present. Grass-root European consumers worried that the 'spectre of Americanisation' was threatening domestic economic interests and national identity.<sup>54</sup> For instance, Kuisel looked at how *Coca-Cola's* expansion—a flagrant symbol of Americanisation—infused anti-Americanism.<sup>55</sup> For example, *Italy L'Unita* stated that *Coca-Cola* turned the hair white, *L'Humanite* posed the pithy question 'will we be coca-colonised?', and *Le Monde* warned against America's cultural invasion.<sup>56</sup> Hence, anti-Americanism's mere presence proves that Americanisation was no longer a 'consensual domination', but a suffocating and exploitative symptom of economic neo-imperialism.<sup>57</sup>

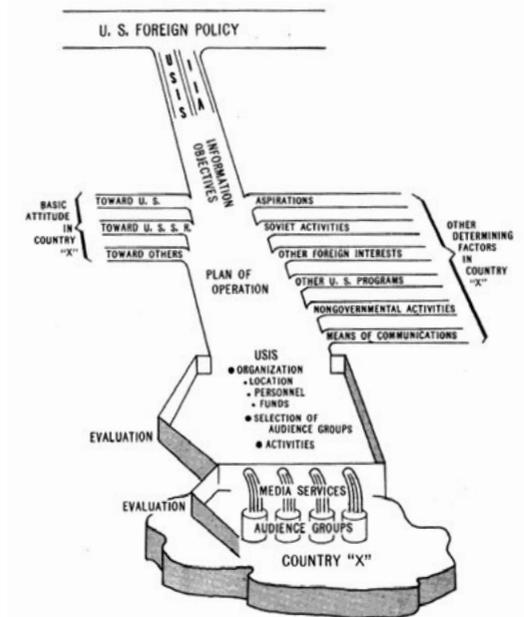


Figure 2: Diagram depicting the flow of information into 'Country X'. Image reprinted from The International Information Administration Program 4939, International Information and Cultural Series 32 (1953).

Both globalisation and economic neo-imperialism have fostered Americanisation. Whilst earlier historiography tended to emphasise that America had imperialistic designs from the onset, recent research has shifted away from vilifying American intentions.<sup>58</sup> Initially, economic reconstruction programs created global trading links that facilitated Americanisation in Europe. State-led cultural offensive strategies, along with private business capitalisation, utilised American economic domination. In turn, this created economic neo-imperialism. This neo-imperialism fostered a new wave of suffocating Americanisation, evidenced by resultant anti-Americanism counter-movements. What started as a snowball of economic aid, ended in an avalanche of economic neo-imperialism. By 1970, globalisation and neo-imperialism had become two sides of the same coin.

23. Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's advance through twentieth-century Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), p. 337.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 418.

25. Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, p. 10, p. 38, p. 116.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

27. Fosler-Lussier, 'Music Pushed, Music Pulled', p. 53.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

29. de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, p. 368; Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, p. 37.

30. Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, p. 105.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

33. Fosler-Lussier, 'Music Pushed, Music Pulled', p. 63.

34. Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy*, p. 104.

35. Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, p. 38, p. 116, p. 197.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

37. Artemy Troitsky, *Back in the USSR: The True Story of Rock in Russia* (Boston, 1988), pp. 13-14.

38. Gleb Tsipursky, *Socialist Fun: Youth, Consumption, and State-Sponsored Popular Culture in the Soviet Union, 1945-1970* (Pittsburgh, 2016), p. 28; Eleonory Gilburd, *To See Paris and Die: The Soviet Lives of Western Culture* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 97.

39. Fosler-Lussier, 'Music Pushed, Music Pulled', p. 63-65.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, p. 38, p. 116, p. 220.

42. Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy*, p. 104.

43. Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945*, (New York, 1982), p. 230.

44. Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War*, p. 246.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 247.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

47. Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill, 2004) p. 10; Justine Faure, 'L'Amérique racontée aux Soviétiques: La revue "Amerika" et la diplomatie publique américaine (1945-1952)', *Revue D'histoire Moderne Et Contemporaine* 2014/4-5 (2014), p. 94; de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, p. 454; Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, p. 38, p. 116.

48. Fosler-Lussier, 'Music Pushed, Music Pulled', p. 53.

49. Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War*, p. 57.

50. Stephan, *The Americanization of Europe*, pp. 5-7, p. 38, p. 116.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 369.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

53. Armerian, "'Buying European'", pp. 45-47.

54. Endy, *Cold War Holidays*, p. 75.

55. Richard F. Kuisel, 'Coca-Cola and the Cold War: The French face Americanization, 1948-1953', *French Historical Studies*, 17:1 (1991), p. 96.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

57. Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy*, p. 16.

58. MacDonald, 'Those who forget historiography', pp. 47-49.

# Coined Connections:

Exploring interactions in north-west Europe during the seventh century



Figure 1: Metal-detecting in Northumberland (Image: Author's own).



Kelly Clarke-Neish

Dr Kelly Clarke-Neish recently completed her PhD in the departments of Archaeology and History at Durham and she is currently a tutor in Late Antique/Medieval History in the department. Her research explores a range of political, social and economic connections in north-west Europe during the early-medieval period (c. AD 500-850) from a transnational perspective. As an active member of both the departments of Archaeology and History, she is also keen to promote the benefits of interdisciplinary research and encourage dialogue and projects across disciplines.

Last year marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Treasure Act's commencement in England, Wales and Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Under the current terms of the Act, finders of gold and silver objects, as well as coins, that are over 300 years old must report their discovery within fourteen days or, alternatively, once they realise that their find might be classed as treasure.<sup>2</sup> As a hobby, metal-detecting has made an immeasurable contribution to the study of early-medieval coinage and ongoing debates surrounding the origins of the European economy. Since the surviving textual evidence pertaining to the production and use of coinage is in short supply, and the sources that do exist are limited in what they can tell us, the hundreds of coins reported by detectorists to the *Portable Antiquities Scheme* (PAS) and *Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds* (EMC) each year have been crucial in shedding new light on the manufacture, distribution and use of coins during the early medieval period.<sup>3</sup> The increasing quantity of gold coinage found as a result of metal-detecting, for example, clearly indicates that the use of gold coins was more diverse both functionally and socially during the seventh century.

In particular, a growing number of finds demonstrate a clear link between gold coins and bullion during this period. A number of gold coins have been found by detectorists featuring additional pieces of gold, most likely to increase their weight to the correct standard. A gold tremissis found in Dover (Kent), for instance, had a blob of gold added to its reverse whilst coins found at both Rendlesham (Suffolk) and Beachamwell (Norfolk) had fragments of coin added to them (figure 2).<sup>4</sup> Such finds complement other discoveries including scale and weight sets deposited in several late-sixth and seventh-century Anglo-Saxon burials that show a close correspondence with the average weight-standards of contemporary Merovingian and Byzantine coins.<sup>5</sup> Taken together, these finds seem to suggest that gold coins were in fact a recognised unit of account and formed part of a multi-currency economy, contrary to what scholars have previously assumed.<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps the most significant find reported by detectorists in the last five years is the West Norfolk hoard: the largest early-medieval coin hoard found in Britain

since the discovery of ninety-seven early-medieval coins at Crondall, Hampshire in 1828.<sup>7</sup> The hoard consists of 132 coins, mainly of Merovingian and Byzantine origin, as well as four other gold objects: a gold ingot, a bracteate pendant and two other jewellery fragments.<sup>8</sup> The presence of these objects alongside the coins further reinforces the relationship between coin and bullion: analysis of the ingot demonstrated that the piece had been broken and weighed roughly the same as two gold coins.<sup>9</sup> Based on the type of coins deposited and an analysis of their gold content, the hoard is dated between c. AD 613 and c. AD 640, though an earlier date seems more likely in light of the similarities identified between the coins in the hoard and the thirty-seven Merovingian coins from the purse found at the famous ship burial at Sutton Hoo, currently dated between AD 625 and 635.<sup>10</sup>

The contents of the hoard will undoubtedly advance our understanding of the early medieval economy and prompt fresh and exciting future research into the role

1. *The Treasure Act* (1996): <https://www.gov.uk/treasure> (accessed: March 2022). The Treasure Act only applies to England, Wales and Ireland. In Scotland, any find regardless of age or material are subject to claim by the Crown under the *Treasure Trove Law* and must be reported: <https://treasuretrovescotland.co.uk/documents/code-of-practice/> (accessed: March 2022).

2. In 2020, plans were unveiled by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to modify the definition of treasure to protect and prevent the private sale of objects of cultural and historical importance that are not made of gold or silver.

3. *Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds* (EMC): <https://emc.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/> (accessed: March 2022); *Portable Antiquities Scheme* (PAS): <https://finds.org.uk/database> (accessed: March 2022).

4. PAS references KENT-585A3A (Dover) and NMS-9E71B5 (Beachamwell); EMC number 2013.0198 (Rendlesham).

5. Christopher Scull, 'Scales and Weights in Anglo-Saxon England', *Archaeological Journal*, 147:1 (1990), pp. 183-215.

6. For an overview of scholarship, see Rory Naismith, *Medieval European Coinage 8: Britain and Ireland c. 400-1066* (Cambridge, 2017), chapters 3 and 4.

7. PAS reference NMS-934673; C.H.V. Sutherland, *Anglo-Saxon Gold Coinage in the Light of the Crondall Hoard* (Oxford, 1948).

8. PAS reference NMS-934673; Adrian Marsden, 'The West Norfolk hoard, East Anglia's Trophy type thrymsas and Anglo-Saxon nummular brooches', *Norfolk Archaeology*, XLVIII (2020), pp. 400-402, pp. 405-407.

9. PAS reference NMS-934673.

10. Gareth Williams, 'The circulation, minting and use of coins in East Anglia, c. AD. 580-675', in David Bates and Robert Liddiard (eds.), *East Anglia and its North Sea World in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 120-122.



Figure 2: Selection of seventh-century issues with additional pieces of gold from A) Dover (PAS ref. KENT-585A3A), B) Rendlesham (EMC number 2013.0198) and C) Beachamwell (PAS ref. NMS-9E71B5). Coins not to scale.

of coins in facilitating exchange and interactions. Incredibly, though, the contents of the hoard could have been lost to us. Rather than being found as one package, as was the case with the Crondall Hoard, the finds were discovered piecemeal by two detectorists, with the first coin find reported in 1990.<sup>11</sup> Whilst one of the detectorists reported every one of his finds, the second detectorist failed to do so and went on to sell at least ten coins on the black market.<sup>12</sup> Even more surprising is the fact that the second detectorist was also a serving police officer with over thirty years of experience as a detectorist and would have been well aware of both the legal requirement to report his discoveries as well as their historical significance. Fortunately, all but two of the coins sold by the detectorist have since been recovered, and Norwich Castle Museum hopes to acquire the contents of the hoard.

Whilst the study of coinage in Britain has benefitted from a positive relationship between detectorists and the authorities—despite what this exceptional circumstance suggests—the same cannot be said of the situation across the Channel. In France, the laws surrounding metal-detecting are far more ambiguous, and finds more often than not go unreported and are subsequently lost to private collectors.<sup>13</sup> Over a decade ago, an attempt to record coin finds was made following the establishment of an online database known as NUMMUS, but the database remains largely underdeveloped to date.<sup>14</sup> Moving further north, meanwhile, the Netherlands have made concerted effort to replicate the success of PAS in Britain through the development of the *Portable Antiquities Netherlands* (PAN) following the introduction of a new heritage law in 2016, which finally legalised metal detecting.<sup>15</sup> Despite these efforts, then, there is a huge disparity in both the availability and accessibility of coin evidence from overseas compared to the evidence from Britain. Crucially, this makes meaningful comparative studies far more difficult to undertake.

Nonetheless, some significant observations can be drawn from the few seventh-century Anglo-Saxon coin finds that have been reported in France and the Netherlands. Firstly, we can see that these coins are scattered along the coastline and seem to be within close proximity to waterways where they are otherwise found further inland (figure 3). This distribution is significant since it strongly suggests that these coins are the result of Anglo-Saxon maritime traffic and evidence, therefore, of direct trade and interaction between these groups. A significant number of these coins, moreover, were recovered around Étapes in the Pas-de-Calais department in northern France. This is telling since Étapes is also the location of an important port known as Quentovic, which, crucially, appears in texts that recount Anglo-Saxon travel across the English Channel.<sup>16</sup>

We can also see that the small number of gold coins (represented on the map by pink dots) that have been recovered to date were found a great distance from one another. This distribution indicates that these coins reached their final destination via different connections and routes. One of the gold coins, for instance, was found along the Seine River at a site near Rouen.<sup>17</sup> Rouen was an important administrative and ecclesiastical centre throughout the Merovingian period in France, and so the coin could possibly be linked to monastic travel to this region.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the surviving textual evidence referring to Anglo-Saxon monastic travel hints at gold coinage from the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms reaching monastic sites in the Seine Valley during the second half of the seventh century. In his account of Eorcengota of Kent's death at the monastery of Faremoutiers-en-Brie,



Figure 3: Snapshot of seventh century Anglo-Saxon coins found in northern Gaul (Image: Author's own).

Bede describes that Eorcengota had a vision in which a crowd of men entering the monastery had brought back with them a golden coin (*aurum nomisma*) from Kent.<sup>19</sup> The coin in question is an example of a 'Trophy' type thrymsa, and their representation amongst finds from Norfolk and Suffolk may indicate that these coins were produced in the kingdom of East Anglia.<sup>20</sup> The East Anglian kingdom shared strong political and ecclesiastical links with Merovingian Gaul throughout the seventh century. The East Anglian king, Sigeberht, for instance, had spent his early life as an exile in Gaul, and his name also indicates a dynastic connection with the area since several Merovingian kings were also called Sigeberht.<sup>21</sup> Whilst in Gaul, moreover, Sigeberht had converted to Christianity and maintained his connection with the Merovingian Church following his return to East Anglia, as evidenced in his request for a bishop from the Merovingian Church.<sup>22</sup> Many women also travelled from the kingdom to the region in order to enter monastic foundations. Both Sæthryth and Æthelburh, the stepdaughter and daughter, respectively, of Anna of East Anglia, travelled from the kingdom to the monastery at Faremoutiers and were later appointed as abbesses there.<sup>23</sup> It is certainly possible, therefore, that this particular coin reached its final destination in Rouen through these female connections.

Clearly, the question of who was using and interacting with coins is central to numismatic study. The study of numismatics, however, remains a predominantly male dominated discipline—I have often found myself as the only woman presenting research at conferences concerning coins—resulting in a lack of gendered perspectives on coin use in the past. Focusing on their reuse, though, particularly as pendants, offers a fascinating window into female engagement with early medieval coins. As of 2022, there are almost 160 coins dated to the period c. AD 550-710 that display evidence of their reuse as pendants, either from being pierced, mounted or having the addition of a gold loop for suspension.<sup>24</sup> One of the more recently discovered examples is of a looped gold tremissis found in Bishop Auckland (County Durham) in 2019 (figure 4).<sup>25</sup> This coin is particularly fascinating

since very few Merovingian tremisses have been reported north of the Humber outside of Yorkshire. Moreover, the coin was minted in Huy (Liège, Belgium), and there are currently very few examples of this type from Britain. Could its rarity in the region have influenced the wearer's decision to modify this coin? The modification also demonstrates significant investment in the form of an additional beaded gold border and ribbed loop for suspension. Examining the types of coins modified, the relationship between the modification and design, as well as their distribution, evidently has the potential to provide us with new and exciting insights into the multifarious meanings early medieval coins carried.



Figure 4: Looped tremissis of Huy discovered in Bishop Auckland, County Durham (PAS ref. DUR-EFD9E4)

The emergence of coinage during the seventh century transformed the social and economic landscape of north-west Europe, and, as these examples demonstrate, metal-detected finds lay at the centre of our attempt to understand this fascinating phenomenon. Importantly, understanding the movement and use of coins in the past strongly rests upon the journeys they take in the present day. Whilst the situation in Britain surrounding the movement of treasure may be in a far better place when compared to the state of play overseas, the story of the West Norfolk hoard reminds us that we must not take our situation for granted.

11. PAS reference NMS-934673.

12. Marsden, 'The West Hoard', p. 400.

13. The National Council for Metal Detecting (NCMD) outlines the current laws regarding metal-detecting across Europe: <http://www.ncmd.co.uk/law.html> (accessed: March 2022).

14. NUMMUS: <https://www.unicaen.fr/crahm/Nummus/> (accessed: April 2022).

15. *Portable Antiquities Netherlands* (PAN): <https://portable-antiquities.nl/pan/#/public> (accessed: April 2022).

16. Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed and trans. B. Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1972), IV.1; Stephen of Ripon, *Vita Sancti Wilfrithi*, ed and trans. Bertram Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid* (Cambridge, 1927), chapter 25.

17. Adrian Marsden, 'East Anglia's earliest issues: The Trophy type shillings', *Caesarmagus*, 120 (2016), pp. 50-51.

18. Nancy Gauthier, 'Rouen pendant le Haut Moyen-Âge (650-850)', in H. Atsma (ed.), *La Neustrie. Les Pays au Nord de la Loire de 650 à 850: Colloque Historique International, Tome 2* (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 1-20.

19. Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, III.8.

20. Marsden, 'East Anglia's earliest issues', pp. 50-59.

21. Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II.15, III.18; Ian Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450-751* (Harlow, 1994), p. 177.

22. Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II.15, III.18.

23. *Ibid.*, III.8.

24. I am currently working on a collaborative project with Dr Katie Haworth (Cambridge University) cataloguing and examining coin pendants from Anglo-Saxon England (c. AD 550-710).

25. PAS reference DUR-EFD9E4.

# Social Decline in Late Medieval England



Figure 1: An illustration of a harvest scene, alongside the calendar page for August, from *The Golf Book* (British Library, London, Add MS 24098, f. 25v).



Dr Alex Brown

Dr Alex Brown joined the History department as an undergraduate in 2005 and has never left! As an Associate Professor in Medieval History, his research has focused upon socio-economic recovery after the Black Death and the lasting impact of these changes upon English society into the Early Modern period. He is currently preparing a monograph on social mobility in late medieval England, which focuses especially upon the fear of social decline and the role of the life cycle and gender in its articulation.

In recent decades, social mobility has become a key political battleground in much of the western world.<sup>1</sup> The absolute upward mobility created by a combination of upskilling and economic growth in post-war Britain, for example, led to the rapid expansion of families entering the middle classes. And yet, there cannot be 'more room at the top' in perpetuity, and fears of social decline have thus placed social mobility firmly on the political agenda—fears which have been exacerbated by recent experiences of financial collapse and global pandemic. Although historians have become more attuned to how such social anxieties can shape society, the social history of late medieval England serves as a perfect example of how social mobility is still often used as a synonym for *upward* mobility. Late medieval society has thus traditionally been portrayed as 'an age of ambition' as land was more readily available, prices were cheap and real wages were high after roughly half of the population died during the Black Death of 1347-1351.<sup>2</sup>

Most detrimental to past efforts in studying historic social mobility, however, has been the fact that 'standard measures of social mobility often focus only on fathers and sons.'<sup>3</sup> In more quantitative studies, this reflects the methodology of correlating patrilineal incomes or occupations, but even in more qualitative works scholars have tended to focus on the success of socially ambitious, male careerists. In so doing, past approaches have overlooked the vital role women played in both achieving advancement and staving off decline within the family, and the social mobility of women remains a topic long neglected in historical research.<sup>4</sup> Our knowledge has been further hampered by a simplicity in assuming that 'people, of course, have two parents'.<sup>5</sup> Remarriage—either caused by high rates of mortality in medieval England or by

high rates of divorce in modern society—confounds such simplistic attempts to compare fathers and sons, especially when measuring social mobility over multiple generations. Around one in five families in late medieval England experienced a situation where children were likely to leave the parental home because of the death of a parent, and up to one-sixth of children faced a subsequent transit to a second or third household.<sup>6</sup> A particularly extreme example of this is William Aungier, whose father died before his birth in 1342, and was subsequently brought up with his mother, stepfather and maternal grandfather in Yorkshire until all three adults died during the Black Death in 1349; after which he moved households a further four times during a wardship, his schooling and an underage marriage.<sup>7</sup> Such turmoil caused people to take desperate measures in order to stave off social decline. When Sir Robert Darcy died childless in the early fifteenth century, for example, he left four sisters and their heirs in dispute with his widow, Margaret, who stood accused of feigning pregnancy after her husband's death, borrowing another woman's child to complete the deception, and selling her late husband's estate in Durham.<sup>8</sup>

What impact, then, did such familial complexity have upon the prospects for the social mobility of stepchildren? How far did remarriage spell the beginning of neglect and social decline for children of a previous marriage? Or did remarriage instead provide new opportunities for widows and stepchildren? After all, there could be potential benefits to such arrangements, and a 'new husband could help protect a widow's property and the rights of her children, and women may have been more likely to remarry if they had underage offspring'.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, this would be the ideal scenario, with children potentially benefitting from inheriting property and goods from their birth parents as

1. J.H. Goldthorpe, 'Understanding – and Misunderstanding – Social Mobility in Britain: The Entry of the Economists, the Confusion of Politicians and the Limits of Educational Policy', *Journal of Social Policy*, 42 (2013), pp. 431-450. See also C. Crawford et al., *Social Mobility: A Literature Review* (London, 2011).

2. F.R.H. Du Boulay, *An Age of Ambition: English Society in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1970). See also R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth-Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1994).

3. Gregory Clark, *The Son Also Rises: Surnames and the History of Social Mobility* (Princeton, 2014), p. 290; Santiago Pérez, 'Intergenerational Occupational Mobility Across Three Continents', *The Journal of Economic History*, 79 (2019), pp. 383-416.

4. Marco H.D. Van Leeuwen 'The Next Generation of Historical Studies on Social Mobility: Some Remarks', *Continuity and Change*, 24 (2009), pp. 547-560.

5. Clark, *The Son Also Rises*, p. 290.

6. Philippa Madder, 'Between Households: Children in Blended and Transitional Households in Late Medieval England', *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, 3 (2010), pp. 65-86.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-86.

8. Durham University Archives and Special Collections, DCD Loc.V:15.

9. Rachel E. Moss, *Fatherhood and its representations in Middle English texts* (Woodbridge, 2013), p. 157.

well as their stepparents, alongside having the latter to help protect and promote their rights. However, remarriage could also spell disaster for some, precipitating the social decline of children from previous marriages as they became increasingly marginalised in the new, blended family. We can see how such arrangements could lead to conflict, especially over inheritance, which could put considerable strains upon family relations. This happened in 1429 when Richard Armburgh wrote of his stepson, Robert Kedington, that:

Roberd my wyues sone and his wyf ben partid from vs in greet wrath and is in full purpos to hurle with vs for his fadirs enheritaunce withoute we yeve hym a gretter pension than yt lyth in oure pouer to bere.<sup>10</sup>

Robert did not think that his stepfather was aiding him sufficiently, whilst, for his part, Richard felt as though he had provided his stepson with as large a pension as he could afford. Although many of Kedington's problems derived from his time as an underage ward at the hands of the earl of Oxford, the strained relationship with his stepfather did not help matters. Upon learning of Kedington's death the following year, Armburgh notified his farmers 'that I sent to you be my letre that ye paie Robert Kedyngton my wyves sone the annuyte specified in his endentour, loke that ye paye yt no longer, for I haue werry word and ful knowleche that he ys ded and beried'.<sup>11</sup> Although we should be cautious of reading too much into the matter-of-fact tone of medieval letters, it seems likely that the pair were estranged, and Richard's identification of Robert as his wife's son suggests a level of distance in their relationship.

We can also see how such inequalities might affect children from a previous marriage, for example, in the will of John Cowpere of Bardwell, who instructed his executors in 1441 to sell his lands and the money raised to be 'distributed equally among my surviving children by the aforesaid Alice, that is, William, John and Margery'.<sup>12</sup> But he also notes another son, Thomas, living at 'Le Tolcote' by Bury, who was to have '3s 4d on condition he do not impede my executors in carrying out my will'.<sup>13</sup> In a sample of medieval wills, there appears to be a higher proportion of stepdaughters receiving bequests than stepsons, and this may have reflected a genuine concern over their position, especially if they were underage or had not yet married. By comparison, stepsons may have been more likely to inherit from their birth parents and were thus expected to be more independent by stepfathers. Some items that were bequeathed, such as a solitary cow, sheep or a bushel of barley, were a largely symbolic bequest and so had little impact upon stimulating social mobility. Yet such inheritance is important because it suggests a



Figure 2: Medieval illustration of men harvesting wheat with reaping-hooks, on a calendar page for August from *The Queen Mary Psalter* (British Library MS. Royal 2. B. VII, fol. 78v).

level of disregard—or incapacity—in either supporting the advancement of stepchildren or for safeguarding against their potential decline. Given the broad status of testators, however, it is only by comparing how such stepchildren fared with other recipients that we can begin to understand the impact of remarriage upon the prospects of stepchildren.

One of those bequeathing a solitary sheep to each—unnamed—stepson and stepdaughter was Alexander Carew, esquire of Anthony, who gave nearly 100s to various churches and individuals and the residue of his goods to his birth son and wife.<sup>14</sup> Despite not mentioning any children of his own, John Preest of St Albans bequeathed a mere 12d to George, his wife's son, the same amount he gave towards a new church bell.<sup>15</sup> An unnamed testator, referred to simply as Aubry, gave extensive gifts to his biological son and daughter, mentioning six named tenements in his will, yet Margaret, his wife's daughter was to have a solitary cow.<sup>16</sup> The presence of other children, therefore, did not seem to matter and unless such stepchildren received a significant bequest from their birth parents, remarriage could lead to a significant marginalisation for stepchildren. Yet, there was also considerable variation in experiences and, although some were clearly negative, other testators were content to divide goods with stepchildren more evenly. For example, John Swayn of Lavenham gave Agnes Barker 'my daughter' 6s 8d and to Agnes Mellere 'my wife's daughter' the same sum of 6s 8d in 1441, whilst others split goods equally with stepchildren.<sup>17</sup> An example of the kind of windfall possible comes from that experienced by the Pellycan brothers who, in their father's will of 1444, received cash bequests as follows: John £10, a cart and five horses; William £10; Thomas five marks; James five marks; Rose ten marks; and Katherine five marks. Their mother, Seyva, went



Figure 3: Illustration from John Lydgate's *Siege of Troy*, showing the Wheel of Fortune turned by the Quene of Fortune (John Rylands Library, Manchester, English MS 1, fol. 28v.)

on to marry John Borle who left a will in 1453, which made provision for his stepsons, with Thomas and James each receiving a tenement and garden adjacent to that of Borle's own children whilst William was named an executor to his stepfather; clearly, a much more harmonious relationship than many experienced.<sup>18</sup>

The prospects of stepchildren, then, were as varied as there were families in late medieval England. Even within families, there could be considerable differences, with Richard Armburgh—who seems so estranged from his stepson above—having a seemingly much less fractious relationship with his stepdaughter. Yet, there is sufficient evidence to suggest both a fear of the impact of remarriage upon the prospects of children and some potential reality in their marginalisation. Such was its pervasiveness that the

trope of the wicked stepmother entered into the realm of the proverbial in medieval society. When describing the fickleness of Fortune in bringing someone low, the *Romaunt of the Rose* described her 'as a stepmoder envious.' In the *Tale of Beryn*, the warning was stark: 'let hym have no stepmoder, for children had tofore/Comelich they loveth nat', which was acted out in the *Gesta Romanorum*, where the emperor's wife treated his two sons differently depending upon which she believed to be her birth son.

Although only a brief foray into the prospects of stepchildren in late medieval England, we already begin to see the dangers of studying social mobility solely from the perspective of fathers and sons. The reality of social mobility, and especially the prospects of social decline, was an altogether more complex affair.

10. C. Carpenter (ed.), *The Armburgh Papers: The Brokholes Inheritance in Warwickshire, Hertfordshire and Essex, c.1417-1453* (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 112.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

12. Peter Northeast (ed.), *Wills of the Archdeaconry*

*of Sudbury, 1439-1474: Wills from the Register 'Baldwyne', Suffolk Records Society, 44* (2001), p. 37.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

14. Nicholas Orme (ed.), *Cornish Wills, 1342-1540*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 50 (Exeter,

2007), p. 103.

15. Susan Flood (ed.), *St Albans Wills, 1471-1500*, Hertfordshire Record Society, 9 (1993), p. 27.

16. Northeast (ed.), *Wills of the Archdeaconry of Sudbury*, p. 481.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 100 and p. 287. There is no mention of the other Pellycan children, who may have perhaps died or moved away in the intervening years. It is notable that, despite having a son and a daughter of his own, Borle still made provisions for the Pellycan brothers, including entrusting William as executor.



## Contact us

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We hope you have enjoyed the twelfth issue of *Symeon*. We would like to include more about you, our alumni, in subsequent issues, so please get in touch and let us know what you are doing now. Whether you have a job related to history and the skills you developed during your study in the department or you have moved on to something entirely different, we would love to hear from you! We would also be delighted to hear your thoughts on *Symeon*. Perhaps you have ideas for future articles or subject areas you would like us to cover. You might even consider contributing an article yourself. We would be thrilled to have your thoughts.

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**We hope you enjoyed Issue Twelve. Until next time!**

# SYMEON

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