Durham University

SYMEON

Issue Nine

The magazine for alumni.
Department of History,
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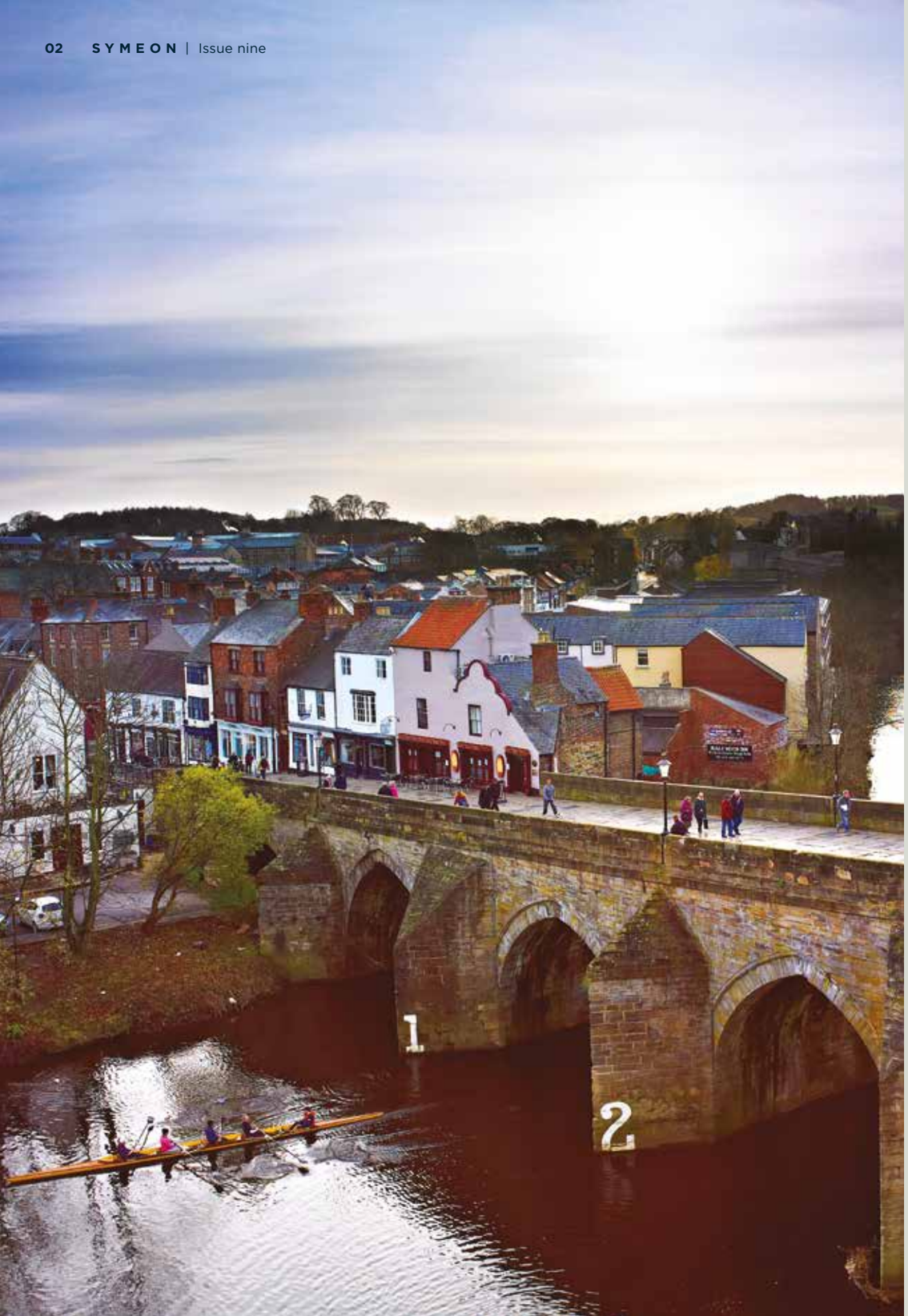


When I was tasked with the selection of a theme for this year's Symeon, the idea of connections seemed an obvious, and pertinent, choice. The current political climate has raised questions about the value of connections and collaboration versus independence; at the same time, the History Department's collaborative activities have demonstrated how enriching academic partnerships can be. The report of the Durham-Münster Conference shows how students and staff from both universities embraced the chance not only to share their research, but for cultural exchange. The PKU-Tsinghua-Durham Colloquium offered similar opportunities; this event inspired Kimberley Foy and Honor Webb's piece, 'Seamless Connections'. More evidence of the Department's activities can be found in Prof Sarah Davies round-up of this year's 'Department News'.

Another focus of Issue 9 is the role that historical research plays beyond the university environment. Public engagement is becoming increasingly important, and you can read about the way in which two university staff, Dr Charlie Rozier and Prof Giles Gasper, have delivered their research to a wider audience, through exciting, innovative projects. 'Singing the Past to Life' reports on the use of music as a medium to convey historical events, and 'Beyond the Horizon' shows how technology and interdisciplinary projects can do likewise.

Alison Tweddle's article, 'The Auckland Project', a project right on the doorstep of the university, is evidence of how history can be used to regenerate. Community Engagement Officer Ali shares her passion for the positive changes happening in Bishop Auckland and emphasizes how local history can benefit communities today. Local war memorials are another way of connecting people in County Durham to their past. Beth Brewer questions the involvement of women in the creation of these monuments: her article, 'Primary Mourners' highlights how, though women were the primary mourners of First World War in the county, they struggled to be heard when it came to the memorialization of their war dead. Memorialization is an important connection to the past, and Beth's article shows how monuments and memorial practices should be evaluated critically.

From international colloquiums and transnational projects, to smaller-scale local initiatives, this issue finishes with a very personal kind of history - family history. Adrian Harris describes how, upon rediscovering a box of research papers of his father's, he was reconnected to memories of his childhood. Both his father, and his mother, Mavis - the only woman on her course at King's College, Durham - instilled in him the importance of knowledge. Family history adds another layer to social history, giving individuals a way to feel connected to a history that is at once shared and personal.

History connects us to the past, but it also connects us to the present, and the future.

I would also like to thank my fellow editors for their sterling work, and I am sure that they would join me in wishing you all a great year – come what may!

Grace Stephenson
Editor-in-Chief

Contents

Department news

Cosin's Hall – where the new History Common Room can be found.

Professor Sarah Davies
Head of the History Department

We began the year with the good news that the Department had been successful in its application for an Athena SWAN Bronze Award.

Athena SWAN awards are designed to encourage and acknowledge commitment to advancing gender equality in academia. The Department has made considerable efforts in recent years to support women's careers: when I arrived in 1995, Margaret Harvey and I were the only female academic members of staff, whereas now at least 30% of the permanent academic staff are female, and the gender balance at professorial level is rapidly improving (see below.) More remains to be done, and the award recognises not only what we have already achieved but also our commitment to making further progress in the future.

Stairwell in 43 North Bailey, which remains the Department's primary base.

Professor Chris Brooks.

EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) have been at the forefront of our attention in other ways too this year. We are keen to do more to promote the racial and ethnic diversity of our staff and students. As the recent Royal Historical Society report 'Race, Ethnicity and Equality in UK History' (2018) makes clear, this is a challenge facing departments throughout the UK: it is sobering to learn that 93.7% of academic staff in History departments are from white backgrounds. In Durham, we have been discussing the RHS recommendations, which include using Positive Action in student and staff recruitment and considering how to 'decolonise' the History curriculum. Finally, we have continued to step up our Widening Participation efforts. In this connection, we were delighted to hear that thanks to the generosity of two of our own alumni, Durham has established the Weldon - Le Huray scholarships to support students from lower-income households.

The History Department is growing at a rapid pace. In September we were joined by several new, permanent colleagues: Dr Chris Courtney, an environmental historian of China; Dr Tom Hamilton, who works on early modern France; Dr Anne Heffernan, a historian of student politics in South Africa; Dr Markian Prokopovych, an expert in art, architecture and East-Central Europe; and Dr Helen Roche, who is currently working on elite schools in Nazi Germany. This year we have made six further appointments to consolidate our existing strengths and develop new areas such as the History of Science and Technology. We are particularly pleased that we have been able to appoint four new female Professors who will be joining us over the course of 2019-20. The Department is now in a very strong position and we expect that the planned expansion will continue, although the Augar Review of Post-18 Education and Funding has created some uncertainty. We await the Government's response to the review with interest.

As we expand, we desperately need more space! Our primary base continues to be 43, North Bailey, but we have recently taken over part of Cosin's Hall, a wonderful Georgian building on the World Heritage Site. For the first time, the Department has a dedicated common room – a particularly welcome development given the arrival of so many new colleagues. Electronic communication is not always a substitute for face-to-face interaction and it is surprising how many conversations over coffee turn into grant applications and proposals for teaching collaborations!

As we come to the end of another academic year, it is always a pleasure to acknowledge the contributions and achievements of our talented staff and students. This year has seen the publication of monographs by two of our newest colleagues: Chris Courtney's The Nature of Disaster in China: The 1931 Yangzi River Flood (CUP, 2018) and Anne Heffernan's Limpopo's Legacy: Student Politics and Democracy in South Africa (James Currey, 2019). Many alumni will remember Professor Chris Brooks, an eminent historian of early modern English law, society and politics, who worked in the department from 1980 until his untimely death in 2014. Adrian Green and others have recently published a volume of essays in his memory Law, Lawyers and Litigants in Early Modern England (CUP, 2019): a fitting tribute to a wonderful scholar and teacher.

A number of colleagues have been awarded external funding for their research projects, including Tom Stammers for a project on the Jewish country house (AHRC) and Kay Schiller for a biography of Alex Natan, a Jewish-German sprinter (Gerda Henkel Stiftung). Public engagement activities continue to be a priority for us, and this year Professor Ludmilla Jordanova has pioneered a new initiative: History NOW!, a series of free public lectures delivered by colleagues at Durham's Gala Theatre. Particular highlights included Adrian Green's lectures on Durham architecture and Kevin Waite on 'Fighting the American Civil War (again) in the age of Trump'. It was great to see the enthusiastic response of so many members of the public at these events. Charlie Rozier and Giles Gasper have been closely involved in another local initiative: 'The Life of St Cuthbert', a new cantata about the Northumbrian saint, which had its world premiere at Cuthbert's final resting place – Durham Cathedral. Do read Charlie's inspiring article about the project in this edition of Symeon.

The achievements of our students are equally remarkable. All, without exception, have worked incredibly hard this year. Although it is difficult to single out particular individuals, we would like to highlight our prize-winners. This year the Edward Allen Prize for the best performance in the first year has been awarded to Matthew Pearson (Joint Honours Modern Languages and History), the Alumni Prize for the best performance in the second year to Thomas King (Single Honours History), and the Thompson Prize for the best performance in the final year to Charlie Steer-Stephenson (Single Honours History). Charlie Steer-Stephenson (Single Honours History) has received the Dissertation Prize, and at the time of printing, the Gibson Prize for the best dissertation on a local topic is yet to be announced. 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. Please do consider visiting us as we would be delighted to see you.

Volume of Essays published in memory of the eminent historian.

Internal View of the Durham Light Infantry Memorial Chapel, 1925', DRO, D/CL 5/761. Durham County Record Office. Reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office.

Primary mourners?

Marginalising women in the public commemoration of Durham's First World War dead, 1918-1928

Beth Brewer

Beth completed her Undergraduate Degree in History and French in 2018 and was awarded Department and Faculty prizes for her dissertation on female experiences of Durham's First World War commemoration. She is now studying for a Master's in Social and Economic History, before staying in Durham to undertake a PhD examining the contention that female perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide were not held fully accountable for their crimes.

The aftermath of the First World War saw the first mass public commemoration of civilians across Britain.[1] Discussions took place about the best way to remember the dead, with public memorials ranging in scale from national monuments to local workplace rolls of honour, and in nature from militaristic statues to the dedication of new hospital wings.[2] The Durham County Council workplace First World War memorial was unveiled on 27 July 1921 in the council's headquarters at Shire Hall in Old Elvet.[3] In October 1922, the council sent a photograph of its memorial to the relatives of all 122 men listed on it, and the Durham County Record Office holds forty letters of thanks sent in response.[4] Among these letters is one from a woman named Annie Deighton. Her response thanked the county clerk for his letter but noted that the clerk had mistaken the relative who was commemorated on the memorial, writing that 'it is not my Husband's name on it but our only son's'.[5] Deighton goes on to express the emotional pain she continued to feel concerning her son's death, stating 'if only we had known what became of him, the only word was missing'.[6] Deighton's letter indicates that, rather than through this act of public commemoration, her grief would have been aided by knowledge of her son's fate. Indeed, by failing to check their correspondence to ensure that the deceased relative was referred to correctly, the actions of the council appear to have caused Deighton some distress, and certainly did not prioritise fully her reflections on their commemorative process.

The experience of Annie Deighton stands in contrast with a principle argument in the historiography of First World War memorialisation.[7] Several scholars, notably Jay Winter, have asserted that women, who constituted a high proportion of the bereaved, were primary mourners whose grief was aided by memorialisation. Yet, such generalised statements about the attitudes of the bereaved within the historiography are largely made without specific evidence from the mourners themselves.

Durham is home to over one hundred First World War memorials.[8] Notably, the county memorial, takes the form of a column outside the Cathedral, and was unveiled in 1928 following extensive debates about the most appropriate form and location.[9] The Durham Light Infantry (DLI) chapel [Seen in image opposite] is located within the Cathedral, while smaller university, parish and workplace memorials were constructed throughout the city. Each of these memorials constituted a form of public war memory which was the result of independent decision-making processes, involving different interest groups within Durham's community. During their creation, individual memories of the war and desires to commemorate it in a public way came together and often clashed. Societal power dynamics affected who had the ability to assert their views. As a result, Durham's commemorative practices reveal much about the nature of involvement, disagreement, and decision-making in the creation of communal memory narratives.

Approaching Durham's public commemoration practices through a gendered lens challenges the historiographical assumption that female mourners were the primary beneficiaries of memorialisation. Analysis of newspaper reports and archived correspondence relating to Durham's memorials shows that, rather than being placed at the centre of Durham's public commemoration, female experiences were marginalised. Women were absent from public debates and committees established to oversee memorialisation. Women were also dismissed when they tried to make more private attempts to correspond with memorial committee members, which meant that they were often prevented from engaging in the finished memorials in personally meaningful ways. This marginalisation was not only the result of gendered power dynamics, but also the unexplored consequence of the belief that women should be the main recipients of memorialisation. By creating memorials primarily for the bereaved, the male leaders of Durham's commemoration excluded women from any involvement in the creation processes, meaning that female experiences were not represented in the finished memorials. As a result, rather than being uniformly helped with their grief, women had varied reactions to these forms of public memory.

In common with local memorialisation practices across Britain, the main public arena of Durham's commemoration was composed of

1. Joy Damousi, 'Mourning practices', in Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War. Volume III: Civil Society* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 358.
2. Alex King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 1-2.
3. North East War Memorials Project (NEWMP), 'Plaque 1914-18 Shire Hall Old Elvet', www.newmp.org.uk/detail.php?contentId=11239 (accessed 2 February 2018).
4. County Council correspondence relating to memorial, *Durham County Record Office* (DRO), CC/X 110, 1-40.
5. Annie Deighton, DRO, CC/X 110, 11.
6. Ibid.
7. Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 6.
8. NEWMP, 'Parish: Durham City', http://www.newmp.org.uk/search_results.php (accessed 31 May 2019).
9. NEWMP, 'Memorial Details: Column 1914-18 Cathedral Grounds', http://www.newmp.org.uk/detail.php?contentId=9903 (accessed 13 July 2017). Denise Coss, 'First World War memorials, commemoration and community in North East England, 1918-1939', *Durham E-Theses* (2012), p. 36.

Image taken from the Somme 1916 Exhibition held in Palace Green Library in 2016.

official committees established to create memorials.[10] A small group of male civil society leaders, predominantly clergymen, regimental officers and politicians, dominated this public sphere of memorialisation and generated the dominant narratives of remembrance in Durham. The Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail reported on a meeting of the county memorial committee in Durham's town hall on 16 April 1919, which had convened to discuss preliminary plans for its form and location.[11] Lord Durham chaired the meeting, and all those recorded as being present were men with prominent positions in organisations such as the church, council and army. Although this report is the only record of the meeting, it indicates that the motion to remember the dead with a monument near the Cathedral was passed without the official contribution of any woman. This decision is reflective of committees throughout the city, which were similarly composed of male civil society leaders. Colonel Rowland Burdon and Lieutenant-Colonel Hugh Bowes of the DLI led the creation of the regiment's memorial chapel in consultation with Dean James Welldon of Durham Cathedral, where the chapel was to be located.[12] Likewise, Reverend Richard Tolliday and Alderman H. Ferens organised the creation of St Cuthbert's parish memorial.[13] In the context of inter-war Britain, it is unsurprising that men held the positions which led to close involvement with official commemoration processes. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that the public arena of commemoration was inherently gendered. Not only were memorials created with the primary intention of helping female mourners deal with their grief, but female exclusion from this sphere of decision-making meant that their individual memories of the war were not heard in the public record. The experiences of women were not allowed to compete with other memories for influence in the creation of these commemoration landscapes.

10. Bob Bushaway, 'Name upon name: the Great War and remembrance', in Roy Porter (ed.), *Myths of the English* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 23.

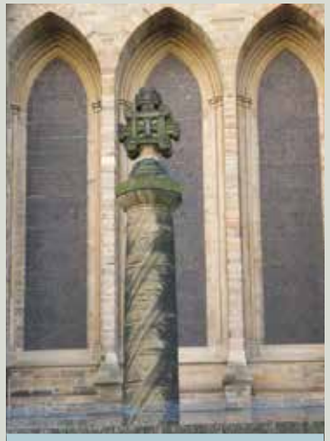
11. 'Durham County War Memorial: A Monument Near the Cathedral', *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, 17 April 1919, p. 2 (*British Newspaper Archive*).

12. Correspondence concerning the DLI chapel, DRO, D/DLI 11/1/7-11.

13. 'Parish War Memorial', *The Newcastle Daily Journal*, 1 November 1918, p. 6 (*British Newspaper Archive*).

As a result of female absence in the official processes of commemoration, the finished memorials represented male memories of the war, and their aesthetics need to be analysed through this gendered lens. Durham's finished memorials perpetuated ideals of soldierly heroism and sacrifice, turning public areas into spaces permanently dedicated to these militaristic concepts. Most notably, the county monument and DLI chapel militarised communal religious spaces within the grounds of the Cathedral. The county monument, located outside the Cathedral's east wall, is decorated with carvings of army kit and grenades, linking the memorial to the violence of trench warfare. Similarly, in an article on 10 October 1923 publicising the DLI chapel's unveiling, the Sunderland Daily Echo described its 'military character'.[14] The regimental colours of the DLI were placed around the walls of the chapel and on the pillars of the transept outside, marking the space as celebrating the men's soldierly identities. The regiment further increased the militarisation of the chapel in 1926 by placing the Butte de Warlencourt memorial within the chapel space.[15] The 6th, 8th, and 9th Battalions of the DLI had originally placed the cross on the summit of the butte in northern France, in commemoration of the men who had died there in November 1916.[16] As well as being intrinsically related to the military through its creation, the memorial cross provided a reminder of violent warfare through the bullet marks which covered its surface.[17] The small group of men who controlled the creation of Durham's memorials turned communal areas into spaces which promoted the idealised visions of militaristic masculinity which were present in inter-war Britain.[18] This commemorative narrative of the dead as brave soldiers who had sacrificed their lives cannot be assumed to reflect the individual beliefs of relatives, who would have had their own personal memories of civilian husbands, sons and brothers. Echoing their absence from the memorial creation processes, due to the belief that women should be the recipients of commemoration, female experiences of the war and memories of the dead were marginalised from memorial spaces. Without a consideration of female reflections on public commemoration, it cannot be assumed that these finished memorial spaces helped women to grieve and remember their dead.

Female reactions to both the commemorative processes and finished memorial spaces give indications of their complex attitudes towards commemoration. Accessing the reflections of women on memorialisation is challenging. Their absence in public debates and on memorial committees means that there is no record of individual female voices in the public sphere. Oral histories for Durham are not available, and private letters and diaries written by women are not present in the archives. These methodological difficulties have likely fed into the overwhelming historiographical assumption that women were aided by memorialisation, as historians have not found significant evidence to the contrary. Nevertheless, in Durham, evidence featuring female reflections on commemoration exists in the form of semi-public correspondence between women and the male leaders of memorialisation. Such sources give the closest indication available of how a small number of women tried to engage in and reflect on Durham's public commemoration.



The county memorial for the First World War, outside Durham Cathedral.

In addition to archived letters relating to the County Council workplace memorial, correspondence between women and the directors of the DLI chapel's committee, Lieutenant-Colonel Bowes and Colonel Burdon, indicates that individual women reflected on memorialisation in a variety of ways. Some women wrote to donate funds, some wanted to be involved with the chapel's design, and others wanted to see the finished memorial. However, this female correspondence was met by responses which emphasised paternalistic ideas of women being the primary recipients of memorialisation. In correspondence sent to Burdon

14. 'Military Chapel: Durham Light Infantry War Memorial', *Sunderland Daily Echo*, 15 October 1923, p. 3 (*British Newspaper Archive*).

15. Hugh Bowes, 25 November 1926, *DRO*, D/DLI 11/1/11, 11.

16. 'Description of the Memorial Cross to the 6th, 8th and 9th Battalions of the DLI', *DRO*, D/DLI 11/1/11, 65.

17. 'War Deeds of the Durhams', *Dundee Courier*, 22 December 1926, p. 5 (*British Newspaper Archive*).

18. Phillip D'Alton, 'Women in the military and the cult of masculinity', in Bernd-Rüdiger Hüppauf (ed.), *War, Violence and the Modern Condition* (Berlin, 1997), pp. 227-229.

Image taken from the Somme 1916 Exhibition held in Palace Green Library in 2016.

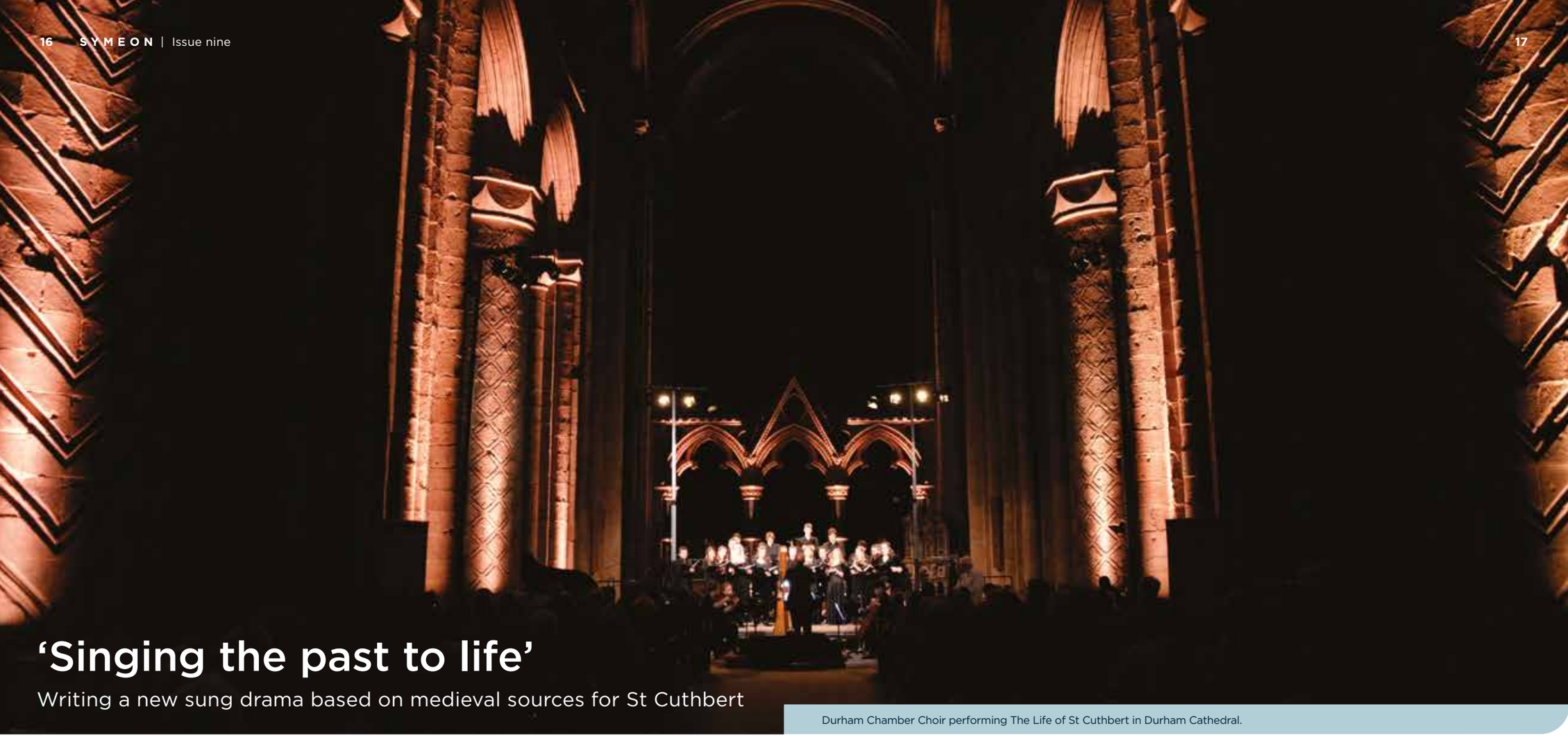
on 9 October 1922, Bowes wrote that he had 'received a letter from one of the Misses Lowe asking if they might participate in the preparation of the memorial chapel'.[19] Although the original letter has not been preserved, this subsequent correspondence shows that a woman, whose brother had served in the war and subsequently died in 1922, explicitly wanted to participate actively in the memorialisation process.[20] However, Bowes went on to write that he had replied to Lowe 'stating the action we are taking,' and that they would send her one of the circular letters with subscription information.[21] Bowes had assumed that Lowe's desire to be involved was simply an indication of her willingness to donate, and his letter implicitly excluded her from being able to contribute to the creation process other than through the donation of funds. Even if this exclusion stemmed from a belief that relatives should be the prioritised recipients of, rather than agents in memorialisation, Bowes' action runs counter to the concept of memorials helping the bereaved. The level of Lowe's engagement in the chapel's creation as a commemorative action was controlled by the male leaders of its construction. This response may have restricted her personal way of dealing with her wartime grief. Furthermore, it is indicative of the manner in which female reflections on public memory of the war were marginalised during the creation of a communal narrative.

Portraying women as primary mourners in the writing of First World War memory history implies that they were prioritised as the main beneficiaries of memorials, and the literature has extended this analytical lens to conclude that memorials were successful in helping relatives deal with their grief. A questioning of the assertion that women were primary mourners through a gendered analysis of public commemoration in Durham shows that women were, in fact, marginalised from the practice. Women were absent from the male-dominated official processes surrounding memorialisation. Reflecting these gendered dynamics, the finished memorial aesthetics presented inter-war visions of idealised militaristic masculinity through their glorification of the dead soldiers' sacrifice. Lowe's experience was not unique; archived correspondence shows that where women tried to engage actively with memorialisation in personally meaningful ways, male memorial leaders often restricted them from doing so. The overriding belief that relatives should be the primary beneficiaries of commemoration meant that memorial leaders could not contemplate involving women in the creation processes, marginalising them from memorialisation. Finally, the semi-public female reflections on the County Council workplace memorial show that individual women experienced a range of reactions to commemoration, not all of which were positive. Ultimately, further investigation into private female reflections, not just in Durham but across Britain, is necessary to consider fully the range of female attitudes towards memorialisation, and address the assumption that women were the primary beneficiaries of public commemoration.

19. Bowes, 9 October 1922, DRO, D/DLI 2/18/8, 15.

20. 'Lieutenant Colonel William Douglas Lowe', The National Archives, WO 339/13346.

21. Bowes, 9 October 1922, DRO, D/DLI 2/18/8, 15.



‘Singing the past to life’

Writing a new sung drama based on medieval sources for St Cuthbert

Durham Chamber Choir performing The Life of St Cuthbert in Durham Cathedral.

Dr Charlie Rozier

Charlie Rozier’s research and teaching interests broadly cover the political, cultural and intellectual history of Britain and Continental Europe during the period c.900-1250 AD, with particular focus on exploring perceptions of the past and theories of history-writing from Antiquity to c.1200.

In 2016, Giles Gasper and I received an AHRC Cultural Engagement grant for a collaborative project with the not-for-profit opera ensemble Cantata Dramatica. Directed by Julia Stutfield and Nick Pitts-Tucker, Cantata Dramatica specializes in helping young people to develop, write, produce and perform new sung dramas, usually on historical themes. Our project, titled ‘Singing the Past to Life’, proposed to build the concept and content for a brand-new commission based on the medieval sources for St Cuthbert that I had been researching and writing about in my academic work.[1] Three years later, in February 2019, the world première of the Life of St Cuthbert was performed in Durham Cathedral.

I first began collaborating with Cantata Dramatica in 2013, when I was contacted to give historical insight on the main sources used to compose Cantata Eliensis, which tells the story of the founding and building of Ely Cathedral over a period of four centuries. We were convinced that there was rich potential to develop a similar narrative on St Cuthbert that would focus on the dramatic events that he witnessed, and tell the story of how his relics were brought to Durham. The AHRC grant gave us the freedom to explore our ideas in more detail, with a far-off dream of using the Cathedral as a venue for our yet-to-be-completed work.

During 2016, we assembled for several collaborative workshops, during which student and staff members of the History Department at Durham shared their ideas about possible story arcs with Cantata Dramatica. I then worked alongside Nick in the development of our libretto.

As an historian trained in academic writing, I learned some valuable lessons in crafting the best story while staying faithful to the sources. In the end, we managed to use sections of text from Symeon’s works, Bede’s Life of St Cuthbert, and the eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon Durham poem. I was particularly keen to highlight the role played by the Anglo-Norman author Symeon of Durham, whose written accounts continue to dominate the popular narrative of how Durham was founded in 995 - yes, this is the same Symeon who gives his name to this very magazine! Much of our preface comes from Symeon’s

Arts & Humanities Research Council

CANTATA DRAMATICA

DURHAM VOCAL FESTIVAL

1. List of sources used: Historia de sancto Cuthberto: a History of Saint Cuthbert and a record of his patrimony, ed. T. J. South (Woodbridge, 2002).Symeon of Durham, Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius hoc est Dunhelmensis, ecclesie, ed. and trans. D.W. Rollason (Oxford, 2000). Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: a life by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and Bede’s prose life, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940).

Narrator 'Symeon' performing on stage in the Cathedral.

history of the Durham church:

Cantor: **"Our venerable church was founded in ancient times,**
By kings and bishops,
who were saints in waiting.
Oswald, King and martyr, Aidan,
holy pastor,
And Cuthbert, God's hand in our land.
Now far from our home on Holy Island,
We are still the same church (place?),
built high by God's grace.
We keep their holy relics, and follow their holy precepts,
Our bishop is heir of all they laid there.
So come, listen now, and hear of Cuthbert, his life, and his hand in the origins and progress of this, the church of Durham".[2]

Symeon was a natural choice to function as our narrator. Our main idea was that each scene would recreate important sections of Cuthbert's life, including his conversion to monastic life, his miracles, his death and his eventual translation to Durham and burial in the new cathedral.

The libretto was handed over to our composer, Solfa Carlile, who produced the final piece in just over a year. Julia, Nick and I were extremely lucky to build a collaborative partnership with Durham County Music Service, the organisation responsible for planning the annual Durham Vocal Fest with the Durham Music Trust. This collaboration then snowballed into the programme of events that we were able to put on in February 2019. Performing as part of the Vocal Fest gave us access to the Cathedral as our venue, help with additional outreach events, and collaboration with the Durham University Chamber Choir, Music Durham, and others.

Our events kicked off on Saturday 2 February, with a special preview performance at St Aidan's Church in Bamburgh. Our singers and musicians gave workshops for primary-school children in Northumberland and County Durham on Tuesday 5 and Wednesday 6 February. Children gained the chance to hear some of the music, and took part in singing some of the Life of St Cuthbert. The response was overwhelmingly positive. It was great to see such unbridled enthusiasm from the children for our work, and the teachers expressed their gratitude for how far our university could reach into local communities that do not get to experience classical music styles on a regular basis.

Without doubt, our performance in the cathedral was the highlight of the entire project. James Burton, director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted, and the lead role of Cuthbert was played by Daniel Tate, a Durham alumnus and native of the North East. David Stancliffe, Bishop of Salisbury from 1993 to 2010, read the part of narrator, Symeon of Durham—standing not far from where Symeon himself is probably buried, off the monastic complex. Johnny McCausland was superb in his role as Production Director, and particularly inspired in his designs for lighting up the Cathedral and staging the singers.

My favourite moments included the section in which Bede appeared at the back of the nave to chastise Symeon for distorting the earlier history of St Cuthbert's cult.

2. Extract taken from Life of Cuthbert libretto.

Bede (interrupting): "Cantor, Cantor, what are you doing with this history? Who told YOU what Wilfrid said? Who was YOUR witness? Not me, Not mine! I know you read by books, so see the truth in them. So… how do you know?"

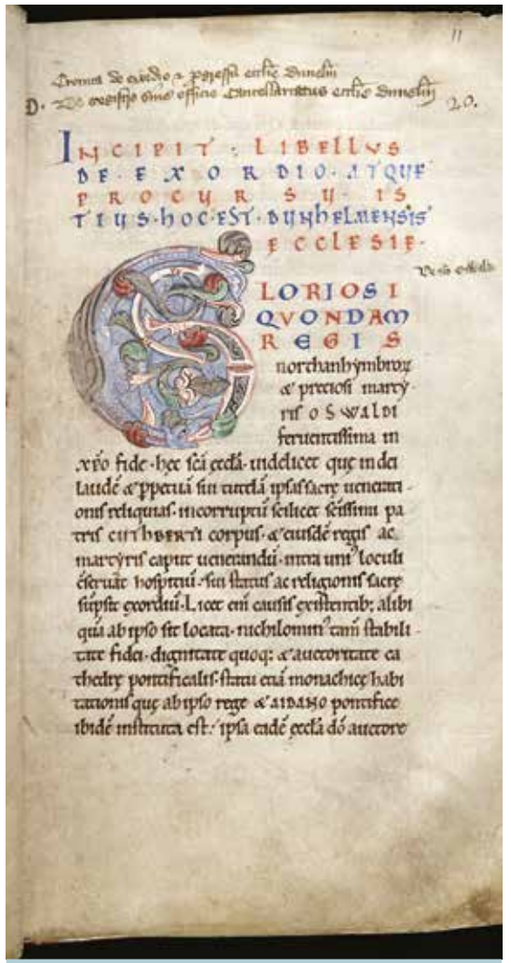
Cantor: "Master, Master, forgive me. What I am telling is just a story. Full well I know what history is, as you have taught me in your books. But this a story for our times. Five hundred years have passed, and new man are now guiding Cuthbert's holy church. What you saw clear has dimmed in the darkness of time. The people of our age hear the saints and kings of former years in different ways."

Bede (fading): "Have a care, master Cantor. Have a care! Tell your story as you put it, but keep truth in it. I sleep back here….but I only sleep! If I hear false words, I shall rise and chastise you….most severely. Have a care, master Cantor. Have a care!"

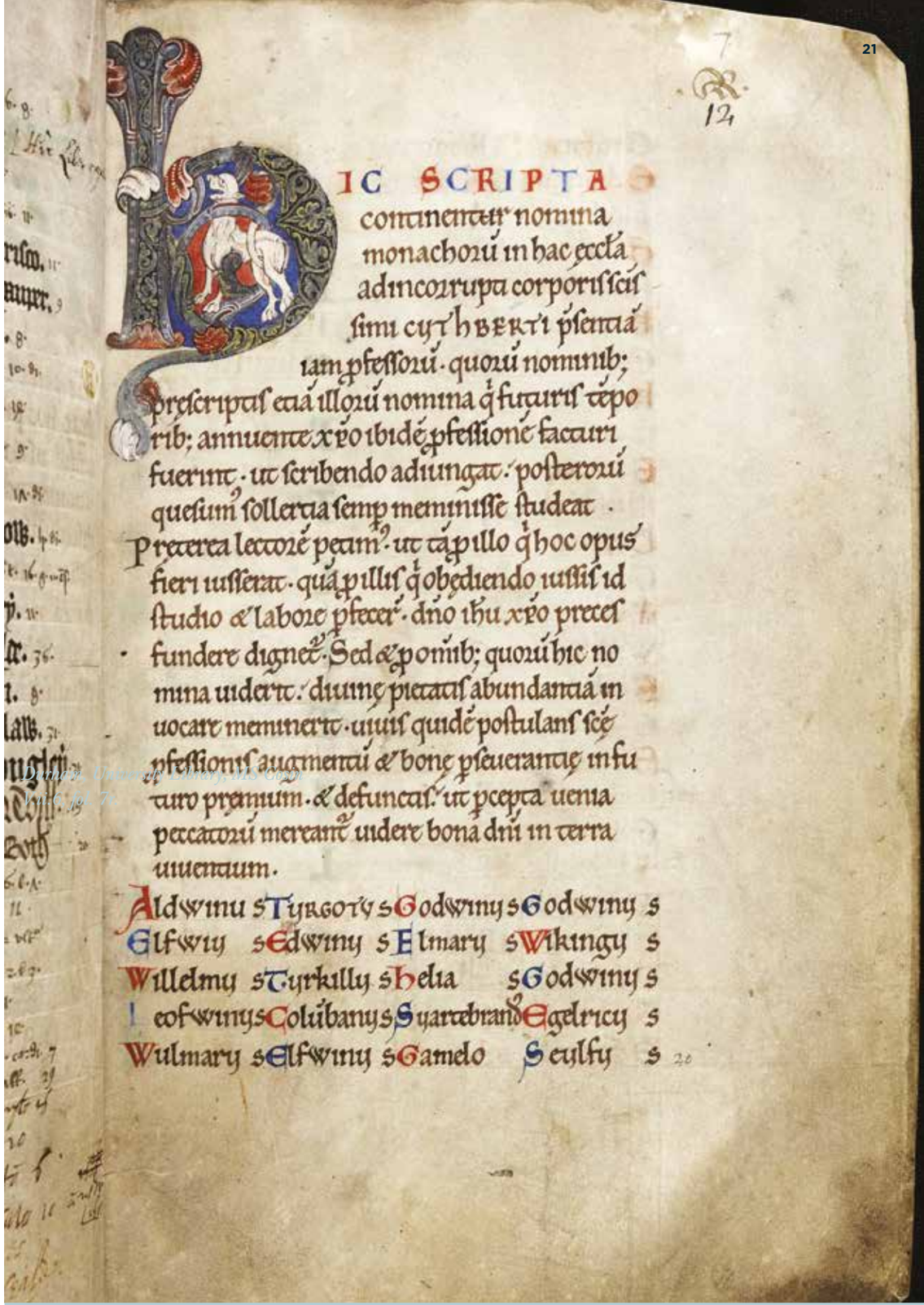
This section provided a nice dialogue on the uses of history in the medieval period, which has formed a constant thread of my academic research. Likewise, the tolling of the cathedral bells at the death of Cuthbert brought added drama to the most moving scene of the piece (complete luck that it just so happened to be 9pm).

While there have been an array of exciting events in recent months, work on this project is certainly not complete. I will continue working with Cantata Dramatica and the Durham County Music Service on their future. We plan to deliver another performance of the Life of St Cuthbert in the Cathedral as part of the Feast of St Cuthbert celebrations in March 2020 or 2021, and Cantata Dramatica are particularly keen to develop our schools collaboration in order to make a more permanent impact on the teaching of music, history and religious studies.

From humble beginnings in March 2016, we have managed to collaborate from the Durham University History Department and Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies outwards to a range of organizations including Cantata Dramatica, Durham Cathedral, Durham Music Service, Durham University Chamber Choir, Durham University Music Society, four primary schools, and a number of individuals, not least our composer, Solfa, and conductor, James Burton. Now the real work begins!



Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V.ii.6, fol. 11r.



Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V.ii.6, fol. 7r.

The Auckland Project

"My eyes were opened to the importance of local identity and heritage as vehicles for positive change whilst travelling the world, but it was at Durham that I saw clearly how to translate this passion into action."

Alison Tweddle

Alison Tweddle graduated from Durham University in 2015 with an MA in International Cultural Heritage Management. During her studies, Ali became part of The Auckland Project, a charity creating a faith, arts and heritage destination in her hometown of Bishop Auckland, County Durham. Now, Head of Community Engagement at the Project, she leads a team working with the local community, including groups, residents, and partnering organisations, to drive regeneration in the town. Since graduating, Ali has also regularly returned to Durham University as a visiting lecturer in International Cultural Heritage Management.

Alison Tweddle, Head of Community Engagement at The Auckland Project. Photograph Credit - House of Hues, courtesy of The Auckland Project.

Members of The Auckland Project's Engagement Team out and about in the local community. Photograph Credit - House of Hues, courtesy of The Auckland Project.

I grew up in Bishop Auckland, County Durham, within walking distance of a castle I knew nothing about. While I was vaguely aware of Auckland Castle as a private residence, its doors had always been closed to the town. So, for me, as for many others, it faded into the background of our lives, an elegant but static stone addition to the County Durham scenery - little did I know how big a role it would come to play in my life and career.

After school, I left to see more of the world. My last stop was a post teaching in an orphanage in Iringa, a small town in central Tanzania. It is the home of the ancient Isimilia Stone Age site, where some of the most significant Stone Age discoveries to date were unearthed in the 1950s. I worked with some of the young people there, teaching them how to use their knowledge of Iringa's heritage and stories, steeped in local myth, to engage with tourists and carve out a potential career and a new future for themselves.

This work inspired me. I had seen how the past could help people look forward. So, upon returning home, I was determined to do the same and to take what I had learned in Tanzania back with me.

Studying for my Master's degree at Durham allowed me to dig even deeper, and find out more about how identity, local pride and quality of life can all be forged and connected through a sense of place. The idea that local history and heritage could be used as a force to regenerate and renew communities, took root and grew within me.

During my studies, I undertook a three-month work placement at The Auckland Project, based back in Bishop Auckland. The charity, then known as Auckland Castle Trust, had bought Auckland Castle, and launched an ambitious mission to create a visitor destination. With the focus being on the unique history of the town, using art and heritage as a catalyst to revitalise it.

I was fascinated by what was happening in my hometown, and wanted to be a part of it, so when my work placement ended, I stayed on as a volunteer.

In 2014, just months before I graduated with my MA, I joined The Auckland Project full-time as a Community Outreach Officer.

Opening doors to local history

At the heart of The Auckland Project's visitor destination is Auckland Castle, the physical embodiment of Bishop Auckland's fascinating past and prestigious place in British history.

When I joined The Auckland Project, the Castle had been opened to the public, its doors swung open, and visitors and residents alike welcomed inside.

In my first role as Community Outreach Officer, I stepped back in time to connect with my own history. After years working abroad and studying, it was my job to get to know the people of my own hometown and learn more about the Castle itself.

Auckland Castle. Photograph Credit - Graeme Peacock, courtesy of The Auckland Project.

900-year-old Auckland Castle is the former home of the prestigious Prince Bishops of Durham, who governed much of the north of England on behalf of the monarch. It was first their countryside manor retreat from Durham City, and then a private palace, with its stature and grandeur a symbol of their status and authority.

Though the near-absolute power of the Prince Bishops came to an end in the 1830s, the Castle remained the residence of the Bishop of Durham until 2010 and still houses the office of the current bishop of Durham, Rt. Rev. Paul Butler. It is now considered one of the best preserved and most important bishops' palaces in Europe.

Because it had been a private residence for so many years, generations within Bishop Auckland, including myself, had inherited the feeling that Auckland Castle was strictly off limits. This, in turn meant that the history, significance and prestige of the building and its inhabitants was not widely known or worn proudly by the local community.

It was part of my role to rectify this and to connect the local community with Auckland Castle.

When I first started seeing people cross the threshold, tentatively at first, but with increasing confidence, it confirmed my belief that the Castle could become a beacon for local pride and a catalyst to kick start a brighter future.

In 2016, a multi-million pound programme of conservation began at Auckland Castle, causing it to close temporarily to the public. During that time, we have been working hard, off-site, to maintain the fledgling links with the town and build up to the Castle's re-launch later this year – but there has been plenty more to keep us busy.

New buildings – old stories

In the four years since I joined The Auckland Project, the charity's work has expanded and grown beyond the Castle walls, with two new attractions already popping up in the town.

The Mining Art Gallery opened in 2017 and is the first of its kind in the UK. Coal was once the lifeblood of the north east and this gallery uniquely showcases art by mining artists, exploring what it meant to work in this vital industry.

The significance of the gallery's links with local mining heritage are not accidental. My own family has roots in the mining industry, my grandfather worked as a miner until he sadly succumbed to the common miners' disease 'black spit' which forced him to retire before his early death at 55. My family's experience, and our history, is one that is shared and reflected in countless families throughout County Durham. It was important that with its first new gallery, The Auckland Project could connect with local people to acknowledge and reflect their shared heritage. The Mining Art Gallery is the embodiment of this ethos.

In 2018, over 1,000 people came to the opening of Auckland Tower, a new visitor centre welcoming visitors to the Project, and selling tickets to its attractions. Standing at 29 metres tall the tower's contemporary design is a nod to history, reflecting a wooden siege engine standing against the walls of Auckland Castle, symbolically opening it up to the town.

In the coming years, more galleries and attractions will open in the town, with a Spanish Gallery, Faith Museum, Walled Garden and Walled Garden Restaurant all in the works.

So far, almost £150m has been committed to make these plans a reality. At the heart of our mission there has always been a desire to

create real, positive change for the people of the town, using its fascinating history and beautiful buildings as the driving force, reminiscent of the changes I began to see in Tanzania.

Looking forward

Heritage, as a focal point for development, can give a renewed sense of purpose, not just to buildings and can also enrich the reputation and social landscape of an area through community engagement.

Now, as Head of Community Engagement at The Auckland Project, it is my responsibility to ensure there is a variety of routes for local people to engage with us, and access all our venues.

My team runs various programmes and activities that act as barrier breakers and ensure direct communication. This includes a Dementia Friendly Heritage Group, and an after-school club that uses football as a way to get children excited about the town's heritage and teaches them more about different cultures and healthy eating. There is also an over-60s dance programme in association with Helix Arts, which invites older members of the community to come together, socialise and stay active.

We also offer unemployment support, and have guided people into apprenticeship schemes and other opportunities within the town.

The dedicated Education Team, whom we work closely with has engaged with more than 6,000 students over the past three years, from 45 different schools.

Through all of this community engagement, we forge lasting relationships with local groups, which in turn encourages individuals to begin to feel ownership of the changes in their town.

Our current themes focus on growing a sense of local pride, reconnecting people to the natural world and exploring how arts and heritage can improve health and wellbeing.

In March 2019, we launched a Bishop Auckland branch of Incredible Edible, a national food planting community movement that started in Todmorden, which demonstrates how a townscape can be transformed through the power of small actions. This includes replanting disused and unloved areas that are unsightly or used for fly tipping, tackling areas prone to anti-social behaviour and brightening residential areas by growing food that people are welcome to pick and take home.

Bishop Auckland has a longstanding heritage of growing both flowers and food. The area has a number of thriving allotments and, by coming together as a community, we are encouraging people to strengthen their relationship with food, wasting less of it as a result of appreciating its true value.

We will also launch our exciting Social Haunting project this year in partnership with Ribbon Road Music. The rapid decline of industry in the Bishop Auckland area that followed the demise of the mining industry left communities struggling to recover, with cracks that still run deep.

Social Haunting explores the inherited "ghosts" of collective memory that continue to influence people's lives today. Through intensive community workshops, the project uses song writing, art, and meaningful consultation to explore feelings in a creative and safe space, acknowledging past experiences and galvanising hope for the future.

The outreach element of our work is crucial for the Engagement Team. We have to be out there, talking to people, and listening to what is important to them in order to gain an insight into what work we can do that befits their needs.

Running our programmes from local community centres and churches is a fantastic way to do this, not only supporting the town's existing infrastructure but becoming a visible and real part of the town's community.

We also work to increase and strengthen community capacity, bringing together local groups and organisations to partner up and help each other. Networking connections like this strengthens our community. We believe that every effort counts towards making Bishop Auckland a better place to live and work.

Bishop Auckland is a historic market town and, as the seat of power for the Prince Bishops of Durham, it prospered. Its location at the heart of the Durham Coalfield led to the town becoming a hive of activity and mining industry from the Industrial Revolution through to the demise of the collieries across the north of England in the 1980s. Sadly, at this point Bishop Auckland's fortunes also dipped and the town has since struggled to regain its former glory.

This situation is not unique to Bishop Auckland, indeed it is being replicated in towns and villages up and down the country. What is unique about Bishop Auckland is the work being done to revitalise the town, to create opportunities for education, training and skills development.

It is our job to work with the local community to ensure they are part of all this and instil a renewed sense of pride.

Currently, The Auckland Project has 118 staff, including 26 apprentices and 82% of staff live in County Durham, rising to 98% if you include the wider North East.

There are also around 300 volunteers working with The Auckland Project, gaining new experience, skills and confidence in a range of areas from the galleries and gardens to working with the Engagement Teams.

The people of our community are our current and future visitors, our current and future employees and volunteers, and are also the living experts of the town.

By working with all generations of the local community on an almost daily basis I have seen the changes that are already starting to happen in the town's outlook. A gradual wave of optimism and cautious excitement with what the future could look like for Bishop Auckland.

And that is at the crux of my role. We are creating a visitor destination that we hope will attract visitors from across the country and the world, with the long-term benefit of the local community very much at the heart of what we do.

Get in touch

If you would like to get in touch or get involved with The Auckland Project through the Engagement Department, or as a volunteer, please email me at **alison.tweddle@aucklandproject.org**

Note to newsdesks: For more information please contact Kathleen Moore, Communications Assistant at The Auckland Project on **01388 600529** or **Kathleen.moore@aucklandproject.org**

A view of Bishop Auckland from Auckland Tower.
Photograph Credit - House of Hues, courtesy of The Auckland Project.

About The Auckland Project:

The Auckland Project, based in Bishop Auckland, is working with the community and other key partners to help raise aspirations and create opportunities through arts, heritage and a culture of learning.

As part of this long-term ambition, the charity* is developing a visitor destination of international significance, including Auckland Castle, once home to the Prince Bishops of Durham, a Spanish Art Gallery, Faith Museum, Walled Garden and Deer Park.

The latest of these new attractions, Auckland Tower, opened in Bishop Auckland on October, 20 2018, following the Mining Art Gallery which opened in October 2017. The other attractions will be launching in stages over the next three years.

The Auckland Project's dedicated Engagement Team is also working closely with schools and community groups to deliver a range of life changing programmes for all ages, designed to increase educational attainment, enhance employability, boost community spirit and improve health and wellbeing for current and future generations.
By 2020 the charity aims to create 8,000 opportunities for learning and skills development, including 60 apprenticeships.

To date, approaching £150m has been committed to the Project, including £12.4m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. A full list of supporters and funders can be found at visit **aucklandproject.org/supporters**

For more information please visit aucklandproject.org or search Auckland Project on Facebook and Twitter.

*From September 2017, Auckland Castle Trust is known as The Auckland Project.

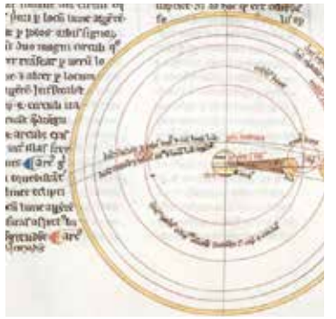
Beyond the horizon

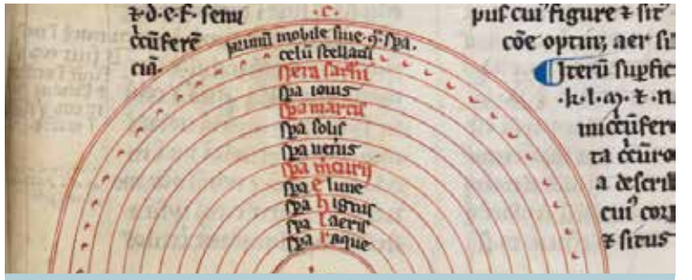
Research in light and sound

"As many horizons are possible as there are places on the earth."

Professor Giles Gasper

Giles Gasper is Professor in High Medieval History at Durham University. He specializes in the intellectual history of the high middle ages (11th-13th centuries), particularly in the development of theology. He also has interests in Patristic and early medieval thought, and in the history of science.





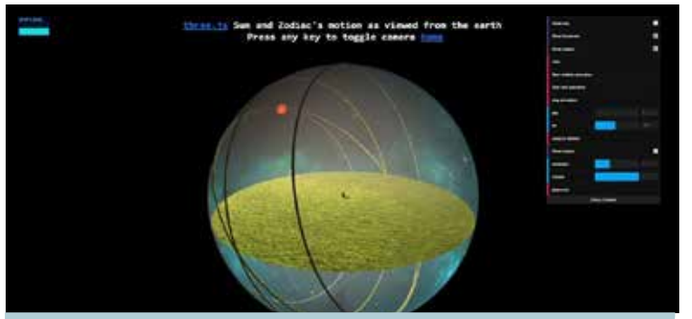
Images – British Library MS Harley 3735.

These words come from a treatise on astronomy by the English polymath, and sometime bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grosseteste (c.1170-1253). The treatise, On the Sphere, provides a general introduction to astronomy and the place of the earth within the universe. Surviving in over fifty manuscript copies (over ten indicates a wide circulation in the medieval period) On the Sphere explores the spherical nature of the world, the movement and eccentricity of the Sun, the length of days and night, ascensions of the zodiac, the habitability of the earth and different climactic zones, lunar and solar eclipses and a detailed discussion of the precession of the equinoxes and the theory of trepidation. Precession is the movement of stars, as seen from earth from east to west, and, on a yearly basis, around the sun. Trepidation is oscillation within that movement.

Throughout the treatise, Grosseteste uses a variety of ancient and medieval astronomical and cosmological sources, especially by the Islamic astronomer Thebit (Thābit ibn Qurra) (for the theory of trepidation in particular), Aristotle and Ptolemy. In this we see Grosseteste as among the first generation of European scholars to encounter, through translations from Greek and Arabic, a treasure-store of scientific knowledge from the ancient world and the medieval Islamicate. This encounter transformed medieval thinking about the world around them, giving a more sophisticated framework for knowledge, experience, observation, and, from the mid-thirteenth century, experiment. Such encounters with ancient authorities like Aristotle created challenges too. In a related text, On the Six Differences (Up, Down, Left, Right, Front, and Back), Grosseteste explores a contradiction between Aristotle's On the Heavens and his Physics over the definition of the horizon, adjudicating between the two positions put forward.

Now, this is all fascinating in its own right and Grosseteste, his world, and in particular his scientific texts form the focus for a major international and interdisciplinary project The Ordered Universe (ordered-universe.com). Involving a team of medieval specialists, from history and philosophy to Arabic studies and medieval Latin, and modern scientists, from Physics to Vision Science, and Engineering to Mathematics, Ordered Universe brings together over 150 team members from across the world. By combining medieval science and modern-day research, the team aims to open an inspiring window on the past and share the wonders of medieval science and culture in new and exciting ways. Not least of these is the inspiration for modern science - we have modelled natural rainbows in human colour vision space, and the medieval cosmos on the basis of Grosseteste's works, including 3D simulation of the medieval universe built on the descriptions in his On the Sphere. The interactive simulation can be found at: **desphera.comxa.com**

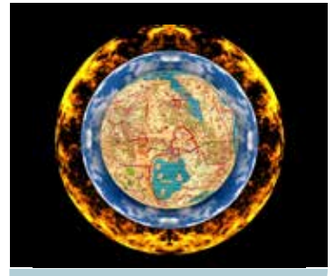
More than this the project has inspired a series of artists, working in a variety of different media, from glass art to film, to produce artworks



De sphera simulation and model (Jack Smith).

World Machine Durham Lumiere (2015)

The Medieval Cosmos, (Ross Ashton)



The Elemental Spheres, (Ross Ashton)

Satellite View of the Earth (Ross Ashton)

NAPA Lighted Art Festival (Ross Ashton)

in response to medieval science and its modern-day elucidation. One of our longest-standing partnerships is with Ross Ashton and Karen Monid of The Projection Studio (**theprojectionstudio.com**). If you've been to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, it's Ross and Karen who provide the scenic projection onto Edinburgh Castle, if you were at the 2012 London Olympics, it was they who designed the large-scale projection and sound installation for the Houses of Parliament. No strangers to collaboration, Ross also holds a Guinness World Record for the Most Artists Working on a Single Artwork. We formed a collaborative team for the Durham Lumiere Festival in 2015, on World Machine, an intriguing blend of medieval and modern cosmology: Grosseteste's vision of the universe juxtaposed with modern galaxy modelling from Durham's Institute of Computational Cosmology. The projection was onto the Cathedral, which was quite a back-drop.

Seeing your research come to life in a projection and sound installation is both humbling and exciting. The reactions of the crowd, the way in which the artists use the research and transform it to create a story that is dazzling and intriguing by turns, and the process of presenting that as a digital public performance, are aspects of collaboration beyond the day-to-day experience of academic research. More than this, the experience of working with professional artists has changed and nuanced our own research process, with different models for collaborative interaction, and a set of different insights and perspectives onto academic interpretations of thirteenth-century science. Ross and Karen attend our workshops and symposia, and we aid their preparation for new projection and sound works.

World Machine proved only to be the beginning. We have worked together on another five pieces: Spiritus, which takes Grosseteste's thought on light, angels, and being, exhibited at the Berlin Light Festival 2016, Cambridge e-Luminate 2017, Oxford Heritage Night of Light 2017; I-See for Cambridge e-Luminate 2018, draws on vision science and perception, medieval and modern; Northern Lights for York Minster 2018 – an internal immersive projection and sound installation incorporating the nave vault and Heart of Yorkshire window; and, most recently Horizon, a co-commission for the Napa Lighted Art Festival, California 2019 and Light Up Poole in Dorset. The latter also premiered Zenith, a new projection and sound piece currently under development.

Horizon and Zenith take the treatises On the Sphere and On the Six Differences, and create a meditation of the place of humans within the universe. In Horizon, the first part expounded from Grosseteste's construction of the spherical universe and the definition of the horizon, to the structure of the medieval cosmos – nested spheres for the planets with the earth at the centre, and made of five elements: aether for the region above the moon, fire, air, water and earth, below the moon. Moving from this to wider medieval thought on the relationship between God, humankind, and the purposes of life, Horizon also featured research from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at NASA, drawing on the ECOStress programme, led by Joshua Fisher. The programme monitors, from the International Space Station and other orbiting satellites, how the world's ecosystems use water (**https://science.jpl.nasa.gov/projects/ECOSTRESS/**). Placing the two projects together in Horizon allowed the different perspectives of earth-bound contemplation of the furthest horizon and space-bound observation of earth itself to flow together. All of this gave the audiences a lot to think about!

Projected onto the Goodman Library, as part of the Lighted Art Festival, Horizon played to about 50,000 residents and visitors to the city in early January 2019. We also put on a series of talks about the science and history behind the show, and an exhibition explaining the project and its other artistic outputs. In this we were joined by glass artists Cate Watkinson and Colin Rennie, and multi-media sculptor Alexandra Carr, all based in the UK. Putting Horizon together involved me, Karen, Ross in detailed and regular contact, and featured not only our vocal talents but also those of students from a History Department third-year special subject module Saints and Scholars, alongside Ross, Karen, Josh Fisher, and children from the city of Napa.

[There is a link to a video of the show from the Napa Festival: **https://vimeo.com/313549592**]

All in all, an extraordinary experience and a wonderful lesson in pushing the horizon. Our projection and sound collaborations have exhibited to over a million viewers in the UK, in Europe, and in the USA. What would the thirteenth-century bishop of Lincoln have made of this? As light and sound are both phenomena on which he wrote extensively, we can only hope he would be equally as delighted and inspired by the capacity of such art to project complex ideas and the science of the past and present-day, in accessible, innovative, and above all, creative ways.

Report on the First Annual Durham-Münster Conference

1 - 2 November 2018

Dr Adrian Green takes Münster delegates on a tour of Durham's fascinating architecture.

Julia Bühner

Julia Bühner studied History and German at the Westfälische Wilhelms-University Münster. Since April 2018 she has been a research assistant under the supervision of the chair of high and late middle ages/western European history, Prof Martin Kintzinger. Her dissertation project deals with questions of international law in the context of the conquest of the Canary Islands.

Roaring laughter from my companions and a taxi driver's warm 'welcome to England' marked the beginning of two wonderful workshop days at Durham University. When invited to sit in the front row of the minibus picking us up from Newcastle Airport, I immediately caused amusement by trying to take the driver's seat. I finally realised, with my purse full of pounds and pennies, that I was abroad in a country where people drive on the left-hand side.

Over the next few days, the doctoral students of Durham University and Professor Christian Liddy proved to be the ideal hosts. On the first evening we met them in a typical English pub and got to know each other in a welcoming atmosphere. During an archive tour on the first workshop day, the historians and archivists (Dr Michael Stansfield and Mr Francis Grotto) of Durham University not only presented us with precious pieces collected in Durham, but had also selected sources of interest for our individual projects. The items presented were chosen with great consideration and amazed us all, as did the beauty of the medieval city of Durham. The workshop took place in the castle and in the Cathedral, the latter's cloisters having served as a location for the Harry Potter movies. In sum, giving my first talk and listening to a variety of interesting historical research topics, surrounded by so many beautiful testaments to history, was an awesome experience.

Maximiliane Berger

Maximiliane Berger studied History, Classics, and Public Policy in Munich and London. She came to Münster in 2015 to join the federal research cluster 'Cultures of Decision-Making' as a research assistant in Medieval History. Maximiliane's research looks at rule without decisions in the late-medieval Holy Roman Empire's multi-level system of governance.

What will stay with me after three days of new insights and stimulating discussions in Durham is, above all, the warmth and friendliness shown to all of us by the History Department at Durham. I have rarely felt so well looked after, as everything was organized for us, even down to crisps and sandwiches for lunch, and conference packs being handed to us at the hotel. What was most striking was that we felt we were embarking upon a welcome partnership, and I can honestly say I envy future Münster PhD students who will be able to enjoy staying in Durham for research.

We got to know the present Durham PhD cohort during presentations given against a backdrop of tapestries and carved unicorns and over tea and coffee. It soon became apparent that there is much common ground between our fields of interest: from pre-modern practices of rule and political cultures, to guilds and heraldry, to diplomatic exchanges, economic history, and the history of the British Empire and the Commonwealth. There were also new things to discover, from the architectural continuities and (older) discontinuities of the Palatinate of Durham's old centre, which we explored under the expert guidance of Dr Adrian Green, to the collegiate and departmental structure of Durham University, which is so different from German academic customs. Thinking back to lunch under the watchful gazes of past University College dignitaries, whose portraits decorate the Great Hall, I am sure we are all looking forward to reciprocating and welcoming a group from Durham in Münster next year.

Enjoying lunch in the Durham Castle dining hall.

Rhiannon E. Snaith

Rhiannon is a North East native and PhD student at Durham. Supervised by Prof Christian Liddy, her work focuses on noble reputation in late medieval England 1377-1437, and considers the relationship between reputation and power.

The first thing that might have struck you when presented with the programme for the Durham-Münster History Conference was the sheer range of periods and topics on offer. From justice in Anglo-Saxon England, to twentieth-century Africa, and everything in between, the event promised to showcase the richness of the discipline of History.

It was perhaps less evident as to how such apparently disparate papers were going to fit together. Take, for example, the first panel of the conference entitled simply 'Visual and Material Cultures'. It was an unusual arrangement; a canter through time. A discussion of the heraldry and coats of arms of the late medieval period was followed by an assessment of the Consumer Revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The panel was then concluded by a dive into the newsreels of the Second World War and the transatlantic meeting between President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill.

Each paper was thoroughly enjoyable in its own right, but an outsider may have been inclined to scoff at the great stretches of time and theme which seemed to divide these individual engagements with the past. For anyone fortunate enough to attend the conference however, this rapidly became a moot point. What quickly became apparent was how frequently these seemingly discordant periods and sub-topics coincided, overlapped and complemented one another. The papers were not as divergent as one might have assumed.

In this sense the conference was perhaps a perfect example of the kind of cooperative effort needed in the current (political?) climate, in which an increasing number of issues seem to divide us. Two universities, two cities, two countries, and a collection of topics scattered through time and place, demonstrated that despite the differences between us, there is always common ground to be found.

Prof Martin Kintzinger and Dr André Krischer with Münster doctoral students.

Marcus Meer

Marcus Meer is a PhD student within Durham's Centre for Visual Arts and Culture. His project investigates the role of heraldry in the late medieval cities of England and Germany, focusing on the perceptions and functions of coats of arms a means of visual communication that reflected, reinforced, and negotiated identities, politics, and hierarchies within the urban space.

To be honest, I was a little bit nervous as we were waiting for our German colleagues to arrive. After all, we had worked towards this workshop for so long, but would our guests from picturesque Münster actually enjoy the all too often grey and rainy North East?

Fortunately, as soon as we had our first get-together in the pub – despite the lack of fish and chips – it became clear that there was no need to worry. We had so much in common after all!

This was echoed at the official 'Welcome to Durham' by our Head of Department, Prof Sarah Davies, and by Prof Martin Kintzinger's response. He argued very convincingly (and wittily) that there are in fact so many intersecting interests between Durham and Münster that our two departments were practically meant for each other!

He was right, of course, as a range of presentations of ongoing PhD projects in Münster and Durham, as well as two exciting keynote lectures, soon showed. The formal presentations were interrupted only by insightful (and cheerful) discussions of our work over the odd cup of tea or two.

'Goodbyes' had to be said way too soon, at least for now. At the end of two exciting days in Durham, we were left with an increased determination to repeat this great opportunity for international academic exchange in the future. Next year in Münster, perhaps?

Seamless connections

Materiality and cultural relations between England and the East

Honor Webb

Honor Webb is a Taught MA History student from St Cuthbert's Society. She was awarded the Faculty of Arts & Humanities Master's Scholarship in 2018 and is currently interested in Japanese twentieth-century material culture.

Kim Foy

Kim Foy is currently a Leverhulme Doctoral Scholar in Visual Culture at Durham University, where she is more widely considering the relationship between dress and diplomatic interaction at the Stuart court.

Queen Elizabeth I, Unknown Artist, c. 1575, Oil on Panel, 441/2 in. x 31 in., © National Portrait Gallery, London

Subjects at the recent Durham-PKU-Tsinghua Colloquium (5–6 November 2018) were varied, ranging from British newsreels and game theory, to the international wood trade. The event was in part, though, a meditation on the material meeting points between East and West, in particular through papers delivered on two distinct but related topics: Elizabethan diplomacy and the British reception of Japanese culture in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. This article will use these papers to articulate more fully the role of textiles in establishing transnational contact and narratives, and, more broadly, demonstrate the value of material culture as a vehicle for transnational research. Textiles, and objects more generally, are often transnational in terms of their modes of production, their dissemination, and their continual dynamic reinvention. In this way, the story of one garment is also the story of many different but related cultural contexts. As such, materiality can function as a foundation stone for cultural and diplomatic contact.

That the Elizabethan mercer Anthony Jenkinson gained access to Ottoman ruler Süleyman the Magnificent in the Winter of 1553-54 (while on a sourcing expedition to the Eastern silk Capital Aleppo) is remarkable.[1] Having developed his knowledge of silk and other textiles while working alongside English cloth agents in the Low Countries and the Levant, he had travelled across Europe from Flanders, through to Germany and Italy, on to North Africa, and eventually to the Holy Land and Syria, sampling the material delights along the way. With his 'mercer's eye for gauging cloth' he expertly noted the Great Turk's 'goodly white [turban], containing in length by estimation fifteen yards, which was of silk and linen woven together.'[2] The construction details were noted here by a bona fide expert in the best cloths, and a cog in the prolific export machine which would operate from East to West, and to Elizabeth and her court. Jenkinson had no formal diplomatic training or credentials. As Anglo-Ottoman expert Jerry Brotton has observed, there is no suggestion from the record that Jenkinson was geo-politically astute or interested, knowing little about the sectarian war Süleyman was raging on his fellow Muslims in Persia.[3] Diplomatic strategy for English political gain was not a concern of either party. Rather, the purpose of Jenkinson's initial dialogue with the Great Turk was likely a discussion of a common interest: the production and trade of fine fabrics. Where more experienced diplomats, normally with little professional textile expertise, might have failed, Jenkinson had succeeded. The most likely conclusion is that despite having no formal diplomatic training or reputation, the mercer appealed to the Sultan's material interests in some way, and hopes for an Anglo-Islamic trading relationship.

Comparatively, initial textile-based contact between the British and the Japanese in the nineteenth century was not suggestive of the longstanding relationship that would manifest itself, but merely stood as a means of polite introduction. Members of the Earl of Elgin's party received by the Japanese Meiji Emperor in 1858 were seemingly pleased with their gifted shirts which were 'remarkably neat and tasteful'.[4] They were less enthused by the robes and silks presented to them. The party deemed the silk length overwhelming and the padding of the robes was compared to that of a 'duvet'.[5] In fact, the silk wadding was ripped from the robes by British crew members on the voyage and was used for the packing of egg-shell china, showing rather literally the envoy's priorities regarding foreign goods. Despite the fact both men were on diplomatic missions, unlike Anthony Jenkinson, the Earl of Elgin did not have the material expertise to understand the significance of such gifts. His return offering of flannel was appreciated but it was the supply of rifles and carbines that truly enthused Japanese recipients.

By contrast Jenkinson, with his knowledge of the European and Eastern silk markets, was a master linguist in material terms, and a cultural gatekeeper. With no formal diplomatic status or endorsement from the English crown, he achieved unprecedented trading privileges

1. By the time of Jenkinson's arrival, Aleppo boasted fifty-six silk markets and was the centre of the silk trade in the East. See Jerry Brotton, *This Orient Isle: Elizabethan England and The Islamic World* (Milton Keynes, 2017), p. 41.
2. Ibid., p. 42.
3. Ibid., p. 45.
4. *L. Oliphant, Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan in 1857, 58 and 59,* Vol. II. (Edinburgh, 1860), p. 227.
5. Ibid., p. 228.
6. Quoted in Brotton, *Orient Isle*, p. 46.

normally only granted to heads of state, 'to lade and unlade his merchandise wheresoever it shall seem good unto him' throughout the Turkish empire, free from 'any other custom or toll whatsoever.' Even Süleyman's allies Venice and France were warned not 'to intermeddle or hinder his affairs'.[6] In so doing, Süleyman had firmly established that the terms of Anglo-Islamic engagement were primarily material, and the importance of basing political negotiations on a willingness to exchange clothing was not lost on later official English diplomats. The conflation of a growing consumer demand for the East with diplomatic needs and function worked to place considerable pressure on diplomats to understand and circulate new goods. Especially in the case of Anglo-Islamic relations, traditional forms of diplomatic skill were less important than an ability to treat in the magnificent language of exotic textiles and clothing. As Protestant Elizabeth I was ex-communicated by the Pope in 1570, she looked to Muslim rulers for new alliances against her Catholic enemies, particularly Spain. Political needs now gave way to the opening of an unexpected era of diplomatic dialogue: Elizabeth's dealings with the Ottomans directly contravened a Papal ban on European trade with Muslim nations.[7] Diplomatic gifts between the two courts now contributed to a strong English desire and taste for Eastern dress. Such exchanges provided an excellent excuse for the establishment of diplomatic openings. In 1593, after much pleading from Robert Barton, Elizabeth's ambassador to the Ottomans, Robert Cecil sent a particularly well-meaning gift to the Sultan and his mother on behalf of the Queen which included 'a jewel of her majesty's picture set with some rubies and diamonds... ten garments of cloth of gold... with two pieces of fine holland', amongst other items. This now provided much needed clout for the struggling Barton.[8] Elizabeth's following request for a sample of clothing 'after the Turkish fashion' was met with a 'gown of cloth of gold, very rich, an under gown of cloth of silver, and girdle of Turkey, work rich and fair.' [9]

The Great Turk was visually present in English society as Islamic textile design entered the visual vernacular. Inventories, for example, of the Lord Mayor of London and others list portraits of the Turkish Emperor. In the 1570s, Philip Sidney was delighted by such a portrait received from a contact in Strasbourg.[10] Bess of Hardwick boasted forty-six 'Turkie carpets' in her vast collection—this was no feigned interest by the English.[11] Such consumer demands were at the forefront of diplomatic activity, via the intense operation of gift-giving and requests from English ambassadors for gifts of English cloth with which to treat with the Ottomans. Cultural mediators therefore played an important role in the international political sphere.

Textiles would continue to underpin Anglo-Japanese relations and expose the British to Japanese materiality, despite Elgin's own lack of expertise in that area. Thus, the Japanese silk trade serves to emphasize the strong relationship between the transfer of material fluency and cross-cultural contact. In 1870 a series of reports was compiled by one Mr Adams, a secretary to the British diplomatic minister in Japan, on the central silk districts there.[12] These detailed reports were intended to be used to improve British infrastructure already in place for British profit. However, that year, the Japanese Minister of the Interior appointed 'a Japanese Officer, and near relative of his own, to accompany Mr. Adams', and insisted the reports were to be circulated around the various silk districts for the benefit of Japanese eyes.[13] No longer intimidated by British advances, the Japanese Minister asserted that silk culture was 'an industrial pursuit of the highest importance to [the Japanese] Empire' and appeared to revel in the prospect of combining western technology with traditional Japanese methods.[14] Growing Japanese apathy towards the British consumer and commercial links more generally with the British is shown by a later report on the deteriorating quality of raw silk arriving from Japan which was attributed to 'the excessive export of silkworms' eggs to France and Italy', thus depriving the British market of the best re-export silk.[15] Japan, inspired by its contact with Britain, had entered the competitive world of global trade, while freeing itself from a dependent commercial relationship with its erstwhile trading partner. Now the combination of European methods of production and traditional Japanese sericulture made Japanese exports a 'hot commodity'.

If multicultural agents facilitated the circulation of knowledge, and vice versa, objects themselves were testaments to important material meeting points and connections. Elizabeth and her courtiers not only consumed Islamic material culture but merged it with English design to birth something new. During a busy period of trade negotiations with the Ottomans in 1581, Elizabeth received an entire suit of Turkish clothing, and, in a portrait from around this period [Fig. 1], the English Queen is represented in a bodice embellished with Turkish-style horizontal braids, a stunning coming-together of two dress styles. [16]

7. Lisa Jardine, *Worldy Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York, 1996), p. 374.

8. Brotton, *Orient Isle*, pp. 207-208. Barton's weak position prior to the exchange of gifts resulted in his having to travel with the Sultan on military campaigns against other Christian kingdoms, which was less than ideal.

9. Quoted in Brotton, *Orient Isle*, pp. 189-190.

10. Karen Hearn, Dynasties: *Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England* (London, 1996), p. 64.

11. Brotton, *Orient Isle*, p. 211.

12. See Francis Ottiwell Adams (ed.) *Reports by Mr. Adams, Secretary to Her Majesty's Legation in Japan, on the Central Silk Districts of Japan* (London, 1870-71).

13. *Japan. Third Report* (London, 1871), p. 131.

14. Quoted in *Japan. No. 5* (London, 1870), p. 379.

15. *Japan. No. 3* (London, 1871), p. 181.

16. Charlotte A. Jirousek and Sara Catterall, *Ottoman Dress and Design in the West: A Visual History of Cultural Exchange* (Bloomington, 2019), p. 100.

An image of the two Squire sisters and 'friend' in traditional Japanese costume, K. Moriyama, 1902-1907, Meiji Period, Durham University Oriental Museum Collection, DUROM.1987.98, © Durham University Oriental Museum.

In the 1890s, Briton George Squire, the General Manager of the Kokura Paper Company in Japan, and his family, would show similar instincts to multi-display in this way. The Squire collection, housed at Durham University Oriental Museum, charts the family's consumption and communications as they attempted to integrate in a country with few other Europeans. A small segment of the collection represents what Miss Dorothy Mary Squire, Mr Squire's youngest daughter, deemed the best reflection of her five years as a child in Japan [Fig. 2]. One such item in the collection is a yukata, a summer kimono, in this case for a little boy.[17] Mrs Squire adapted the blue and white garment for her daughter, shortening and tapering the sleeves and bottom, and adding darts to the body. This created a fitted garment far more reminiscent of Victorian blouses or dresses. Remnants of Victorian utilitarianism concerning 'the level of the usefulness of the designed object' and conservative colour palettes, left no room for the surplus fabric and bright colours synonymous with the kimono of Japanese girls.[18] This material meeting and reinterpretation suggests how textiles can be used to resist a changing identity and yet, historically, be seen as a reinforcement of cross-cultural identities. Through Mrs Squire's needlework we see that the two cultures have, quite literally, been stitched together.

In the case of both contexts, Anglo-Islamic and Anglo-Japanese, it is clear that textiles and clothing operated to establish connections. Both real and feigned common interests in materiality provided convenient openers to—sometimes strained—diplomatic dialogue, involving official or unofficial diplomatic actors. The exchange of silk, and clothing more generally, was a convenient route into talks, without which, such dialogues might have proved difficult. With their extensive knowledge, cultural mediators sat at the core of this contact, and, conversely cultural contact allowed this expertise to travel, as we have seen with the example of the Japanese move into the silk industry, to the surprise of the British. The relationship between cultural mediators and cultural contact, and the creation of one by the other is a hallmark of both interactions under discussion here. Local narratives and, identities were clearly dependent on much larger scales of belonging. English, and later British, instincts to combine the East with their domestic and European material styles underpins the usefulness of textiles and clothing to underline what might not be obvious: identity was multi-faceted and one's 'culture' incorporated many aspects, from local to world design and style.

17. Durham Oriental Museum, DUROM.1987.89.

18. Malcom Quinn, *Utilitarianism and the Art School in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London, 2015). p 11.

Keith G. E. Harris

My father and his unpublished opus

Adrian Harris

Adrian studied Architecture at Newcastle University but after deciding that particular career was not for him worked in retail banking for several years. He later switched to IT: first in a technical role then as a project manager. He now works at Durham University on the Knowledge for Use, a large ERC-funded Advanced Research Grant. Adrian is married and lives in Chester-le-Street. He is father to four children, two boys and two girls.

Keith and Mavis on their wedding day.

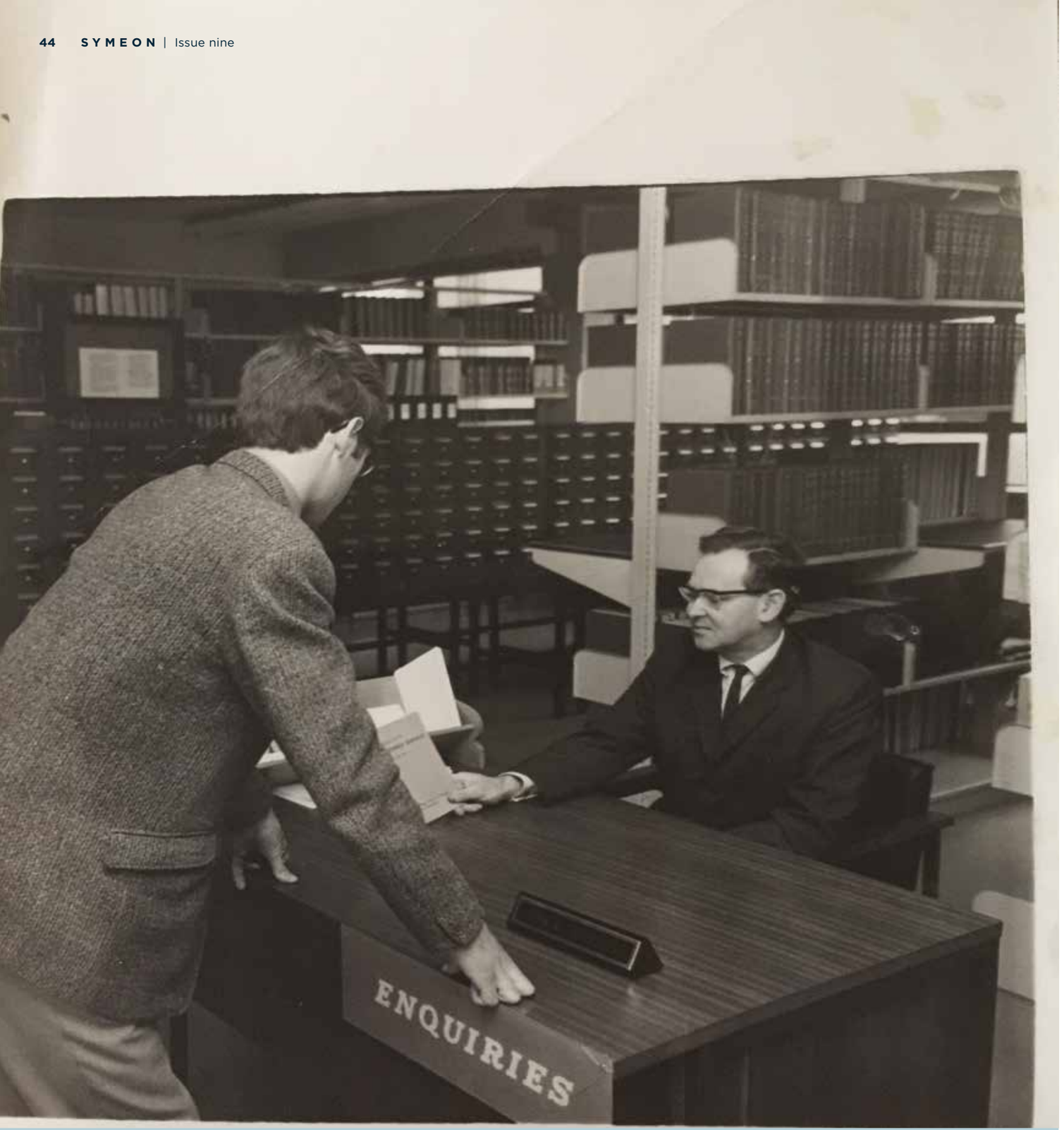
I was only eight years old when my father had his first heart attack. Back then, you were told to rest in a hospital bed without any of the marvellous surgical interventions that are commonplace nowadays. You either died, or you survived. Fortunately, Dad survived. But the damage was done. Although only in his mid-forties, he would see just fifteen more summers.

So, the life of Keith G. E. Harris was cut short, but it was eventful. He'd served in the Fleet Air Arm in the Second World War and travelled widely, developing a love of India and Italy, in particular. His love of Italy was profound. During the war, he befriended an Italian P.O.W. Their ensuing friendship endured far into peacetime, and Keith became a fluent speaker of Italian. Equal to his love of Italy was his passion for the North East of England.

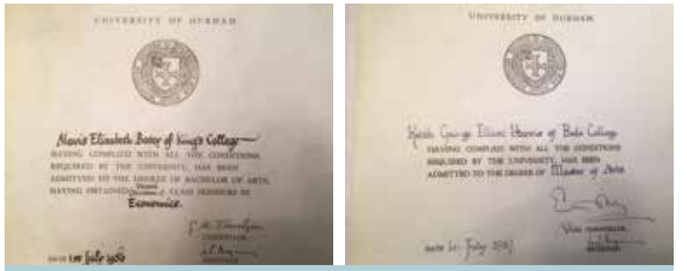
Coming from what we would now call a 'broken home,' his father having left home without trace in the mid-1920s when Keith was but a toddler, he was brought up by a mother struggling to find work, and 'various aunts'. He was raised amongst poor, working-class North-Easterners, something which he never forgot. I guess his politics would be described in today's terms as somewhere between New Labour and Corbyn. The Newcastle branch of the Fabian Society was one of his haunts.

As was the case for so many young men, the Second World War interrupted my Dad's education, somewhat. Despite his humble roots he was clearly bright academically. In 1940, he was awarded his Higher Certificate – the equivalent of today's A Levels - in English Literature, Modern History, and French, accredited by the University of Durham, no less. This allowed him to return to Durham for his degree when the fighting was over. He then pursued a highly successful career in librarianship, becoming the librarian of Newcastle Polytechnic in 1969. In the early fifties, Keith met my mother, Mavis. Mavis had been the only - and she would always stress *only* - female economic student on her course at King's College, Durham. They married soon after and went on to raise four children, of whom I was the third-born.

Growing up with a Librarian father and a semi-feminist mother was interesting and educational. On family car journeys, be it Scotland or Yorkshire – journeys which took considerably longer back in the 1960s, due both to the cars and the roads – we would be tested. 'Which river have we just crossed?' 'Into which rivers does it flow?' 'Through which counties?' 'There was a famous battle near here in 1066 - who won?', and so on... I am not sure, how much in later years these 'tests' benefited me.



Keith at work as librarian at Newcastle Polytechnic (now Northumbria University).



Mavis and Keith's BA and MA degree certificates from the University of Durham.

The box full of research for Keith's unfinished opus...

Joseph Cowen

There was also often talk of Dad's 'thesis.' It was a project, maybe a book, which he would complete after he retired. Sadly, his damaged heart meant that he would never retire, and that the book was never written. We knew about the Cowen aspect as, living in the Tyne Valley, we would frequently pass the site of 'Cowen's Brickworks' just outside Blaydon and the connection would be pointed out to us repeatedly, just to make extra sure that it sank in. There were countless library index cards littering the house that seemed to follow us through our many house moves. When my mother, a woman who never threw anything out, passed away in 2018, we found the index cards, and then a box containing much more. Hidden in a wardrobe was a box jammed full of unfinished manuscripts, newspaper clippings, index cards, and more.

It was an opus, with as much on Giuseppe Garribaldi as on Joseph Cowen, and, just like Schubert's 8th Symphony, started but not finished...

Contact us

We very much enjoy receiving correspondence from our alumni, so please do get in touch.

Perhaps you would like to contribute to the next issue, or you have suggestions for future content?

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We hope you enjoyed Issue Nine. Until the next time!