

THE LEICESTERSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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NEWSLETTER 105 Winter 2019

Welcome to the latest edition of the LAHS Newsletter. Contributions to future editions are welcome at any time. Send them to the editor, Cynthia Brown, at newsletter@lahs.org.uk or by post c/o Honorary Librarian, Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, The Guildhall, Guildhall Lane, Leicester, LE1 5FQ.

LAHS NEWS

LECTURE PROGRAMME

The lecture programme for January – February 2020 is below. All lectures take place at New Walk Museum, and start at 7.30 pm. To ensure sufficient space for everyone attending, lectures at New Walk Museum will be held in the Victorian Gallery. Please use the main entrance to the Museum on New Walk and arrive in good time to avoid disruption once the lecture has started.

Thursday 9 January 2020

The actions of the 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment in Mesopotamia

Nigel Atter, Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Branch, Western Front Association

Thursday 6 February 2020

Lutterworth in the later Middle Ages – a successful small market town

Dr Andrew Watkins, Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester

Thursday 27 February 2020

Members' evening

If you would like to present the results of your research to fellow members, please contact the Hon. Lecture Secretary, Yolanda Courtney by email at lectures@lahs.org.uk or by phone on 0116 212 0271.

REVD DR GERALD RIMMINGTON

We are sorry to report the death of Gerald Rimmington, who was known to many in the Society as a member and subsequently Chairman of the Committee. He died in October this year aged 89, leaving his wife Jacqui, children and grandchildren. Revd Dr Gerald Rimmington was ordained in 1978 and served a curacy in the Diocese of Peterborough. In this Diocese he became Vicar of Cosby in 1987, then Rector of Barwell cum Stapleton and Potters Marston in 1990. He retired to Countesthorpe in 1995, receiving the Bishop's Permission to officiate until 2015. A full obituary will appear in the 2020 edition of *Transactions*. Gerald was also a contributor of numerous articles to the LAHS *Transactions* and the *Leicestershire Historian*. For a list of his publications in the LAHS Library, see 'News from the Library' below.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

Gerald Rimmington was an active historian and author, publishing books and periodical articles, as well as those referred to above. The Library has copies of the following:

Baptist churches and society in Leicester 1881 – 1914. 2000.
Baptist membership in Leicestershire between the World Wars. 2002.
Baptist membership in rural Leicestershire 1881 – 1914. 1998.
Bishop Cyril Bardsley and the Diocese of Leicester 1927 – 1940. 1999.
Bishop W.C. Magee and the town of Leicester 1868 – 1891. 1998.
Comprehensive school issue in Leicester 1945 – 1974 and other essays. 1984.
Development of Senior Elementary Schools in Leicester before 1944. 1997.
Education of maladjusted children in Leicester 1892 – 1974. 1985.
Education, politics and society in Leicester 1833 – 1903. 1978.
Late Victorian clergy income: the Leicestershire evidence. 1999.
L.H. Marshall's ministry in Leicester 1930 – 1936. 1996.
Methodism and society in Leicester 1881 – 1914. 2000.
Methodist membership in rural Leicestershire 1881 – 1914. 2003.
Treatment of the sick poor in Leicester: North Evington Poor Law Infirmary 1905 – 1930. 2004.

Gerald also wrote, with Alan McWhirr, Gallowtree Gate Congregational Chapel Leicester 1823 – 1921... 1999. A very few copies of this are still available from the Library at the regular opening time, price £3.

Comic History of Leicester, by Q.U.I.Z., (1851) has previously been mentioned on these pages. Thanks to the research of member Ned Newitt, the anonymous author has now been revealed as Thomas Emery. See this year's *Leicestershire Historian*, 55, p.18 – 24, Thomas Emery the Radical (1821-1868) by Ned. The complete book can now be read on the Society's website.

Member Geoff Brandwood's book Bringing them to their knees: church-building and restoration in Leicestershire and Rutland 1800 – 1914 was published by the Society in 2002. Copies at the special price of only £5 are available from the Library at opening times. In 1997 he published Temple Moore: an architect of the Late Gothic Revival. A new illustrated edition is published this November by Shaun Tyas at £45. These are not in the Library, as Moore did very little work here, just restoration and fittings at St. Matthew Worthington. Local historian Barry Lount's research on over 1000 Leicester pubs is being made available on a website. See <https://pubhistoryproject.co.uk>. It will be of interest to members interested in alehouses, inns, taverns, buildings... and beer. The Library has a copy of Barry's book George Davenport: Leicestershire's notorious highwayman (1983).

The Library is, of course, currently shut for its regular winter closure. It will reopen on Sunday 2 February 2020, 2 – 4 p.m.

Aubrey Stevenson, Hon. Librarian.

HONORARY SECRETARY REQUIRED FOR LAHS

Chris Jordan has decided to call it a day and has resigned as our Honorary Secretary. We are very grateful to Chris for the years of service he has given the Society during a difficult period that has seen much more change than usual! Unfortunately, there was not enough time for his replacement to be elected at the AGM as formal nominations had to be received a number of days beforehand, and so we are now Secretary-less and looking for someone who would be interested in taking on this role. The Committee is very much a self-supporting and friendly team of members and officers with a wide range of skills and

interests. We meet five times a year on a bi-monthly basis, and the next meeting is on 15 January 2020 at 5.30 at the Belmont Hotel. This voluntary position can be very much tailored to what time you have available, over and above dealing with the administrative tasks of setting meeting times and agendas. If you'd like to have a chat to discuss the position, or just find out a little more, please do call Matthew Beamish on 0116 2525234.

LAHS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Hon Membership Secretary Matt Beamish would like to thank all members who have responded to his request for 'top-up' subs following the increase in subscriptions from £20 to £30 (individual), and £25 to £40 (family), on 1 May 2019. Of 280 members who had not adjusted their Standing Orders, 110 of you have now responded to his emails, sent in early November, with a top-up payment/adjusted payments for next May. However, this means that some 170 are still in arrears and have not made contact. Please do check your Standing Orders, adjust for next year if necessary, and send Matt a top-up payment.

Payments can be made by bank transfer to the LAHS account (60-60-06 87270080); by cheque payable to Leicestershire Archaeological & Historical Society; or through Paypal (payments@lahs.org.uk). Please forward cheques to Matthew Beamish, Hon. Membership Secretary LAHS, c/o ULAS, School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH. If you are unclear on what/if you have paid a sub recently, and what you may or may not owe, then please do contact him – preferably by email (mgb3@le.ac.uk or membership@lahs.org.uk) as it is the easiest for him to deal with.

LAHS PUBLIC HERITAGE FUND

Joe Hall reports that the October application round of the Society's Public Heritage Fund saw one grant of £1,186. 80 awarded to the Mountsorrel Museum and Heritage Trust. This will fund a major exhibition for early 2020 on the history of The Green and its residents which will run for six months at Mountsorrel Library. This is the fifth grant the Public Heritage Fund has awarded since it was founded at the beginning of 2019. Its aim is to provide grants to history and heritage societies within Leicestershire and Rutland which will enable them to engage with, and display their research to, the general public. If your group, project or society is interested in applying for a grant, please contact the Fund's chair Joe Hall at phfund@lahs.org.uk to discuss it. The next application deadline is 17 January 2020.

OTHER NEWS

GREEN PLAQUE SCHEME – LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Nominations for the latest round of Leicestershire County Council's Green Plaque scheme are open until Monday 23 December 2019. Nominations can be for people of historical significance, places with cultural or heritage connections, or buildings of historic or architectural importance within Leicestershire. The six successful nominees will be chosen by the public from a shortlist of 12 and unveiling events will take place throughout 2020. The most recent plaque to be unveiled was that to the suffragette campaigners Kathleen and Nora Corcoran in Castledine Street, Loughborough. Visit www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/history-and-heritage/the-green-plaque-awards for further information about the scheme, or to make a nomination.



UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER CENTENARY

LAHS member Caroline Wessel is serving on the University of Leicester's Centenary Project Board, and is also part of the Special Collections research team. She sends this update on the centenary activities: 'As the University of Leicester approaches its centenary year, a comprehensive online database is being compiled by a team in the Library's Special Collections entitled "Our Founders". Many names of Leicester's great manufacturing families will be familiar to Leicester people, but a huge number of new and fascinating stories are emerging about them, especially as Special Collections has acquired fresh information from the private archives of a number of descendants. Members can access these accounts at <https://www2.le.ac.uk/library/find/specialcollections/university-history-project/our-founders-1/our-founders>'. Caroline also assures LAHS members that in the lead up to the actual Centenary Year of 2021 there will be many exciting events to attend, including a proposed 100 Days Festival with a very varied programme.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

IN MEMORIAM: LEICESTER'S WAR MEMORIALS AT RISK - EXHIBITION

A new exhibition that tells the stories of Leicester's fallen heroes through a collection of war memorials has opened at Newarke Houses Museum. The exhibition features memorials from the museum's own collection, as well as those that have been saved from destruction by the Leicester City, County and Rutland At Risk War Memorials Project. The exhibition highlights how memorials can provide an invaluable record of the city's casualties of war. 'These rescued memorials are an important part of our county's history', says Denis Kenyon of the At Risk War Memorials Project: 'They are personal, and include the names and, very occasionally, photographs of those lost'. Denis and co-founder Chris Stephens have saved over 45 memorials since the project began in 2012. 'In Memoriam: Leicester's war memorials at risk' runs until 9 February 2020. Admission is free of charge. Denis is also happy to give talks to local groups about the project, and can be contacted on mail@atriskwarmemorials.co.uk.

LEICESTER GROUP VICTORIAN SOCIETY

All lectures are held on Tuesdays at Bishop Street Methodist Church, opposite Town Hall Square, Leicester at 7.30 pm. Meetings are open to all, but attendees are asked to make a contribution of £2.50 per person towards the cost of room hire and other expenses.

Tuesday 7 January 2020

A colourful look at Victorian times through the prints of George Baxter

Roger Smith, former chairman of the New Baxter Society

RURAL LIFE PAST AND PRESENT

Out-of-Print and Difficult-to-Find Books

Local history, rural and agricultural history, recollections, country characters, farming reminiscences, canals, folklore, traditions and customs, rural occupations and skills, rural architecture, including wind and water mills, country living in the past, Gypsies and other Travellers, etc.

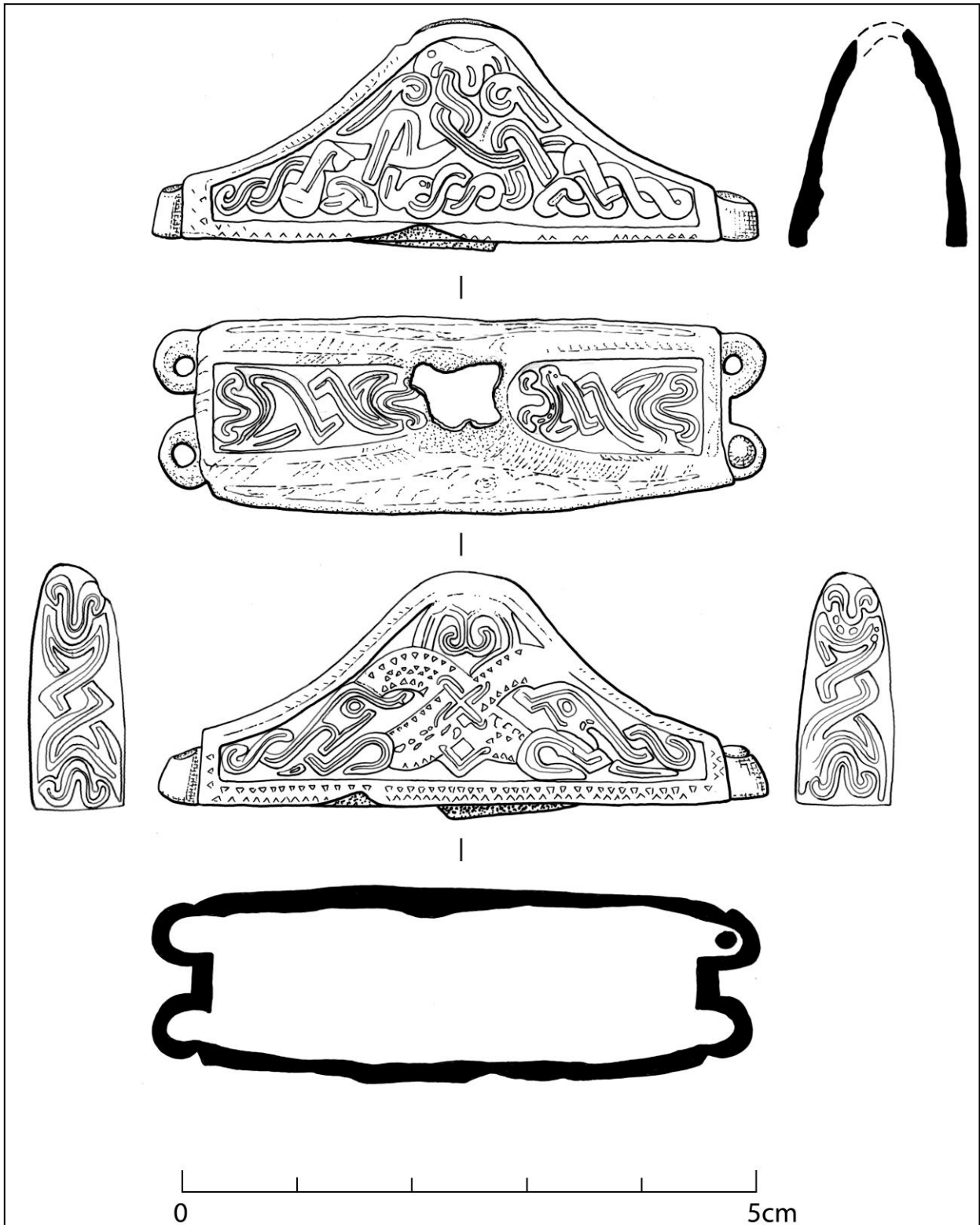
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS

SCIENCE REVEALS SECRETS OF SCALFORD SWORD POMMEL CAP



The Salford pommel cap – drawn by Dr M. Hawkes (Leicestershire County Council Museums)

The Scalford sword pommel cap was reported on in the last LAHS Newsletter as being the new star exhibit of the re-vamped archaeology displays at Melton Carnegie Museum. Helen Sharp, Archaeology Manager at Leicestershire Museums reports further on scientific analysis of this wonderful object (the in-depth report can be found in *Transactions*):

This beautiful Anglo-Saxon object is cast gilded silver, dates to the 6th – 7th centuries AD, and would have been mounted at the end of a sword handle. Leicestershire County Council Museums were able to purchase the pommel cap through the Treasure process, thanks to grants from the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, The Friends of Leicester and Leicestershire Museums and the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. After acquisition the pommel was conserved for display. During this process the conservator discovered that a substance initially thought to be green corrosion appeared glassy under a microscope. She wisely decided to leave it intact and suggested we commission further scientific analysis to confirm her suspicions. In January 2019, Eleanor Blakelock of ArchaeoMaterials, based at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, analysed the green (possibly not its original colour) substance using a scanning electron microscope with energy-dispersive spectrometer. The analysis suggests that it was an inlay, with the top layers having a chemical composition similar to corroded glass. In places it appears that the inlay had extended over an edge, which suggests that it was inlaid in a viscous state, suggesting some form of enamel.

The pommel is very similar to examples found in the Staffordshire Hoard, some of which also have a green material present. This was analysed by Prof. Martín-Torres in 2016, but conclusions could not be drawn at that time. Eleanor Blakelock described the Scalford pommel as the “missing link” to explain manufacture of the Staffordshire Hoard pommels. The Scalford pommel shows that enamel was used to decorate pieces of high status Anglo-Saxon metalwork, which adds another level of craftsmanship to appreciate on these wonderful objects. The pommel was also decorated with niello (a black inlay of silver, sulphur, copper and lead) which would have required a conflicting melting temperature to the enamel – a manufacturing nightmare which was over-come successfully by the Anglo-Saxon metalworker. The pommel is on permanent display at Melton Carnegie Museum, Melton Mowbray www.meltonmuseum.org.

ONLINE HISTORY OF RAF WYMESWOLD

From Bob Trubshaw, of the Wolds Historical Association: A detailed and well illustrated history of the RAF airfield near Wymeswold, written by Richard Knight (who grew up living in a farm at the western end of the runway), is now online as a free PDF as part of the Wolds Historical Organisation web site. Most of the information covers the post-WWII activities of the RAAF 504 Squadron and, after the RAF left, Fields Aircraft Services. However, there are also a number of previously unpublished photographs of the American Air Force using the base prior to D-Day. The history can be downloaded from www.hoap.co.uk/who/raf_wymeswold.pdf.

WRITE YOUR LIFE STORY

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A HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE

However you intend to spend your own Christmas, you may be entertained by this reflection on the joys of a past festive season from the *Leicester Daily Post* on 25 December 1891. We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

I wonder if any mortal exists who does not feel a little relieved when he awakes on Boxing Day and remembers that the great festival of the year is actually over? Meals at wrong times, morning church, and the children downstairs all day – these are factors which would be trying to the temper under ordinary circumstances, even if those who participated in them were not expected to indulge in particularly high spirits. The labour entailed by the Christmas shopping is very heavy on the housekeeper, an amount of forethought having to be exercised which should almost be characterised as five-thought. The day is over at last, and both customers and shopkeepers are at rest. Let us hope that all the presents have been a success, the cracker bon-bons have not missed fire [sic], and that the pudding has been successful enough to justify the highest aspirations of the housewife.

During the evening of Christmas Day, when all the presents have been examined and the toys are beginning to pall, nothing is so welcome to the little ones as a new game in which everyone can join. One of the most successful of the games is "Adverbs", in which one member of the company is sent out of the room whilst the others fix upon an adverb which they propose to illustrate by their manner. Questions are asked of each in turn, and they must endeavour to illustrate the chosen word by their manner of replying. Supposing that "softly" is the word, every member of the company must whisper. They must assume a threatening manner for "fiercely," whilst "idiotically" offers a fine field for dramatic action. One of the best words I have seen portrayed is "inconsequently," when the answer to "Do you think I shall discover this word" was "Oh yes, because I had mutton for my dinner." I have often been amused to notice how the tone of the suggested mood will be insensibly caught by the questioner. "Pertly" is always resented, and seems to call forth the most impudent questions...

Clairvoyance is greatly in vogue at present, and palmistry is a prominent feature at afternoon parties. Second sight is said to produce very baleful limits on the person who exercises it, and I was not surprised to hear that the wonderful Zuresta was ill. Zuresta used to look into a bowl of water and see visions of the life and surroundings of her visitor, and it used to be very fascinating to listen to her, as she had very dramatic method of description. I found a new prophetess in her place the last time I paid a visit to the Bond-street home of mystery, and I determined to try what miracles she could work. "Beata" sat opposite me, with her face covered by a black lace mask. She did not look in a bowl, or examine my hand or read the cards, but she told me to ask a mental question and she would answer it. This I did, and the replies tallied wonderfully with my questions. The idea was always reproduced, and sometimes the very words of the question...

This newsletter is edited by Cynthia Brown and published by Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. Further information about the Society, its publications and other activities can be found on its website at www.lahs.org.uk

**THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL &
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Alternatively pay by Paypal: Payments@lahs.org.uk



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