

# SYMEO N

..... ISSUE EIGHT .....



The magazine for Durham University History alumni

2018





This year, Durham goes global! The History Department's position as the locus of international networks has featured in previous issues, but the theme has come to the fore with this year's articles. Our authors use Durham as a base to explore international phenomena, and to reflect on themes which are globally relevant. The History Department has always enabled vibrant exchanges, with historians travelling as far as Africa, North America and China for their research, and new students making the reverse trip to study at Durham University. Symeon captures a snapshot of this dynamic, intellectual, global network.

This issue of Symeon features a range of articles which demonstrate Durham's place in a global community. Justin Willis' piece on the moral economy of elections in Africa, rising from his role in the 'Impact of Elections' project, demonstrates the ways in which relationships are formed between officials and local communities in recently formed democracies. Michael Aspin describes the relationship between Britain and the wider world through the case study of Parliamentary involvement with the 'Bulgarian Horrors' of 1876. Clarissa Cahill, Durham Cathedral's Marketing and Communications Officer, reflects on how the Cathedral's digitization projects and new exhibitions make history accessible to both the local and international communities.

Our interest in local history remains vibrant alongside these international projects. Adrian Green reveals a longer history of education through the subject of 'New College', an Oliver Cromwell-inspired initiative that predates the establishment of Durham University

by over 150 years. On the far side of this historical narrative, Ellen Paterson updates us about the successful year of talks and travels in the History Society. Abigail Steed demonstrates the complex conversations around the subject of martyrdom in the case of the Anglo-Saxon Saint Ælfheah. On the hundredth anniversary of female suffrage, Henry Miller and Ciara Stewart demonstrate the significance of female petitions in an article originally published online in *The Conversation*.

Our two alumni features strike a balance between international travel and building a life in the North East. In 'History Graduates: Where are they now?', we reached out to Reetta Humalajoki, Ben Pope and Lindsay Varner, all former postgraduate contributors to Symeon, about the path of their post-graduation lives in Finland, America and Germany. David Dougan provides a longer history of the ways in which his Durham degree has influenced his career and passions in English journalism, arts and history in the North East.

Movement and change are also evident within Symeon's editorial board, which has an entirely changed team of editors after the retirement of Mark Bennett, Caitlin Phillips and Alanna Freedman-Manke. Thank you for your amazing work and clear handover instructions! The new editorial team consists of Kathleen Reynolds, Antonia Perna, Rhiannon Snaith, Grace Stephenson and Ryan Wicklund. Additionally, Sarah Davies has taken the reins of the head of the Department and member of the Symeon editorial board.

Our alumni community also demonstrates Durham's global impact, as you emerge from your graduation ceremonies ready to take up positions across Britain and the world. We would love to hear where your history degree has taken you! Please get in touch using the contact details on the penultimate page.

And, as always, we hope you enjoy this year's Symeon!

#### SYMEON BOARD OF EDITORS:



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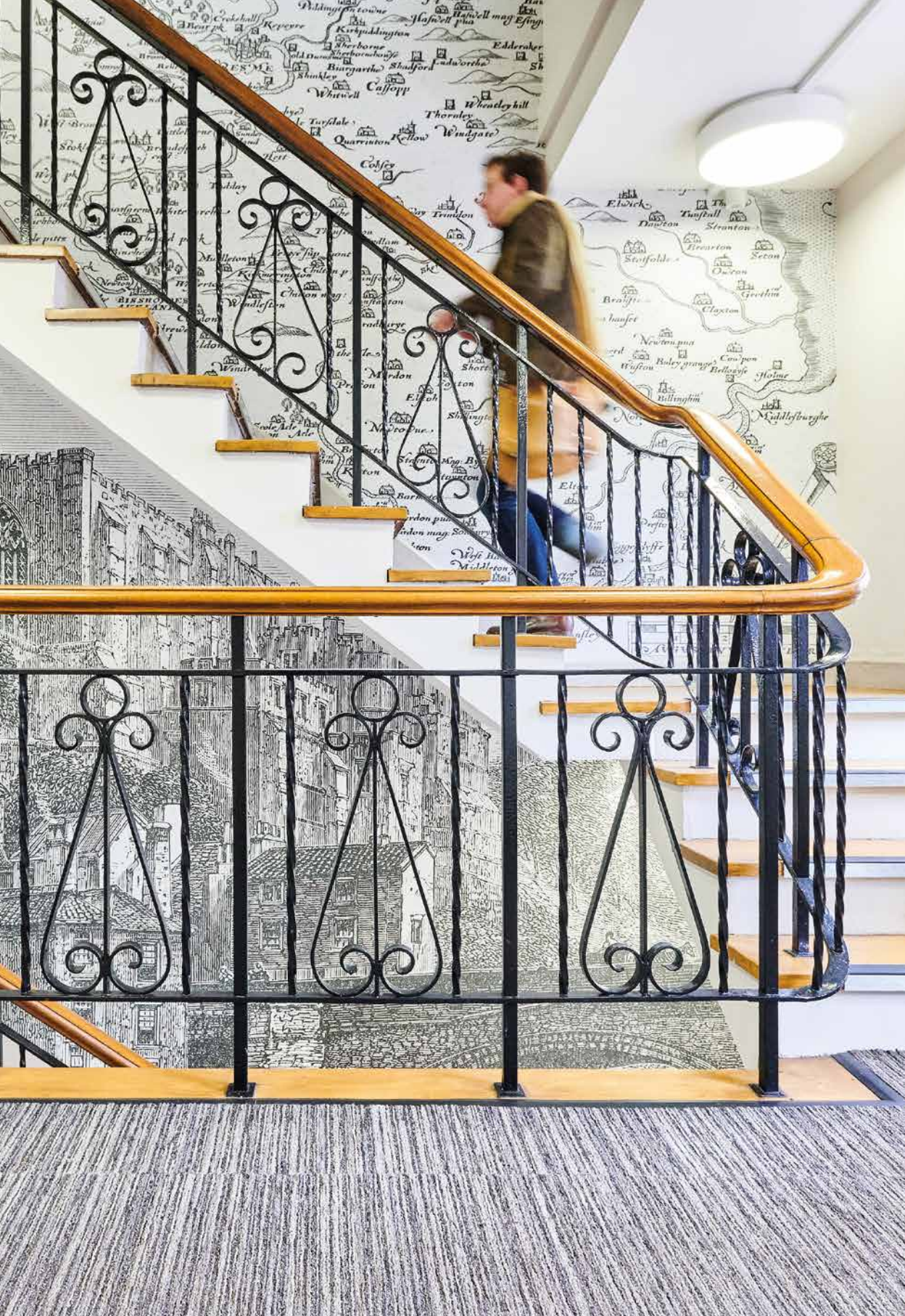


GRACE STEPHENSON



RYAN WICKLUND





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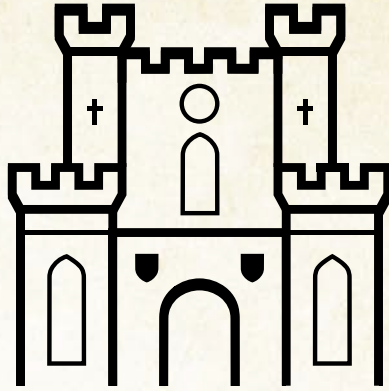
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*FRONT COVER:* This issue's bookshelf belongs to David Minto, Assistant Professor of Modern British History. He studies histories of gender and sexuality in transnational perspectives, and his upcoming book is titled *An Intimate Atlantic: The special relationship of transnational homophile activism.*





THE FIRST

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# DURHAM UNIVERSITY

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Durham University was founded in 1832 by Bishop Van Mildert. This High Church initiative was intended to promote education in the North of England as a direct challenge to the evangelical Low Church movement active in the industrial communities of the Great North Coal Field.



**ADRIAN GREEN**

Adrian Green is an Associate Professor in the Department of History. His research concerns the social and economic history and archaeology of the period 1450-1750, with his main interests focusing on housing in Britain and its colonies.



Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth from 1653-1658.

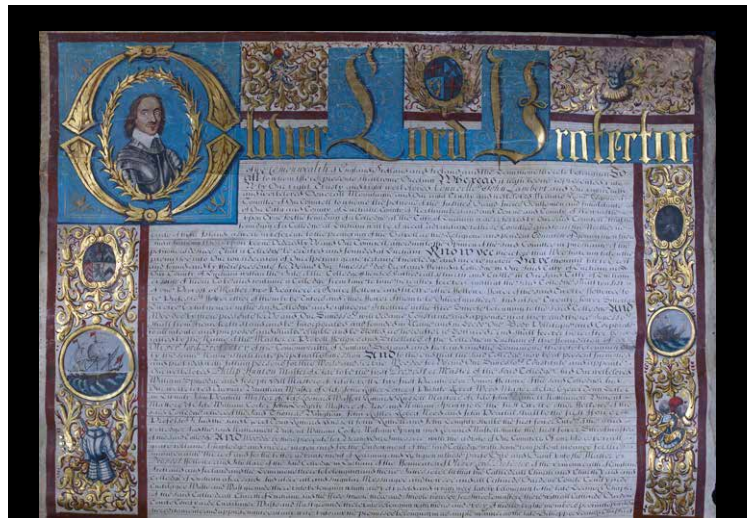
Bishop Van Mildert gave Durham Castle, with its episcopal library and furnishings, to form the core of a new university. 'Castle' became University College. This, however, was the second attempt to found a university at Durham. One hundred and eighty years earlier, 'New College' had been created under Oliver Cromwell. The foundation of a new university in the North of England in the 1650s made use of the cathedral complex left vacant by the Civil Wars. The Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral was abolished following Parliament's victory over Charles I. The first university at Durham was a Puritan initiative. It was in many ways a mirror-image of the 1830s foundation—providing a university for the North of England that would equip clergy, scholars and gentlemen with learning, but with a Puritan rather than a High Church agenda.

Proposed as a site for a new university as soon as the cathedral became vacant in the mid-1640s, the college was not established until after the civil wars ended. Famously, Scots prisoners from the Battle of Dunbar were marched to Durham to spend the winter of 1650-1 in the Cathedral. New College was established from 1653, and remained active until the Restoration in 1660. Statutes were drawn up in 1657, which survive in Durham Cathedral Library Hunter MS.47. These detail safeguards against maladministration, and set out a regimen of college life for scholars and fellows. Methods of teaching involved lectures, and 'disputations'

whereby 'scholars shall be accustomed and encouraged to propose to questions'. Stipends for fellows were established, with a librarian 'learned in languages'. Exhibitions were provided for poor scholars, with students drawn from schools across northern England. Under Statute 12, 'Oath of the Elected', Fellows were required to 'renounce all of Popery, Socinianism, Arminianism & Superstition'. Socinianism presumably refers to Quakerism, while Arminianism was the theology pursued by Archbishop Laud during Charles I's reign. Arminianism rejected Calvin's emphasis on predestination, and the conflict between High Church Arminianism and Calvinist Puritanism was central to the conflict over authority and worship in the Civil Wars. Puritan New College initially focused on training in the learned languages of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. This was in effect a foundation programme, equipping students with the skills necessary for seventeenth-century scholarship. Further faculties of Law and Physic were intended to be added once the College was fully founded as a university. The university at Durham thus envisaged a full range of Faculties in Theology, Philosophy, Law and Medicine. Its independence from Oxford and Cambridge is indicated by planned links to the University of

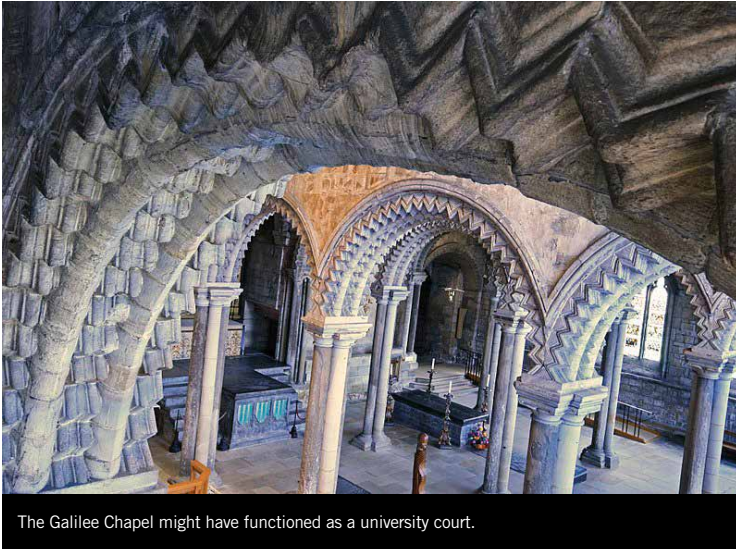
Paris—the leading university of late medieval Europe.

In European context, the lack of a university in the North of England was a glaring anomaly. Scotland like many European countries had established several universities in the Middle Ages, but England focused on Oxford and Cambridge, with the Inns of Court for legal training in London. A university for the North was repeatedly proposed, and Durham was a favoured site with its tradition of scholarship and learning under ecclesiastical patronage. Durham Priory was linked to Oxford, particularly Durham College, and Oxford might have created an outpost at Durham. The nearest these proposals came to fruition was in the context of the Dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, when Thomas Cromwell supported establishing a university at Durham in the 1530s. The idea was revived in the 1640s, as soon as the cathedral buildings became vacant. Given that the bishop's palace was also vacated, Durham Castle would have made a logical second college for the university. However, in 1660, the bishops and cathedrals were restored with the monarchy, and the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral along with the Bishopric of Durham returned to occupy their historic architecture.



Detail of the document drawn up by Oliver Cromwell in 1657 to formally establish an institution of higher learning in Durham. © Durham Cathedral.





The Galilee Chapel might have functioned as a university court.

Nevertheless, between 1653 and 1659, the cathedral buildings and gardens were converted to educational purposes. We can only speculate on how the cathedral might have been used. It presumably resembled the university churches in Oxford and Cambridge, and the use of churches by universities elsewhere in seventeenth-century Europe, particularly in the Netherlands. At Durham, the immense cathedral building would have been sub-divided. With the choir most likely retained as a place of worship, the rest of the building would have been available for different purposes. Teaching spaces in the Chapel of Nine Altars and Transepts seem likely, while the great nave of the cathedral would surely have served as a public space for lectures as well as matriculation and graduation ceremonies. The Galilee Chapel at the west end of the Cathedral might have functioned as a university court—just as university courts sat in the principal parish churches (both dedicated to St Mary) in Oxford and Cambridge. New College not only acquired the cathedral itself, but also the buildings around the cloisters and close. Samuel Hartlib's correspondence refers to 'one of the Auncientest of 8 hundred years building most of which bee underground', presumably relating to the under crofts. It is easy to imagine how the cloister ranges would have been used by New College, especially since

the Library remained in its medieval position on the east side of the cloister and what is now the Dean and Chapter Library created in the 1680s was still the Refectory. New College would thus have taken over the existing Library (preserving its books and manuscripts), with the Refectory served by the great Kitchen. The Monk's Dormitory would presumably have been partitioned into sleeping and study quarters for scholars. Tutors, meanwhile, would have been lavishly provided with the clergy's housing in the close, while the Deanery naturally became the Master's Lodge.

Israel Tonge (1621-1680) was the leading figure in establishing New College. Best described as an educationalist, Tonge came to Durham from Oxford—where he had been a schoolmaster in the 1640s as well as a university fellow. Although himself a Protestant, Tonge was interested in applying Jesuit teaching methods, and developing pictorial teaching. Fanatically anti-Catholic, Tonge later alleged the 'Popish Plot' to kill Charles II (and probably went mad as a result of his belief in this conspiracy theory). During the 1650s, as an ardent educationalist, Tonge was in correspondence with Samuel Hartlib (c.1600-1662). Educated at the University of Konigsberg and Cambridge, Hartlib was a German-British polymath—the Great

Intelligencer of Europe', who from his house in Westminster tirelessly promoted learning and a 'Great Instauration' (or rebirth) of knowledge across England through his energetic correspondence. Hartlib was directly funded by Parliament in the 1640s, and had support at Oxford University. The 'Hartlib Circle' of leading intellectuals is documented in their energetic correspondence, collected in *Ephemerides*, which is our best source for Durham College. In 1655, Hartlib noted that 'The fore-said College is related to the Northerne Counties the schools being to supply the college'. Endowed with '1,000 acres belonging to it', 'Durham College is already of £400 yearly revenue and £400 more in reversion.' Nevertheless, 'A Draught of new reformed statutes is most desired to avoid Errors in the foundation', while 'The buildings are very much decayed and yet were by Mr Tongs industry very much advanced'. The patrons of this new university for the North—'Lord Lambert is his great friends besides the Gentlemen of the Northerne Gentry Sir William Strickland, my Lord Ayres, Colonel Lilburne etc.'—were all leading figures in Cromwell's North of England.

Hartlib noted the appointment of Fellows and Masters at Durham College in 1657. 'One Sprig is a fellow of Durham College, excellent for drawing and painting and ver Optical also'. 'Mr Vaughan another Fellow undertaking in two years to fit schollars for University for Latin and Hebrew. Mr Vaughan *Didactica Linguae Latinae*'. 'Hinton the Master of it an Indesputable scholar, Also a Fellow of Magdalene College, a Universal Scholar—one of the Professors or Fellows.' Robert Wood wrote to Hartlib (3 March 1657) with the news that: 'I heare which I am glad of that the Colleg at Durham goes on (tho but slowly) and that I had the honour to bee proposed for a mathematical Professor'. Hartlib's correspondence also records experiments in agricultural improvement, noting in September 1658 'the growing of a new type of oats, called groats, at Durham College' and in July 1659, 'the growing of raspberries'.



College 930 was one of the sites of the New College. Photo by Durham World Heritage Site.



Although Durham College was successfully established, with the appointment of tutors and instruction of at least some students in languages and horticulture, it had not in fact been founded as a university before its closure. It was in effect a foundation college, awaiting its creation as a university. Regrettably, the actual university foundation had not been enacted before Oliver Cromwell's death in 1658. Cromwell's support appears to have been crucial, and the project subsequently foundered, not least due to the opposition of vested interests at Oxford and Cambridge, and alternative political and religious agendas. The church historian Thomas Fuller (1608-1661), wrote a lament for this university for the North in *The Worthies of England* (1662).

*'I understand that there is an intention of erecting a university in Durham, and that some hopeful progress is made in order thereunto, which I cannot but congratulate; for I listen not to their objection, Alleging it monstrous for one face to have three eyes (one land three universities); seeing I would wish that, Argus-like, it had an hundred in it. Would all men were Moses-minded, "that all the people of God might prophesy;" the rather because I am sure that ignorance is no more the mother of devotion, than*

*the lying harlot, which pleaded before Solomon, was mother to the living child. I confess I was always much affected with their fears, who suspect that this convenience for the North would be a mischief for the South, and this new one in process of time prove detrimental to the old universities. Nor were these jealousies, when moved, removed in any serious consideration, not being well satisfied of the intentions and design of some prime persons undertaking the same. But, since this freshman college lived not to be matriculated, much less (not lasting seven years) graduated, God in his wisdom seeing the contrary fitter; the worst I should have wished this new spring (if continuing) was pure water, pious and orthodox professors, to have principled and elemented the members therein with learning and religion.'*

Disagreements over religion obscured the greater need for a university that served the North of England, especially at a time when Durham was at the heart of an economically vibrant region. Northern England led the world in the Industrial Revolution, but remained without a university. The first university at Durham was to have been a university for, not merely in, the North.



College 704 was one of the sites of New College. Photo by Durham World Heritage Site.

# HISTORY SOCIETY

The History Society has had an incredibly successful and busy academic year, continuing to hold numerous talks, trips and events for its members. We have most definitely lived up to our reputation as one of Durham University's most active academic societies, and it has been a pleasure to serve as President for this year.

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**ELLEN PATERSON**

Ellen Paterson is a third-year undergraduate in the History Department from Trevelyan College. She is interested in sixteenth-century British political history.





This year's History Society Exec at Hadrian's Wall.

In both Michaelmas and Epiphany terms, we invited numerous academics from various universities to deliver talks on their current research. These talks were as fascinating as they were varied. From outside Durham we heard papers ranging from Manchester University's Thomas Tunstall Allcock on Lyndon Johnson's Cold War policy, to Jim Sharpe from York University discussing the social crisis in 1590s Elizabethan England. Furthermore, we also had talks from our own department: Eleanor Barraclough, Kevin Waite and Richard Huzzey all delivered papers on their research, talks which complemented numerous undergraduate modules

here at Durham. We enjoyed great levels of turnout at these throughout the year, helping to expose students to a range of cutting-edge research.

In February, we ran our annual History Society conference. This year's theme was 'the History of Sex', an exciting research topic which gave our conference co-ordinators the opportunity to invite speakers with research interests spanning numerous geographical areas and time periods. Numerous papers were delivered ranging from Jeremy Goldberg on the complexity of sex in medieval Europe, to Laura Tisdall on lesbianism in twentieth-century Britain. This was

a amazing conference. Our members really engaged with the papers— indeed, many interesting questions were posed by students throughout the day.

The History Society has also continued to run fantastic trips this term, taking both history and non-history students alike to areas of historical importance in the North East. In November, we ran a trip to Hadrian's Wall, accompanied by John-Henry Clay, who gave talks on the history of the wall and the Roman settlement. Despite the freezing weather, the trip was a great success, attended by both historians

and classicists. As well as walking along the wall itself, we were able to visit the Vindolanda Fort and Roman Army Museum. In February, we ran a joint trip to Lindisfarne Priory with the Theology Society. We were lucky enough to be accompanied by Eleanor Barraclough, who despite the early start of six o' clock and torrential rain and wind, kept us all entertained with stories of the first Viking raid there in 793. Not only were we able to explore the ruins and museum, but we also all thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to sample some Lindisfarne Mead. Despite bad weather present as a recurring theme on all of our trips, they have continued to be thoroughly enjoyable.

Perhaps the highlight of our social calendar this year was the History Society Winter Ball, an Elizabethan banquet hosted at Lumley Castle

in November. The ball sold out completely in a weekend, a first for the Society, and was certainly an amazing event. Over the course of the evening, we ate a five-course meal in historical style, accompanied by Tudor songs and entertainments. This proved to be a wonderful evening as always, and we had the opportunity to explore the beautiful and historical grounds of Lumley Castle. Whilst this was undoubtedly our biggest social event of the academic year, our social secretaries have continued to organize great history-themed socials and pub quizzes for our members.

The Society has also worked closely with the History Department this year to run events directly beneficial for students. In October, we held a book sale where students could sell their old course books at affordable prices. Within half an hour all of the books

had been sold. The event was such a success that we held a repeat at the end of the month. Additionally, at the end of the year we are hoping to run a dissertation 'open mic' style event, in which third-year students can present on their dissertations to second-years. We hope this will be of great help to those students who will begin the process of choosing a dissertation topic over the summer.

On behalf of all the exec, I would like to say a massive thank you to the History Department, who have continued to assist us with all of these activities throughout the year. This has certainly been a busy year for the History Society, and I hope that the following executive committee continues to maintain our reputation as the university's most active academic society.

Vice President of the History Society defending the wall.







*Revolting to the  
Consciousness of  
Englishmen, or  
Coffee-House Babble?*

**THE PARLIAMENTARY  
RESPONSE TO THE 1876  
'BULGARIAN HORRORS'**



**MICHAEL ASPIN**

Michael Aspin is a taught MA History student from St Chad's College. He is particularly interested in late nineteenth-century British foreign and imperial policy, and his dissertation will examine whether foreign policy played a role in the 1874 and 1880 general elections.

Dedicated to Joanne Elizabeth Aspin (1971–2011)

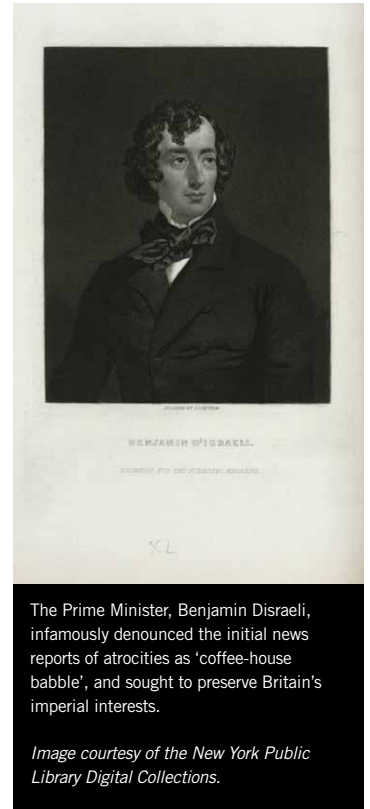


The response to the 1876 ‘Bulgarian Horrors’ is one of the most intriguing episodes in nineteenth-century British political history. The Ottoman government—which controlled Bulgaria—faced an uprising, and decided to employ irregular Bashi-Bazouk mercenaries to brutally suppress the rebellion. Scores of innocent men, women and children were killed, and the Victorian public was moved by graphic despatches from the *Daily News*: ‘The Bashi-Bazouks violate women, burn houses, destroy churches, cut into mince meat little children, and crucify and roast priests’.<sup>1</sup>

These massacres would later be called the ‘Bulgarian Horrors’ by William Gladstone.<sup>2</sup> Soon after these reports were printed, a nationwide atrocitarian campaign emerged, which called for Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli’s government to intervene against the Ottoman Empire to put an end to (and prevent further) atrocities. The *Economist* spoke of an ‘irresistible wave of public feeling ... [of] boiling anger and indignation’ that would only be satisfied with a military incursion into Ottoman Europe.<sup>3</sup> This is striking, for Britain was seen as a ‘more or less candid friend’ and ally of Constantinople.<sup>4</sup> The Conservative government would have to argue over whether to resist the popular agitation or give succour to the atrocitarians by launching an intervention. Similar debates were held in Parliament in late 1876

and early 1877, and this article will examine the Parliamentary response to the Bulgarian Horrors. It will argue that the question over whether to intervene was a delicate one (in spite of the noise and passion within the wider atrocitarian outrage) and an issue that transcended conventional party-political divisions, even though, ultimately, the desired intervention of the atrocitarians never materialized. Liberal titans like Gladstone found themselves on the same side as Tory grandees like the Duke of Argyll in calling for an intervention; the Liberal leadership found itself sharing the government’s reluctance to be drawn into a wider conflict in Southeast Europe. Broadly speaking, two main groups emerged: interventionists and imperialists, with the latter group being reluctant to intervene in order to ‘maintain the Empire of England’, a strategy that might have been endangered had Britain chosen to intervene.<sup>5</sup> Disraeli felt threatened by the prospect of a ‘Kremlin on the Bosphorus’, and Russian control of the region—a genuine possibility if the Ottoman Empire were weakened—would potentially threaten British access to India.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the summer of 1876, when the public became increasingly aware of the atrocities that had transpired, the popular agitation grew more intense. We should not underestimate the extent to which public opinion was outraged at the news. The historian E.A. Freeman accused Disraeli of allying Britain with a ‘foul despotism with whose deeds of unutterable wrong heaven and earth are ringing’.<sup>7</sup> Atrocitarian pressure also came from senior Church of England clergymen. The Archbishop of York said that the Ottoman Sultan had feet ‘planted in corruption and blood’, and the Bishop



The Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, infamously denounced the initial news reports of atrocities as ‘coffee-house babble’, and sought to preserve Britain’s imperial interests.

*Image courtesy of the New York Public Library Digital Collections.*

of Exeter called upon Disraeli to ‘stop this wickedness’.<sup>8</sup> One might have expected Parliament to echo such emotive and passionate language. This, however, was not the case. MPs and peers divided quite markedly over an appropriate response to the atrocities.

Disraeli was initially very sceptical of the first despatches from Bulgaria that emerged in the columns of the *Daily News*. Responding to a question from Liberal MP W.E. Forster, the Prime Minister stated that ‘we have no information in our possession’.<sup>9</sup> By the middle of July, Disraeli was under no doubt that ‘proceedings of

1. ‘The Atrocities in Bulgaria’, *Daily News*, 25 July 1876, p. 5.

2. See William Ewart Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* (London, 1876).

3. ‘The Turkish Atrocities’, *The Economist*, 12 August 1876, p. 943.

4. W.H. Dawson, ‘Forward Policy and Reaction, 1874–1885’

in A.W. Ward and G.P. Gooch (eds), *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783–1919: Volume III: 1866–1919* (Cambridge, 1923), p. 93.

5. Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard* [HC], vol. 231, 11 August 1876, col. 1146.

6. Gary J. Bass, *Freedom’s Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention* (United States, 2008), p. 287.

7. ‘The Debate on Bulgaria’, *Daily News*, 13 July 1876, p. 6.

8. Quoted in R.W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question: A Study in Diplomacy and Party Politics* (London, 1935), p. 83.

9. *Hansard* [HC], vol. 230, 26 June 1876, col. 425.



W.E. Forster lambasted Disraeli's lacklustre response to the initial reports of the atrocities.<sup>10</sup>

an atrocious character' had taken place, but he still hoped that the initial reports were exaggerated.<sup>11</sup> This response was regarded as lacklustre by a variety of Liberal MPs. Anthony Mundella, MP for Sheffield, lambasted the government for failing to remonstrate with the Ottoman government. He noted that the newspapers enthused about the presence of the 'magnificent' British fleet in the region but contained no information whatsoever about whether Disraeli had formally condemned the Ottomans for perpetrating the atrocities.<sup>12</sup> Mundella warned that the entire episode was 'a disgrace to humanity' and one that 'will form one of the bloodiest pages in history'.<sup>13</sup> He implored the government to do more. Forster was even more scathing: he argued that 'it is revolting to the consciousness of Englishmen that we should ... support the Power which has perpetrated these atrocities'.<sup>14</sup>

Such morally charged language stands in stark contrast to the Prime Minister's own thoughts on the Bulgarian atrocities. Disraeli denounced the reports of the massacres as mere 'coffee-house babble', and whilst this may appear grossly insensitive, the Prime Minister was not alone in sharing these sentiments.<sup>15</sup> William Forsyth, a Liberal MP, moved a moderate amendment that called for 'good and impartial government [in the Ottoman Empire] irrespective of race or creed'.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, it was withdrawn without being put to a vote. This relatively minor condemnatory motion itself indicates that a fully-fledged incursion into the Ottoman Empire was a long way from being debated in Parliament, notwithstanding the passionate moralistic language of certain members. The pro-intervention atrocitarians were far from commanding complete support in the Commons.

What is more intriguing, however, is how atrocitarian sentiments transcended the conventional party-political divides at Westminster. The Conservative Marquess of Bath argued that every Church 'would unite in protesting against the power of England' being used to support a 'blood-stained and savage rule'.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, the Tory Duke of Argyll, who was incredibly active in organizing atrocitarian protests, spoke at length in condemnation of the Ottomans, and frequently implored Disraeli to do more.<sup>18</sup> He argued that the conscience of the country awoke to the 'deplorable and horrible results' of the policy of supporting Turkey.<sup>19</sup> There is a marked contrast here with the official government position. Disraeli, in one of his final Commons

speeches before he was elevated to the Lords as Earl of Beaconsfield, stated that 'what our duty is at this critical moment is to maintain the Empire of England'.<sup>20</sup> It is clear that he had no intention of sending in troops to fight against the Ottomans. Disraeli was eloquently backed up by Conservative John Torr, who spoke directly to the atrocitarian campaigners when he attacked 'men of the highest position' for seeming to 'forget their responsibilities and their calmer judgement, and to listen only to the cry for vengeance'.<sup>21</sup> Conservative views on the most appropriate response to the atrocities were therefore divided.

Strange political alliances also reveal themselves when one considers the contributions of the 'icon' of the atrocitarian campaign, William Gladstone, who coined the term 'Bulgarian Horrors'.<sup>22</sup> In August 1876, he wrote a famous pamphlet in which he called for the 'extinction' of the Turks 'bag and baggage' from Southeast Europe via a military intervention.<sup>23</sup> In Parliament, however, his response was more limited. Rather than calling for an armed intervention to expel the Turks from Southeast Europe, he merely stated the need for getting rid of the 'difficulties of local administration by a Power which is wholly incompetent to conduct it'.<sup>24</sup> This is far removed from the powerful rhetoric of his pamphlet and public rally addresses. More than 10,000 atrocitarian sympathizers, desperate for an armed intervention to put an end to further massacres, endured pouring rain in Blackheath to hear Gladstone denounce Disraeli and propose an intervention in the name of common humanity.<sup>25</sup> His muted Parliamentary response is curious. Perhaps he realized that the MPs in the House

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11. *ibid.*, 10 July 1876, col. 1181.

12. *ibid.*, col. 1185.

13. *ibid.*

14. *ibid.*, col. 1183.

15. *Hansard* [HC], vol. 231, 31 July 1876, col. 203.

16. *ibid.*, col. 156.

17. *Hansard* [HL], vol. 231, 31 July 1876, col. 107.

18. On the Duke of Argyll's activism, see Seton-Watson, *Eastern Question*, p. 87.

19. *Hansard* [HL], vol. 232, 20 February 1877, col. 649.

20. *Hansard* [HC], vol. 231, 11 August 1876, col. 1146-47.

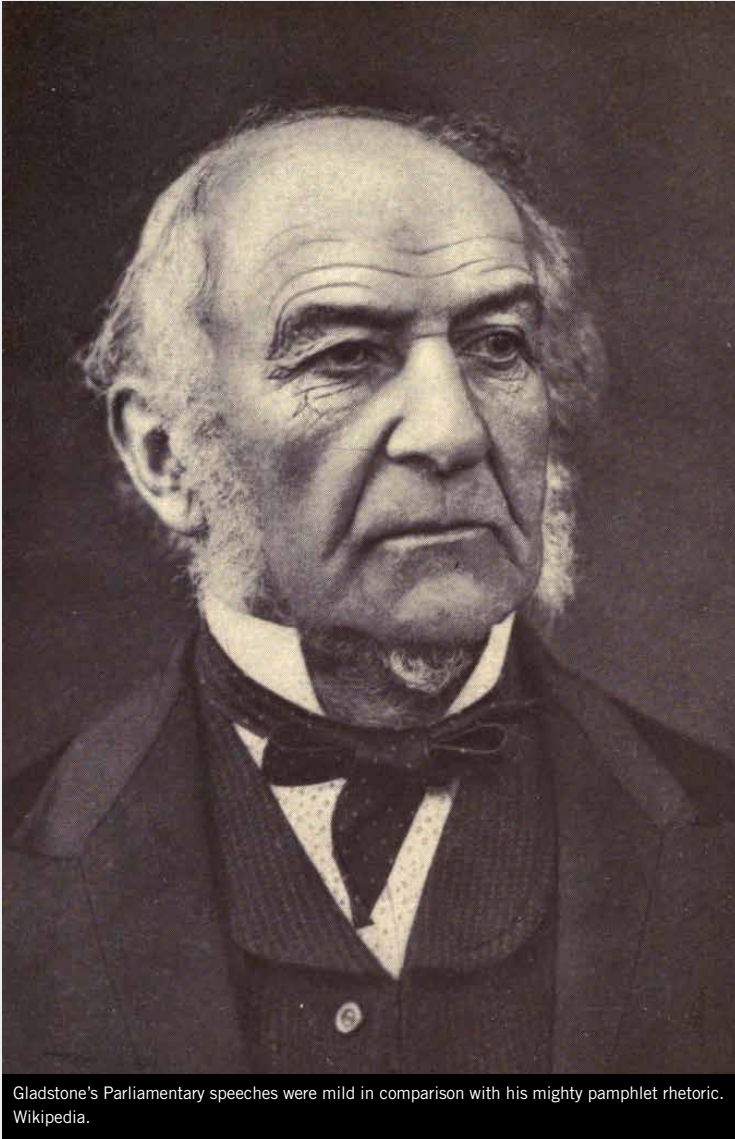
21. *ibid.*, vol. 232, 8 February 1877, col. 67.

22. Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914* (Princeton, 2012), p. 152.

23. W.E. Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors*, p. 31.

24. *Hansard* [HC], Vol. 231, 31 July 1876, col. 160.





Gladstone's Parliamentary speeches were mild in comparison with his mighty pamphlet rhetoric. Wikipedia.

of Commons were much less sympathetic towards an intervention, and this reluctance was proven in May 1877 when Gladstone attempted to move motions to condemn the Ottomans. All five were defeated,

25. 'Mr Gladstone on the Bulgarian Atrocities,' *Northern Echo*, 11 September 1876, p. 3.

26. *Hansard* [HC], Vol. 234, 8 May 1877, col. 501.

27. M. Swartz, *The Politics of British Foreign Policy in the Era of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Hong Kong, 1985), p. 58.

28. *Hansard* [HC], Vol. 566, 29 August 2013, col. 1,552.

even one that mentioned the 'protection of British interests', which ought to have courted the support of imperialist MPs.<sup>26</sup> Gladstone did not even propose an intervention—he merely called for money for the Royal Navy fleet in the area—and was still defeated. Most striking, however, is the fact that Gladstone's own Liberal whips pleaded with the government not to give him any Commons debating time!<sup>27</sup> This is indeed a most curious alliance, and it indicates that Parliament did not support an armed intervention as

ferociously as the noisiest sub-section of the atrocitarians. Britain remained neutral in the ensuing Russo-Turkish War, but the desired intervention never transpired.

The passion and ferocity of the atrocitarian campaigners was not matched in the Parliamentary response to the Bulgarian Horrors. Although there were emotive contributions from MPs and peers from both parties, they failed to stir up Parliament in favour of military action, and it is intriguing that conventional party loyalties broke down. Conservative peers spoke out against Disraeli's imperialistic preferences; the Liberal whips and leadership voted against Gladstone's (relatively limited) motions. Gladstone's mighty oratory and pamphlet rhetoric did not replicate themselves in his Commons contributions, and he was still defeated.

The debate over the Bulgarian Horrors proves that foreign affairs can create strange bedfellows in the British Parliamentary system, a trend that has a rich history and one that continues to this day. In 2013, thirty-one Conservative MPs sided with Labour to defeat David Cameron's motion authorizing military intervention in Syria to put an end to President Assad's deployment of chemical weapons.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the international response to Assad's most recent use of chemical weapons just this year shows that humanitarian intervention continues to be a highly contentious issue. Clearly, today's political parties can be just as easily divided as they were over a century ago in the wake of the terrible atrocities in Bulgaria.

# RECENT GRADUATES

## *WHERE ARE THEY NOW?*







Speaking about the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission at Historians Without Borders Finland.

## REETTA HUMALAJOKI

received her PhD in 2016 and is now an Academy of

Finland Postdoctoral Researcher at the John Morton Centre for North American Studies at the University of Turku.



My PhD viva was on 01 April 2016.

When the examiners said I had passed with no corrections, I thought it might be an April Fool's joke. I spent the following weekend suspended in disbelief. My thesis examined the language surrounding the Cold War era US policy termination, which aimed to remove the special legal status of American Indian tribes, under the guise of making Indigenous people 'full Americans'. The policy was an unequivocal disaster, resulting in tribes becoming further impoverished and losing thousands of acres in land. I had spent the weeks leading up to my viva reading through my thesis identifying all the areas in which it was lacking. I went in to my viva ready to pitch all the changes I would make in turning the thesis into

a monograph. As one of the examiners put it when I expressed surprise at their verdict: *"It was very clearly a PhD thesis."* As it turns out, that is enough to pass a viva.

The months following my viva were difficult. I worked part-time in non-academic jobs while I applied for 30+ lectureships, postdocs, and short-term fellowships. I was lucky to be offered seminar teaching at Durham and at Newcastle. I taught for a widening participation charity and was briefly a Visiting Early Career Researcher at Northumbria. I had an article accepted by the *Western Historical Quarterly*. I shaped plans for a new project, moving forward from mid-twentieth century American Indian policy to examine the development of national Indigenous organizations in the United States and Canada in the same period. I very slowly pieced together a book proposal. Eventually I managed to gain a short-term postdoc fellowship from the Eccles Centre for North American Studies at the British Library, allowing me to do the extra research for the book.

But I did not edit my thesis. Not because I assumed that 'no corrections' meant it was perfect. Instead it turns out that while working five part-time jobs, I simply had no energy, motivation or intellectual capacity left over to do so.

Today, I am an Academy of Finland Postdoctoral Fellow at the John Morton Center for North American Studies at the University of Turku. I moved back to Finland last September after ten years living in Durham, and I have until August 2020 to work on that postdoc project. Leaving Durham, the Department of History and especially my supervisor, Gabriella Treglia, was incredibly challenging. My confidence took a hit in the process, despite all my apparent success. But I am getting used to a new research environment and a new team. Alongside that, I have had expressions of interest from a publisher regarding the monograph from my thesis. In the two years since my viva, I have learned that a PhD is by no means a guarantee of a successful academic career. But it does teach you valuable lessons about yourself, your limits, and the work you are able to put in to achieve your goals.



Houses along the River Neckar at Tübingen.

#### BEN POPE

received his PhD in 2016 and is now a participant in the 'Teach @ Tübingen' programme in Germany.



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After many years as a PhD student and teaching assistant in Durham (during which time I was also one of the editors of the first three issues of *Symeon*) I now find myself in Tübingen, Germany. Tübingen's castle-turned-university, picturesque riverside and small-town charm are all very reminiscent of Durham, and there are strong historic links between the two universities. But it is the different perspectives provided by teaching in Tübingen which are on my mind.

In the winter semester I had the opportunity to run a module based on my research on the increasingly antagonistic and mutually exclusive identities of wealthy townspeople and rural nobles in late medieval Germany. I was afraid that students would see this subject in just one of its facets: a rather unedifying quarrel

between two elites with very similar ways of exploiting those less powerful than themselves. But (of course) they saw much more: the fascination of the processes by which two groups of people with much in common came to see themselves as fundamental opposites, together with the sheer variety and otherness of the medieval society to which this subject opens doors.

A positive experience, then, but sadly not one that we could have had anywhere in the United Kingdom because of a lack of relevant English-language scholarly literature. Beyond the political lives of kings and emperors, large tracts of German history before Napoleon (if not Bismarck) are almost inaccessible to the English-speaking reader. And if Germany contains so much human life of which the Anglophone world barely hears, how much is eluding us elsewhere? This is no crisis of language learning or of intellectual ambition. It is merely a salutary reminder that we are, collectively, not nearly as wise as we suppose, and that the opportunity to learn is still rationed even as it is increasingly

commercialized. In particular, the global ubiquity of English today can blind us to how much lies beyond its reach, and with so many options to choose between we forget to ask which options are not on the table.

It is still harder to envisage what might be whilst there is concern for the security of what we have. For me personally, this year is a brief pause in the protracted professional and economic precarity which almost universally characterizes the efforts of recently-qualified scholars to continue their careers. But this respite is no insulation from the more general fear that opportunities are closing all around us, and that in an education system which does nothing to mitigate the wasteful inequalities of wider society we will soon be obliged not only to take stock of what we still lack, but also of what we have lost. The tranquility of Tübingen's scenic riverside is certainly an apt image of the deep fulfilment of learning and teaching, but it also masks the frenetic struggle to attain and preserve learning which is perpetually underway beneath the surface.





Dedication of Mt Tabor AME Zion Church on Cumberland County's Register of Historic Places (October, 2017).

## LINDSAY HOUPT-VARNER

*received her PhD in 2015 and is now the Community Outreach Director for Cumberland Co. Historical Society in Pennsylvania, USA.*



Upon completing my PhD in 2015, I returned to the United States with the hope of starting my academic career. I quickly received part-time teaching at a private college in Pennsylvania, but the pay was horrible and it was an hour drive to my office. By the end of 2015, I began thinking more about my time and experiences in Durham to broaden my employment opportunities. My mind kept going to my three years' work at the Durham World Heritage Site Visitor's Center. At the time it was a fun and much needed distraction from the stress of the PhD. Looking back, my experience at the Visitor Center, along with my graduate work, provided me the skills for my current role as the Community Outreach Director for a county historical society.

Along with part-time teaching, in January 2016 I was hired as the full-

time Project Director for a pilot program called 'Community Heart & Soul'. While not focusing on seventeenth century communities, this position allowed me to continue my interest in community development and interactions, while also sharing and promoting the humanities to a wider audience. Heart & Soul is supported by a grant from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council (PHC) and uses community-based story-telling to inform revitalization efforts. In 2017 and 2018, the grant was renewed to complete the four-phase process that includes in-depth community involvement and action on issues arising from the project. The project endeavors to create an atmosphere where nonprofits, businesses, local governments, and academic institutions come together to better understand and serve the whole community through humanities-based engagement.

A thread of this project is highlighting history and heritage in the region, and to spur communities to act and save their historic resources. In Spring 2016, I interviewed two residents whose family story led us to uncover a c.1870 log cabin, African American church and adjoining cemetery. Their

family's story led residents to come forward with their memories of the church and has ignited a discussion on how the community and the public history field has treated African American historical sites. The growing threat to historic resources, highlighted in the past two years, led the County Historical Society to adopt preservation education as a priority in their strategic plan, and in January 2018, I was hired to direct the new Community Outreach Department. This role has launched me into the field of historic preservation, community planning, and fundraising. While I continue to work as an internship supervisor and adjunct history professor, I find the most rewarding part of my job is educating the wider community on the importance of history and preservation, and working with residents to uncover how history impacts their sense of place in the County. The humanities are continuously questioned, devalued, and regarded as a luxury that are frequently on the fiscal chopping block in our society. Working daily to highlight the value of the humanities, and particularly our cultural resources, has been an unexpected but rewarding career path.

# DEPARTMENT NEWS



## THIS YEAR HAS BEEN VERY EVENTFUL, AND WE HAVE LOTS OF NEWS TO REPORT.

In December we said goodbye to Jo Fox, who has been seconded to be the Director of the Institute of Historical Research in London. Jo is an inspirational teacher, scholar and colleague, who has had an enormous impact on Durham since her appointment in 1999. She has blazed the trail for women in the Department and in the historical profession more broadly. She was our first female professor and Head of Department and she is now the IHR's first female Director. Jo has done a great deal to promote gender equality in the Department, and we will be building on her work in the coming years. Not surprisingly, her leaving party in Prior's Hall was packed! It was particularly good to see so many retired colleagues there, including Alan Heesom, Michael Prestwich, Howell Harris and Robin Frame.

In the last edition of *Symeon*, we reported that the Department would be expanding by 75% over the next decade. We are now in the process of hiring a large number of new staff. By the time you read this, we hope to have appointed seven

new permanent colleagues, who will consolidate our strengths in the history of Britain, Europe, Africa, East Asia and the United States. We are excited that the Department is becoming increasingly global in its outlook: staff and students are studying the history of China, Romania and Sudan alongside that of Britain and France.

Internationalization is now a high priority for both the university and the department. As a department, we are keen to increase our connections with institutions abroad, as we believe both staff and students benefit from the opportunities for cultural and intellectual exchange these links provide. We do not yet know what Brexit will mean for the future of the Erasmus exchange programme, but for the moment, some History students spend part of their degree studying abroad under the



Jo Fox and Sarah Davies at Jo's leaving party.

Erasmus scheme: this year, for the first time, two undergraduates have spent a year at Uppsala University in Sweden. Other students continue to venture beyond Europe to study in Australia, the US and other parts of the world.

International connections are vital for our research. Many colleagues already have informal links with universities overseas, but we are now seeking to develop more formal arrangements. A new exchange with the Huntington Library, California will begin in 2018-19. Christian Liddy, Nicole Reinhardt and Len Scales recently visited the History Department at the University of Münster, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany to discuss opportunities for research collaboration. Our association with Peking University (PKU) continues to grow: this year

the Department hosted two PKU PhD students. It is clear that both sides gain a great deal from such exchanges.

Just as important as these global connections are our links with the local region. As several articles in this edition of *Symeon* reveal, many staff, students and former students are engaged in research on the rich history of Durham city and the wider North-East region. In her article, Clarissa Cahill, a recent graduate, writes passionately about the importance of communicating this history to the public. It is worth noting that the Department is actively involved in various forms of public engagement, particularly collaborations with local museums. Giles Gasper's AHRC-funded project 'The Ordered Universe' inspired

the recent exhibition 'Illuminating Colour' at the National Glass Centre in Sunderland. In her role as a trustee of the Science Museum, Ludmilla Jordanova has been forging links between the Department and 'Locomotion' in Shildon, the world's first railway town, while Tom Stammers co-curated the exhibition 'The Allure of Napoleon' at the Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle. We hope to strengthen such links in future. As Durham University expands, it is even more important that we act as a bridge between the university and the local community.

It is always a pleasure to report the recent achievements of our staff and students. Our colleagues continue to enjoy success in attracting external funding for their research. In the last issue of *Symeon*, Richard Gameson discussed his work on the pigments used by British medieval illuminators and we are delighted that he has now been awarded funding by the AHRC to take this project forward. Richard Huzzey and Henry Miller have also received AHRC funding for their work on petitions and petitioning, while Len Scales was awarded a Leverhulme Fellowship for his important and wide-ranging project 'The Kaiser Myth: Medieval Emperors and German Memory, CE 900-2000'.

Some notable publications which have appeared this year include Christian Liddy's *Contesting the City: Politics and Citizenship in English Towns 1250-1530*, Lara Douds' *Inside Lenin's Government*, Ludmilla Jordanova's *Physicians and their Images*, Jennifer Luff's 'Covert and Overt Operations: Interwar Political Policing in the United States and the United Kingdom' (*American Historical Review*) and the second volume of *National Prayers: Special Worship since the Reformation* edited by Philip Williamson, Alasdair Raffe, Stephen Taylor and Natalie Mears.





Eleanor Barraclough and her students on their special subject trip to Iceland.

Eleanor Barraclough has received a 2018 University Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. Eleanor's commitment to her students was demonstrated recently when she took a group of them to Iceland as part of their special subject on Medieval Iceland. If you are a regular Radio 3 or 4 listener, you may have heard Eleanor talking on air about subjects ranging from climate change in Svalbard ('Costing the Earth') to the history of the Vikings on the Isle of Lewis ('Open Country'). For her most recent Radio 3 'Sunday Feature' documentary on the history of immortality in the far north, she went ice bathing in Norway with a man who cryogenically froze his own grandfather!

Finally, it is good to note that the Department continues to perform very well in the league tables—we have just been ranked second in the 2019 *Complete University Guide*—and to attract outstanding undergraduates who are a joy to teach. Every year we celebrate their exceptional achievements through the award of prizes. This year Thomas King has received the Edward Allen Prize for the best performance in the first year, Charlie Steer-Stephenson has received the Alumni Prize for the best performance in the second year, Bethany Holden has received the Thompson Prize for the best performance in the final year, Bethany Brewer has received the Dissertation Prize, and Rhys Jones

has received the Gibson Prize for the best dissertation on a topic in local history. We know that the graduate prospects for Durham History students are excellent and we wish all our students graduating this year the very best for their future. We hope they will stay in touch as we always enjoy hearing from our alumni and welcoming back any who are visiting Durham.

**SARAH DAVIES,**  
Head of the History Department



The History Department on the steps of Durham Castle.







# *How 17,000 Petitions Helped Deliver Votes for Women*

This article first appeared in **THE CONVERSATION** at [www.theconversation.com/how-17-000-petitions-helped-deliver-votes-for-women-91093](http://www.theconversation.com/how-17-000-petitions-helped-deliver-votes-for-women-91093)



**HENRY MILLER**

Henry Miller is Senior Research Fellow at Durham University and project co-ordinator of the Rethinking Petitions, Parliament and People project, funded by the Leverhulme Trust and based in Durham's Department of History.



**CIARA STEWART**

Ciara Stewart is a second-year PhD student in the History Department of Durham. She is writing her thesis on nineteenth-century Irish women's movements and their use of petitions. She is also working alongside Dr Richard Huzzey and Dr Henry Miller on the Petitions, Parliament and People project.





NUWSS procession on 13 June 1908. LSE Library.

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In the 50 years before women gained the vote in 1918, almost 17,000 petitions for women’s suffrage were sent to the House of Commons, containing over 3.3m signatures. Other petitions were sent to the House of Lords, the king, and the prime minister.

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Emmeline Pankhurst is arrested in London. Wikipedia.

Most people know about the famous examples of suffragette activity, such as window breaking and street demonstrations. By contrast, petitions show a different side of the campaign: the patient, behind the scenes activity that helped deliver votes for women.

The suffrage campaign was, itself, founded by a petition signed by over 1,500 women, including leading activists Barbara Bodichon and Emily Davies. This was presented to the House of Commons by the liberal philosopher John Stuart Mill on 7 June 1866.

As the right to vote was linked to property, the petition claimed that propertied women had a right to the franchise. Though a limited demand that did not include married women (who could not own property at this time), the petition provided a rallying point for a new movement.

While women (and the majority of men) could not vote at this time, all British subjects had the right to petition. Petitioning was one of the few political rights women possessed and had proved an effective strategy in earlier campaigns. Women had been active both as petitioners and canvassers who collected signatures

in the movement for the abolition of slavery, for example. So when suffrage bills were debated in parliament in the 1870s and 1880s, the National Society for Women's Suffrage encouraged petitions in support.

The architect of the movement's petitioning strategy was the Manchester feminist Lydia Becker. In Ireland, the Dublin Women's Suffrage Association, led by Anna Haslam, orchestrated petitioning activity.

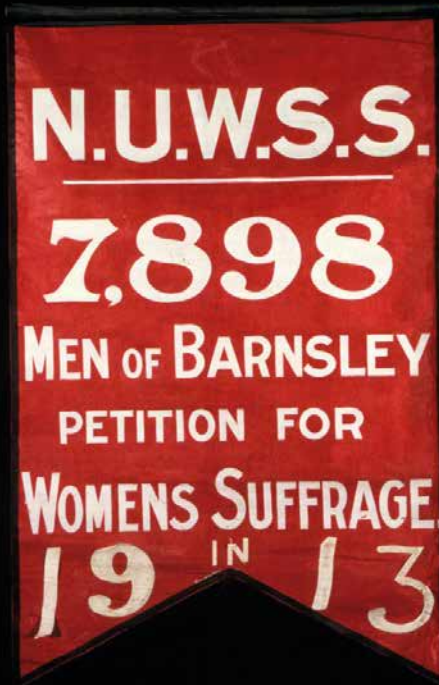
Petitions were a good way of raising public awareness, getting media coverage and keeping suffrage on the political agenda. For example, in the 1890s, campaigners organized a 'special appeal' for the vote, signed by 257,000 women. This was one of the largest petitions of the 19th century. The appeal was displayed to MPs in a special exhibition in May 1896.

At the January 1910 general election, suffragists organised petitions from male voters in many constituencies. This was an attempt to use petitions to hold an unofficial referendum on women's suffrage. During the 1913 'pilgrimage', which saw women gradually descend on London after starting from different locations, pilgrims sent petitions along their way.

## PATIENCE AND RESULTS

The groups fighting for women's suffrage did not, however, see eye to eye on the role petitions should play. Suffragette leaders Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst believed that petitioning a parliament of men was a waste of time. The failure of traditional constitutional tactics showed that new, militant methods of campaigning were necessary.

But suffragettes never entirely abandoned petitioning. In May 1914 Emmeline Pankhurst was arrested on her way to presenting a petition to the king, generating one of the iconic suffrage images.



Men fought for the cause too. LSE Library.

At a time when women were excluded from parliament and voting, petitions were a way to directly engage with male politicians. For Irish suffragists, petitioning allowed them to challenge the British Parliament as well as supporting the wider campaign. Women asserted their right to citizenship through petitions, while petitioning demonstrated their capacity for political participation.

Many of the petitions called for the right to vote to be extended to women on the same terms 'as it is, or may be' given to men. But suffrage petitions addressed other issues too. For example, the 1902 petition signed by women undergraduates argued that the vote was the only way to ensure the equal educational status of women.

In response to anti-suffragist claims that women didn't want the vote, petitions showed that there was in fact popular support for suffrage. They came from men and women

and became a way to organize and mobilize a broad, diverse, popular coalition for women's suffrage. Petitions came from all over the UK and from different types of people, such as women university students in 1902, or women farmers in 1883. Getting people to sign petitions was a first step to recruiting them as active members of the movement. Suffragists preferred to work at a local level, gradually spreading their message through the process of gathering signatures.

### THE MODERN PETITION

These days, e-petitioning has emerged as a popular form of political engagement. Critics complain that the lack of impact of e-petitions shows that they are pointless. Others have argued that e-petitions encourage a lazy, disengaged clicktivism in the place of real, active political engagement.

But as the history of suffrage petitioning shows us, focusing on the lack of immediate results misses the point of petitioning. The majority of petitions throughout history have been unsuccessful. Petitioning has remained a popular form of political activity because of the numerous advantages it has, even if authorities reject or ignore the demands of petitioners. Petitions keep a topic on the political agenda even when politicians would rather avoid the issue. Petitioning raises public awareness and attracts media coverage. Petitions identify support and channel it behind a national campaign, and can act as a first step for further activity on an issue.

The suffrage movement also suggests that petitioning is most effective when it is embedded within, rather than divorced from, other forms of political activity, such as such as public meetings, demonstrations, or elections.





# ALUMNI REFLECTIONS:

## *Durham and beyond*



**DAVID DOUGAN**

David Dougan was an undergraduate at Durham University 1959-62 and was a member of St Cuthbert's Society. He now lectures on English history and art history.

Although my first Durham degree was in Politics and Economics (under Professor Morris Jones and Reader in Economics Edward Allen) it did contain a large element of history. I remember that Allen in particular was passionate about industrial development in this country and especially about the role of James Watt and Matthew Boulton. My second degree, my MA, was firmly set in history, recording and analysing the rise and decline of the shipbuilding industry in the North East.

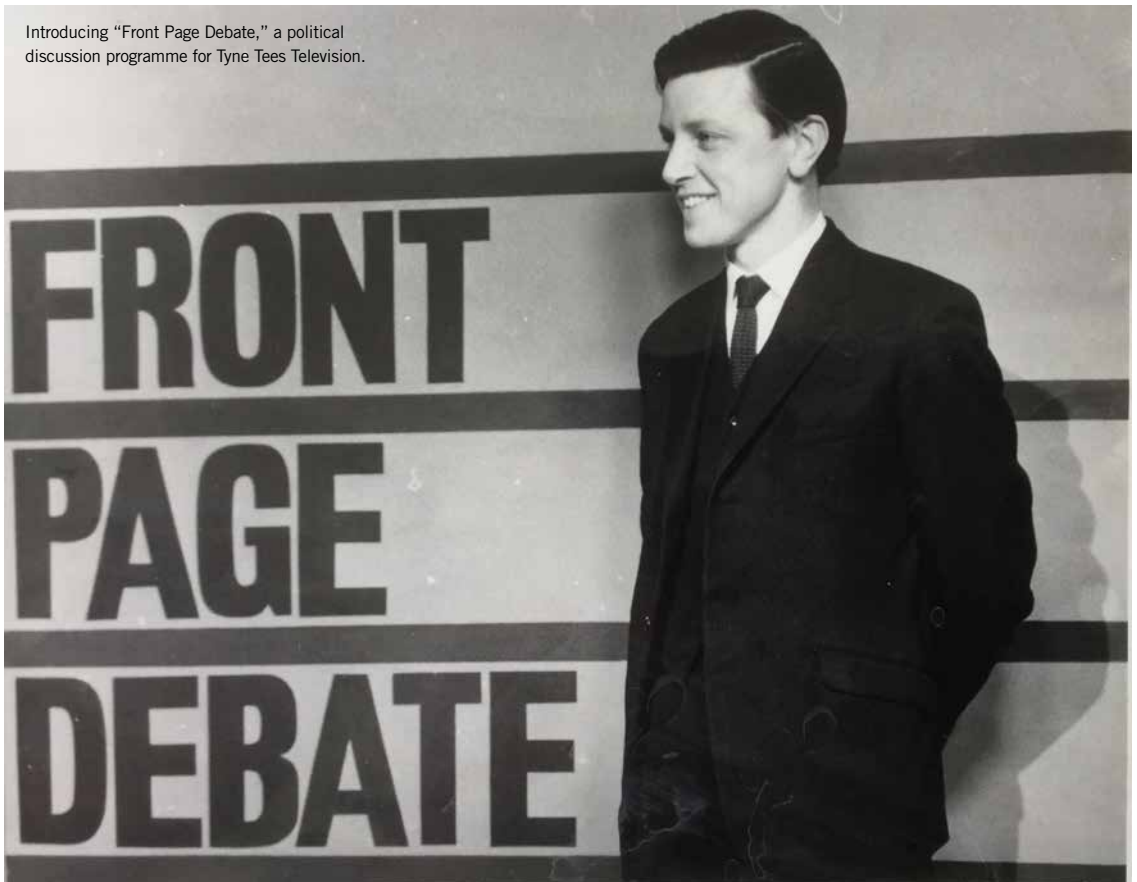
In turn this led on to my first book, *The History of North East*

*Shipbuilding*, published by Allen and Unwin in 1968. By now, of course, I had left Durham University where I was an undergraduate from 1959-1962 and was working in radio and television. This narrative in itself is an interesting case study in seizing opportunities and not knowing exactly how one thing might lead on to another. While at Durham, I was Editor of the *Palatinate* as well as President of the Students' Union. The editor of the *Newcastle Journal* contacted me to ask whether I would be willing to write a series of articles about the profiles of the various colleges—their history, their culture, their character. They must have gone down reasonably well because, just before I was due to graduate and not having any firm idea of my future, he contacted me again to ask if I would be interested in joining the staff of this important regional paper. I was delighted to do so.

Within two years, I was approached by the fledging television company in that part of the country, Tyne Tees Television, asking if I would be interested in joining them as industrial and political correspondent but also as a documentary maker. Again, I think you can imagine what my response was. And so it came about that I presented numerous programmes about the history of the region, telling its story from early tribes right through the Tudor and Stuart period but particularly concentrating on the nineteenth century and the rise of industry.

History, as you might say, was becoming a major pre-occupation and a bread-winner. Books ran parallel to the work in television. I was commissioned to write the official history of the Shipwrights' Trade Union and I also published a biography of one of the greatest of the

Introducing "Front Page Debate," a political discussion programme for Tyne Tees Television.



industrial entrepreneurs, Lord William Armstrong. But perhaps the book that gave me greatest satisfaction was the history of the Jarrow March of 1936. I interviewed the few living participants of that famous event and heard at first hand their side of the story. They were particularly anxious to stress that their march from Jarrow to London was not in pursuit of benefits but as a desperate cry for work. They had no intention of being a burden upon the state but wanted to contribute once again to its success as they had done before the depression of the 1930s.

At about this time, I made a big career change, leaving journalism for a new development in arts administration. This might be regarded as a reckless thing to do—I sometimes felt that way myself! But it did give me an opportunity to play a part in one of the great success stories in this country—the growth and flowering of arts of all kinds, opening up opportunities for thousands of creative people and seeing their work presented in new theatres, concert halls and exhibition galleries. And becoming one of our major export industries too!

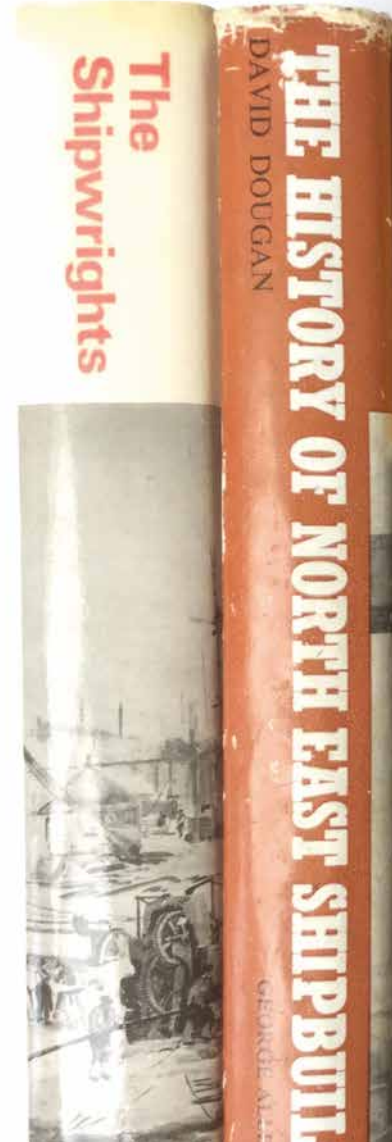
For a while, history had to take a back seat—I was too concerned with the present. But when I retired I joined the University of the Third Age, a volunteer-led organization of retired and semi-retired members who are united by an interest in continued learning, and quickly took up lecturing on history. By now I had a PhD to my name with a long dissertation (120,000 words) on the history of arts policy in this country

and specifically in the North. I also took a fourth degree, this time from the Open University, which enabled me to talk about art history and especially the Renaissance, a period that I love.

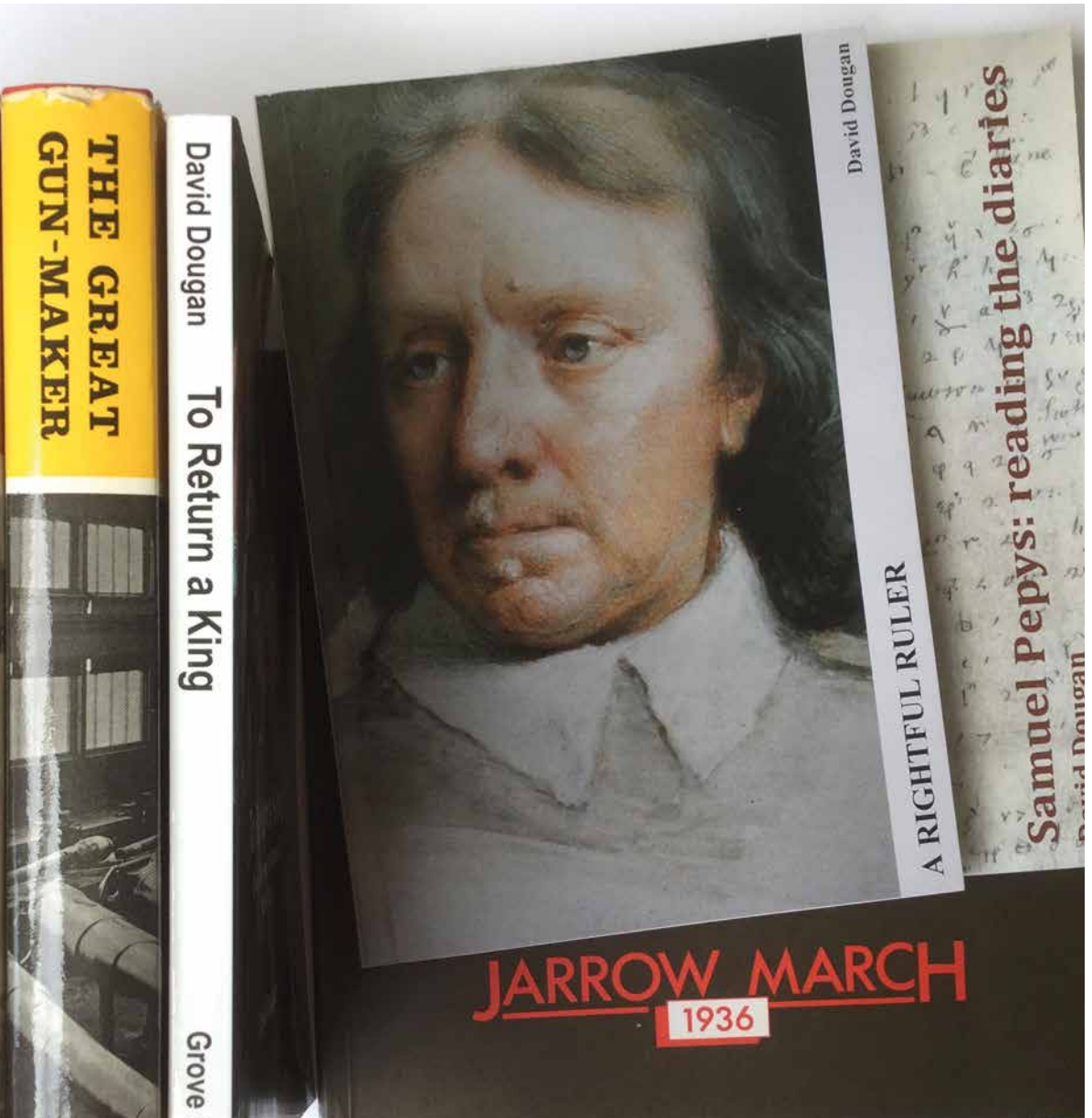
I felt able to lecture on the full tramp of English history from Celtic times, through the Middle Ages and then the Tudors and Stuarts up to the nineteenth century and the work of William Ewart Gladstone, one of my heroes. So here I am now, lecturing every week on English history or art history to about 30 people at a time. These mature members of the community are keen to regain knowledge lost since school days. Perhaps I should not say this but the number of my peers who say to me 'oh, if only history had been taught like this at my school.'

In my retirement, I have also taken up the pen again (quaint term) and produced a study called *To Return a King* about the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660. I have also produced a commentary on Samuel Pepys' great diaries which I called *Reading the Diaries*. My most recent study has been on the role of Oliver Cromwell as the Lord Protector 1653-8 and how he compares as a ruler with his predecessor Charles I and his successor Charles II.

All in all, I can say that history has been one of the great fascinations of my life and I have never tired of reading or lecturing about it. The more you know, the more you realize how little you really know. That is what keeps us coming back for more.







David's historical publications.

# CREATING A MARTYR:

## *The case of Saint Ælfheah*



### ABIGAIL STEED

Abigail Steed is a third-year PhD student in the History Department. Her thesis looks at ideas about vengeance in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman society, and she is also interested in the Medieval Cult of Saints.

ABOVE: Ælfheah's capture and death, from St Alphege's church, Canterbury.  
Photo by Eleanor Parker.





Saint Ælfheah is one of the more obscure and controversial Anglo-Saxon saints. As is common with medieval saints, little is known about his life.

Our richest source is an imaginative hagiography written in the 1080s by the monk Osbern of Canterbury.<sup>1</sup> Prior to this, there is only scant information from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which records that he became bishop of Winchester in 984, was involved in peace negotiations with viking invaders in the 990s, and was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1006 to 1012, when he was captured and brutally killed by Danish raiders who pelted him to death with bones, reportedly because he refused to allow a ransom to be paid for his release.<sup>2</sup> Ælfheah was immediately considered to be a martyr, his body was carried to London and buried in St Paul's cathedral, and in 1023 King Cnut granted leave for his body to be translated to Canterbury, where he became venerated as a major local saint.<sup>3</sup>

Controversy arose in the 1070s, when Ælfheah's martyrdom was questioned by Lanfranc, the new Norman archbishop of Canterbury. Lanfranc's doubts were symptomatic of broad changes within the English church in the years after 1066, as new Norman officials sought to acquaint themselves with the unfamiliar saints of their conquered nation. Relics were tested by fire to determine their veracity, cults that lacked written documentation were provided with edifying texts, and the Normans realized the potential of fostering the support of native saints to bolster their own legitimacy and authority, with the result that they enthusiastically adopted most Anglo-Saxon cults.<sup>4</sup> The case of Saint Ælfheah is a rare example within this atmosphere of a recorded debate over the quality of an Anglo-Saxon saint's sanctity rather than just the reality or condition of their relics, and, as such, of a saint's cult that was briefly jeopardized.

Lanfranc's opinion was seemingly essential to securing the future continuation of Ælfheah's cult, and for Ælfheah's devotees, veneration of the saint momentarily hung in the balance. Details of the way that Lanfranc was persuaded of Ælfheah's sanctity come from another, later source, the *Life of St Anselm*, about Lanfranc's successor as archbishop of Canterbury, written by the monk Eadmer in the early twelfth century. Lanfranc and Anselm had lived together at the monastery of Bec in Normandy, and when Lanfranc became archbishop they remained intellectual correspondents. Eadmer records a conversation said to have taken place between Lanfranc and Anselm in 1079, when the latter was on a visit to Canterbury, about whether Ælfheah could truly be considered a martyr. After a speech comprising several great leaps of theological logic, Anselm

concluded that because Ælfheah died for so great a love of justice, it was not unfitting for him to be numbered among the martyrs, and compared him with the early martyr John the Baptist. According to Eadmer, Lanfranc was impressed by the subtlety of Anselm's argument and became convinced that Ælfheah deserved the title of martyr.<sup>5</sup>

What remained was to provide Ælfheah's cult with proper documentation, so Lanfranc commissioned the English monk Osbern to write a history of the saint's life and passion to be read and sung in church. As mentioned above, Osbern's sources were scarce. Ostensibly he obtained the bulk of his material from eyewitness accounts which became orally circulating legend, though even with the likelihood that this is to some extent true, his work undoubtedly contains a large element of hagiographical fabrication, designed to cement Ælfheah's status as a saint and a martyr and quell any doubts in that respect.<sup>6</sup> To that end, Osbern created a standard hagiographical portrait of a pious child who went on to become a monk of exemplary character, was appointed to the bishopric of Winchester and then archbishopric of Canterbury through divine inspiration, followed by accounts of various miracles and adulation of his generosity and promotion of peace.<sup>7</sup> The influence of Anselm's argument can be seen in Osbern's stress on Ælfheah's continual attempts to convert the Danes to Christianity, and selflessness in refusing to be ransomed.<sup>8</sup>

Osbern's invention lies in the way that he structures Ælfheah's entire life as a trajectory towards martyrdom. Throughout the text, Ælfheah himself seems to anticipate his fate, making repeated comments on how a man who is willing to lose his life is more

1. On the dating of Osbern's work, see Jay Rubenstein, 'The Life and Writings of Osbern of Canterbury', in Richard Eales and Richard Sharpe (eds.) *Canterbury and the Norman Conquest: Churches, Saints and Scholars 1066-1109* (London, 1995), p. 35.

2. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, ed. Michael Swanton (London, 2000), entries for 984(A), 993/991(A), 994(E) 1006(A,E), 1012(E).

3. *Ibid.* 1023 (C, D, E).

4. On Norman adoption of Anglo-Saxon cults, see Susan J. Ridyard, 'Condigna Veneratio: Post-Conquest Attitudes to the Saints of the Anglo-Saxons', in R. Allen Brown (ed.) *Anglo-Norman Studies 9: Proceedings of the Battle Conference* (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 179-206.

5. *The Life of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, by Eadmer, ed. and trans. R.W. Southern (London, 1962), pp. 50-54.

6. *Osbern's Life of Alphege*, ed. Frances Shaw (London, 2009), pp. 25-26. Rubenstein, 'The Life and Writings of Osbern', p. 36.

7. Osbern's *Life of Alphege*, pp. 30-48.

8. *Ibid.* pp. 52-53. Rubenstein, 'The Life and Writings of Osbern', p. 37.



praiseworthy than a man who seeks to save it, and how he would consider himself blessed to die like Christ's martyrs.<sup>9</sup> He is confident of his sinless state and anticipates eternal life. When in prison, he resists the Devil who attempts to trick him into escaping, refuses to allow any ransom to be paid for him, has a vision of his predecessor St Dunstan welcoming him to heaven, and Osbern compares him to the early martyr Lawrence who also protected the treasures of the church.<sup>10</sup>

The passage recounting Ælfheah's death is where the true scale of Osbern's invention can be detected, because it is the one moment that can be compared with an earlier source. Osbern portrays Ælfheah's martyrdom as a malevolent and deliberately orchestrated plot, instigated by the Devil but orchestrated by the Danes, arising from the Danish leaders' fear for their own position in the face of Ælfheah's growing reputation for holiness, even among their own men, during his time in prison. In the lead-up to Ælfheah's death, Osbern creates a

direct comparison to Christ carrying the cross to his own execution, and at the moment of death aligns Ælfheah with the first martyr Stephen, who also refused to plunder church funds and was stoned to death.<sup>11</sup> This is a significant deviation from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle account, written before 1023, which gives a less deliberately malicious version of events in which Ælfheah's murder arose out of the Danes' spontaneous, drunken anger at his refusal to allow any money to be granted for him.<sup>12</sup>

This difference between the early and later source opens up the question of what Osbern was trying to achieve. Beyond the theological considerations over Ælfheah's status, there were broader benefits to be had for Canterbury with the continuation of his cult, which Lanfranc must have realized. At every major English cathedral, the Normans adopted its patron saint and began producing new hagiographical documentation to shore up their cults. Ælfheah's

status was unusually precarious, and Osbern's text was among the earliest in this tradition of writing.<sup>13</sup> Affirming Ælfheah's status and associating him with his predecessor as archbishop, St Dunstan, gave Canterbury Cathedral a pair of archbishop saints, a martyr and a confessor, which was advantageous in its developing rivalry with the other major church at Canterbury, St Augustine's Abbey.<sup>14</sup> Associating Ælfheah with St Stephen and Christ gave resonance and spiritual weight to Osbern's text through rhetoric designed to combat any hesitancy about Ælfheah's martyrdom. By depicting a contested martyr in the model of the incontestable first martyr, Osbern imbued Ælfheah's death with historical precedent and spiritual significance.

What emerges from study of the controversy and subsequent solidification of Ælfheah's status as a martyr saint is that there appears to have been a change in how easily someone came to be considered a martyr over the eleventh century. In 1012, the Anglo-Saxons apparently had no hesitation in interpreting his death as a martyrdom, even without any elaborate tale building up to it. Ælfheah might be considered to sit within a tradition of Anglo-Saxon royal martyr saints, including Edmund, a ninth-century Anglo-Saxon king who was also killed by viking invaders for refusing to share wealth with them, and refusing to damage his reputation by either acquiescing or fleeing.<sup>15</sup> The difference with Ælfheah after 1066 was that Edmund's cult was better documented much earlier. The controversy over Ælfheah should be set against a general trend from the later eleventh century of greater scrutiny of evidence for sanctity with regard to both texts and relics. This means that Osbern's fabrication of Ælfheah's life and death is less important than what the content and style of the text reveals about what a martyr saint was expected to look like in the later eleventh century.



The siege of Canterbury and the capture of Ælfheah, in a 12th-century window from Canterbury Cathedral. Photo by Eleanor Parker.

9. *Ibid.* pp. 57-59.

10. *Ibid.* pp. 64-74.

11. *Ibid.* pp. 74-77.

12. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, 1012(E).

13. R.W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer, A Study of Monastic Life and Thought 1059-c.1130* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 250.

14. *Ibid.* pp. 266-67.

15. *The Life of St Edmund* was first recorded by the monk Abbo of Fleury between 985 and 987, while he was visiting the monastery of Ramsey. It is printed in *Three Lives of English Saints*, ed. Michael Winterbottom (Toronto, 1972).



Ælfheah on the Chichele tomb in Canterbury Cathedral. Photo by Eleanor Parker.



# OLD STORIES, NEW TECHNOLOGIES:

## Bringing Durham Cathedral to life in a digital age



**CLARISSA CAHILL**

Clarissa Cahill has recently completed a BA in English and History, and an MA in Early Modern History, at Durham University. She is now Durham Cathedral's Marketing and Communications Officer, responsible for publicizing the Cathedral, its community, and its events. In doing so, Clarissa utilizes everything from social media to the national press, bringing Durham Cathedral's stories to a global audience.



Throughout my undergraduate and Master's degrees at Durham, I always felt an immense and enthralling connection to the individuals I studied.

The most memorable part of my Masters research was visiting the National Archives to access, first-hand, genuine voices of Elizabethan widows-at-law and their legal advisors. The personal voices and stories present within these pages intrigued me, and with access to a wealth of high quality sources and research, I gained a new appreciation of the experiences of men and women of the early modern period; their squabbles, concerns, and everyday lives were not as alien to my own experience as I had first assumed. I discovered distinct parallels between the communication revolution of the period, triggered by the development of the printing press, and the way social media has abruptly reshaped how we communicate today.

However, many of the most interesting personal stories and enticing secrets present in this type of historical source remain unknown to the general public, forgotten in miles of archival shelving. Here, though, the innovations of the present are bringing us closer to the stories and people of the past. The digitization of archives has made genealogical research increasingly accessible to the public. This is just one example of how technological innovation, from virtual reality to blogging, has made history more tangible



Durham Cathedral during the Lumiere Festival 2018.

and accessible to everyone. In particular, Durham Cathedral's embrace of new technologies enables us to draw out and revitalize our peculiar local history in new ways. There are few places that marry the ancient and the cutting edge so effectively as Durham. During the last Lumiere festival a moon containing a myriad of faces was projected onto the side of the Norman castle which has stalwartly guarded Durham for centuries.

Following the conclusion of my studies, I was eager to find a career which would allow me to draw upon my interest in both the neglected stories of the past,

and the innovations of the future. It was immensely exciting to begin a role at Durham Cathedral, where I was tasked with engaging with the Cathedral's 750,000 visitors a year, and connecting with its global digital audience of followers. In this article I will share with you some recent projects I've worked on at the Cathedral, which illustrate my personal passion, and one of the Cathedral's core objectives: encouraging engagement with Durham's rich tapestry of vivid, entertaining, and awe-inspiring history.



Replica of Durham Cathedral's sanctuary knocker; the original is on display in the Open Treasures exhibit.

## DURHAM CATHEDRAL'S ACCESSIBLE TREASURES

The experience of studying history is often intangible, but the treasures of medieval Durham offer an unmissable opportunity to walk amongst priceless artefacts and irreplaceable buildings, to gain fascinating insights into more than one thousand years of local history. Exhibition projects such as the Cathedral's *Open Treasure* exhibition experience and digitization projects such as *Durham Priory Library Recreated* bring curious minds closer to these great treasures and the stories they have to tell. While these tales often feature saints and monarchs, they also include intimate instances of daily life.



St Cuthbert's pectoral cross.

St Cuthbert's Pectoral Cross is a stunning tribute to Anglo-Saxon metalworking, made of gold, garnets, and rare materials from as far away as the Mediterranean. In addition to its splendid appearance, the cross also has an intimate, humanizing connection to the legendary St Cuthbert. When it was discovered with St Cuthbert's body by Victorian antiquarians, the cross had tell-tale signs of wear which suggested that it had been worn by Cuthbert during his lifetime. The cross combines functionality with decorative opulence; the twelve garnets in each arm of the cross could have functioned as a bejeweled calendar, counted off by Cuthbert's fingers like a rosary. It is easy to imagine Cuthbert's fiddling fingers causing the break to the bottom arm of the cross, which has been repaired several times. The marks of age, and use, that we see throughout the most precious objects in the Cathedral's collections give these objects personality. Scribbles in books and wear on an object personally worn by the North's greatest Saint reconnect us with the people themselves, in addition to their legends.

### VISUALIZING MEDIEVAL DURHAM CATHEDRAL: MANUSCRIPT SOURCES AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

*The Rites of Durham*, a detailed and nostalgic recollection of life at Durham Priory before the Dissolution, contains fascinating details about the Cathedral's lost past. The highly jeweled and 'lively' shrine to St Cuthbert in the Feretory was destroyed at the hands of Henry VIII's commissioners, but through this fascinating account we can gaze through sixteenth-century eyes at the shrine's stunning ornamentation. *The Rites of Durham* describes the shrine in meticulous detail: the shrine's cover is adorned with an image of 'our Savior sittinge on a Rainebowe to geive Judgement very lively to the beholders

[and] the top of ye cover from end to end [...] most fine carved worke cutt owte with Dragons and other beasts'.<sup>1</sup>

The destroyed glories of the medieval shrine are physically lost, but a new project in partnership with the University of York now enables visitors to reimagine the familiar spaces of the Cathedral as they may once have appeared. Based partly on *The Rites of Durham's* vivid testimony, the project has created a 3D reconstruction of how the shrine of St Cuthbert would have looked before its destruction at the Reformation. This visualization enables a glimpse into the Cathedral's history that is tangible and accessible for wider audiences, and also demonstrates the potential of technology to breathe colour into historical sources.

*The Durham Priory Library Recreated* project similarly aims to preserve and make accessible the Cathedral's history, in this case through digitizing the most complete monastic library collection in the UK.<sup>2</sup> Digitization is an important academic tool, but also a fascinating opportunity for wider audiences to leaf through the most significant and valuable books in the Cathedral's collections, including the eighth-century *Durham Gospels*. Like St Cuthbert's Pectoral Cross, scribbles in the margins and dirty page corners are both testaments to the personal and intimate history of these tomes. Such details bring to life images of monks, hunched over, studying in the Cathedral Cloisters, or by the light of the Monks' Dormitory windows. They transform these books from purely academic resources into diaries of the lives of the monks of Durham Priory, five hundred years ago.



3D reconstruction of the shrine of Saint Cuthbert. © Durham Cathedral.

1. *Rites of Durham: A DESCRIPTION OR Brief Declaration OF ALL THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS, RITES, & CUSTOMS BELONGING OR BEING WITHIN THE MONASTICAL CHURCH OF DURHAM BEFORE THE SUPPRESSION.* (ANDREWS & CO., DURHAM, 1903). [http://archive.org/stream/ritesofdurhambei00cathrich/ritesofdurhambei00cathrich\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/ritesofdurhambei00cathrich/ritesofdurhambei00cathrich_djvu.txt)

2. Browse the collection of digitized books online at [www.durhampriory.ac.uk](http://www.durhampriory.ac.uk)





Durham Cathedral from a new angle. Credit Nick Martin.

Durham Cathedral has also been involved in the *England's Historic Cities* app, which uses augmented reality to transport users through time and unveil the hidden stories of the Cathedral and its characters. Visitors can now explore areas of the Cathedral usually off limits to the public, such as the Chapter House and Refectory Library, in 360 degrees on their smartphones.

Drone footage, another recent innovation, has made an immense visual difference to the way the Cathedral is experienced. Drones are more than just a trendy gimmick. Seeing up close the intricately carved stonework, grotesques, and statues that adorn the Cathedral's exterior face is an experience in itself, and it is a way of offering—quite literally—a fresh perspective on our heritage. As such, I was very excited to organize interior and exterior drone filming of the Cathedral for recent documentaries that reached national and international audiences, including the recent Channel 5 series 'Britain's Great Cathedrals with Tony Robinson'.

## A STORY TO REMEMBER

Despite this range of new technology, storytelling remains at the heart of what I enjoy most about my role. Whether it's telling the story of our stonemasons painstakingly restoring stonework sixty

metres above ground, or of Scottish soldiers imprisoned in the Cathedral by Oliver Cromwell, the genuine humanity of these tales is always striking.

Of course, it is not only its past that brings Durham to life; events such as the Durham Miners' Gala are testament to the enduring strength of the local community. This year's Gala is especially poignant in marking 25 years since the closure of the last County Durham colliery. Our new temporary exhibition this summer, *Miners: Pitmen, Pride and Prayer*, reveals a wide-range of local stories, and its use of photographic archives and personal artefacts on loan from local families, will allow visitors to connect directly with community memories of mining heritage.

I've found it is the appeal to personal memory and shared community history that provokes the strongest engagement from our visitors.

The continuing popularity of the Miners' Gala is, for me, an example of how we can easily form personal connections to the past when that history is living, colourful and accessible. Harnessing the communicative power of new technologies is essential in providing an accessible avenue by which people can find their own connections to recent, or distant, history. Ultimately, it is this journey to find new ways of fascinating people with their heritage that is simultaneously my greatest passion and challenge.



Distributing rations during the 1921 strike at the Dean and Chapter Colliery, Ferryhill. Image courtesy of Beamish: the Living Museum of the North.



# THE MORAL ECONOMY OF ELECTIONS IN AFRICA



**JUSTIN WILLIS**

Justin Willis is a Professor in the History Department. His current research is primarily concerned with the history of elections, and he is working with colleagues from Warwick and Oxford on a major ESRC-funded project, 'The impact of elections: voting, political behaviour and democracy in sub-Saharan Africa'.



**RIGHT:** Voting in Kisumu, Kenya. August 2017.



Voters queuing in Kisumu, Kenya. August 2017.

The iconic image of the African election is the queue: the line of patient voters waiting in the hot sun has become a journalistic cliché.

Yet if you ask—in Africa, or elsewhere in the world—about the quality of African elections, you will likely receive a gloomy reply. Elections, you will be told, are no more than ethnic censuses; or they are repeatedly stolen by ruling parties; or they are bought by crooked politicians who use office to amass wealth, and then turn that wealth back into elected office again. In the early 1990s the ‘second liberation’ swept the continent, with multi-party politics returning to many countries. Ageing despots (at least, some of them) were thrown out of office by the popular will. But recent years have seen the rise of what scholars call ‘electoral authoritarianism’; incumbent presidents keep winning elections, again and again.

How can we explain that apparent paradox: why do people turn out in such numbers to vote if they think the contest will not be free and fair? Why is it that African elections seem so often to disappoint? Perhaps most importantly, why have some countries apparently bucked the trend: such as Ghana, where power has regularly changed hands in competitive elections over the last two decades? With funding from the Economic and Social Research Council,

the ‘Impact of elections’ project has followed the history of elections in Ghana, Kenya and Uganda over the last sixty years. Using a combination of interviews, archive work, opinion surveys and behavioural experiments, the research team—from Durham, Warwick and Oxford—have tried to answer those questions.

The idea that popular support is a source of legitimate authority is by no means novel in Africa. But the specific mechanism of the election by secret ballot—with its attendant paraphernalia of lists, rubber stamps, boxes and forms—was a late-colonial innovation. As British and French colonial rulers sought a new legitimacy after 1945, they experimented with elections on a qualified franchise, hoping to recruit a new cohort of elite African allies: only those with a certain level of education, or wealth, would be allowed to vote. The plan misfired—as did most of the schemes of late colonialism. African politicians were not ready to accept a role as imperial subordinates, and colonial subjects demanded the fundamental equality of adult suffrage. Pressed by international and economic realities that made empire unsustainable, and fearing that the states that they had created would crumble as they left, both British and French suddenly saw elections in a new light: ‘operation elections’ would become national events, turning restive colonial subjects into citizens, and proving to the world that colonialism had

successfully created new nation-states. So elections with adult suffrage became an obligatory feature of the end of empire in Africa.

A generation of African nationalist politicians welcomed these performances of nationhood. They had reason to do so: educated men, many of whom had been employed by the colonial state, they had the skills and experience to thrive in electoral processes that favoured literacy, knowledge of the colonizers’ language and familiarity with bureaucracy. Yet they had fears, as well as ambitions. People expected much of independence: ‘development’ was the dream of all, and many assumed that prosperity lay just around the corner. Once colonial rulers were gone, how would Africa’s new rulers persuade people to work, or pay taxes? Late-colonial election campaigns gave nationalists the opportunity to assert state authority, and demand that the public behave well. The registering, queuing and counting were a reminder that independence would bring obligations, as well as rights: ‘You must be peaceful and law-abiding citizens to expect a good return’, one politician warned his supporters.

So it was that Ghana, Kenya and Uganda—like almost all former British and French colonial territories in Africa—became independent with constitutions based on multi-party electoral politics. That did not last. Africa’s new rulers were



Identifying a voter in Kisumu, Kenya. August 2017.

all enthusiasts for popular participation—in theory, at least. But they all feared that the public, disappointed by the realities of independence, would turn against them. They expressed that fear in terms of the dangers of tribalism, or sectarianism, or the possibility that voters would be ‘bribed’ by unscrupulous rivals. A period of experimentation followed, as rulers sought to keep the bureaucratic ‘national exercise’ of elections, with its disciplinary effects, while ensuring that they could not lose. In Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah created a one-party state—endorsed by a rigged referendum in which turnout was partly coerced—but then feared to hold an election, even with only one party. When Nkrumah was overthrown in a coup, Uganda’s Milton Obote drew the conclusion that elections must be held—but spent so long devising an elaborate electoral system to ensure his own victory that he too was overthrown by Idi Amin, the commander of the army, before the ballot could be held. Ghana’s coup-makers handed power back to a civilian government, chosen in an election which was carefully managed to keep supporters of Nkrumah from regaining power; but then that government too was overthrown by the military, apparently unmourned by a public disappointed by its failure to bring the prosperity for which many had hoped.

The pattern recurred again in Ghana at the end of the 1970s. Meanwhile in Uganda, after Amin had been chased out of power by an invading Tanzanian army, Obote came back to power in elections marked by some flagrant abuses of process. These repeated, unsuccessful, attempts to achieve electoral legitimacy are significant: a reminder that both international expectations and bureaucratic self-regard made the managed performance of adult suffrage seem highly desirable for politicians and civil servants. To hold elections was an inherently virtuous display of state capacity.

In Kenya, by contrast, regular elections have been held since independence. Up until 1992 these were effectively single-party polls, and the presidential candidate of the ruling party was returned unopposed. But there was vigorous competition at a local level. President Jomo Kenyatta encouraged Kenya’s voters to see their members of parliament as delegates sent to government to obtain the benefits of development; and told them that if they were dissatisfied, this was the fault not of government but of their elected representative. Voters learned to make explicit demands of the candidates—and to expect that during campaigns, the candidates would

be generous with gifts, as well as with promises. More than half of sitting members lost their seats in most of these one-party elections. The powerful could, and did, cheat: every set of elections saw instances of intimidation, and straightforward theft or stuffing of ballot boxes in a few places. But Kenya’s elections also saw a great deal of very real competition for votes in most constituencies.

The generosity with which candidates wooed the voters might look like vote-buying. But the biggest spenders did not always win, and voters took from all candidates. There was a moral aspect to this: the generosity of candidates in sharing their wealth was a public display of virtue by an aspiring patron to potential clients, an acknowledgement of the proper claims of those clients. Campaign generosity was the price of participation, not a guarantee of success, and voters inspected candidates in other ways, too. Had the incumbent brought development projects to the constituency: new roads, clinics, piped water? Did the candidate have a reputation or generosity to individuals in time of need: paying hospital fees, donating to the cost of funerals, finding jobs or scholarships for young people from their area? Voters wanted people who were known locally,





Supporter of New Patriotic Party in Cape Coast, Ghana. November 2016.



TOP: Counting votes in Cape Coast, Ghana. December 2016.



BOTTOM: Voting in Kwale, Kenya. March 2013.

preferably people with whom they shared ties of kinship or ethnicity—ties that could again be used to make moral sense of claims. Elections in Kenya were—and are—a display of state capacity, and they have been manipulated by the powerful. But there is a moral economy of elections; behaviour and possibilities are constrained not simply by law but by ideas of virtue that shape popular expectation and demands.

The precise shape of that moral economy has changed over time, across our study countries. The return of multi-party elections—in Ghana and Kenya in 1992, in Uganda in 2006—has had a powerful effect. So too has the growth of a complex international architecture of electoral support and scrutiny, with multiple organizations vying to advise and observe. Outright theft of votes at the polling station is now uncommon; popular opinion as well as international norms are against this. Flagrant intimidation is also less common than it was, though still far from unknown. Elections have become increasingly high-tech, and some aspects of them have become increasingly public: in Ghana and Uganda, the casting and counting of ballots is done in the open air. Local-level competition has increased, and the expectation that candidates will show their virtue as patrons by generosity

to voters—visible in the brief earlier experiments with competitive elections in both Ghana and Uganda—has now become entrenched in those countries, as it is in Kenya. Elections have become very expensive affairs for candidates; those who win come to office with debts that they must repay. That encourages them to use office to recoup their costs, as well as channelling resources to their constituents. This changing moral economy helps us to understand the liveliness of elections: voters feel that, at a local level at least, they have a choice to make.

Choice may be limited. In Uganda, President Yoweri Museveni has been in office for more than 30 years, and keeps on winning elections. He uses state resources to reward those loyal to him; like Jomo Kenyatta in the 1960s and 1970s, he encourages voters to blame their members of parliament, not him, if they are unhappy with the government. In Kenya, meanwhile, multi-party presidential elections have come to be surrounded by complex ethnic coalition-building and incumbency is a great asset: the sitting president has the means to reward supporters and create a winning alliance. Only in Ghana has power changed hands repeatedly. There, a distinctive two-party system emerged

through the electoral politics of the 1950s and 1960s. Since 1992, when Ghana began what was self-consciously called its 'experiment' with multi-partyism, that system has come into its own, enabling competitive national, as well as local politics. Ghana's politics are also full of patron-client relationships; but—unlike Uganda—these do not all lead back to the incumbent president, and—unlike Kenya—they are not always rooted in ethnicity.

Our research suggests that behind that difference, there are significant similarities—and continuities—in the moral economy of elections in the three countries. Elections flatter politicians' and civil servants' sense of their status; and they list and catalogue the public in a way that affirms state power. At the same time they allow voters to make demands for 'development', in the many material meanings of that word. Those demands may be largely unmet, but the opportunity to assert them as moral expectations drives popular participation. African elections are often problematic: vulnerable to malpractice, costly, encouraging parochial patronage politics. But they are not mere shams, or ethnic censuses; and they are certainly not without their own morality.

# Contact Us

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We hope you have enjoyed the eighth issue of Symeon. We would like to include more about you, as alumni, in subsequent issues, so please do get in touch and let us know what you are doing now. Whether you have a job related to history and the skills you learned during your study or you moved on to something entirely different, we would love to hear from you! We would also be delighted to hear your thoughts on Symeon. Please let us know any subject areas you would like us to cover in future editions. Perhaps you would even like to consider contributing an article? We'd be interested to have your thoughts.

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