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Facing up to catastrophe: The Great Fire of London

Previous Page: The Great Fire of London, with Ludgate and Old St. Paul's (Unknown Artist, 17th century)

The Great Fire of London was a true catastrophe. Over the course of four days (2-5 September 1666) the 'most horrid malicious bloody flame' destroyed 373 acres of the area within the city walls (about 85%), and a further 63 acres beyond the walls, wiping out 13,200 houses, and rendering 70-80,000 people homeless; also lost or severely damaged were 86 parish churches, 44 livery company halls, and key elements of the civic infrastructure like the Guildhall, Royal Exchange, the custom house, and the city prisons. The lost housing stock alone can be valued at around £3.2M; total losses were somewhere between £8M and £10M.

And yet what is truly striking in the response to the Fire is the resilience of the civic structures, the constructive role played by the state, and the speed with which the rebuilding proceeded. The number of casualties was in single figures, and the relief efforts combined with the rapid establishment of an improvised system of markets ensured that starvation was averted. Although foreigners feared for their lives, as many Londoners believed the Fire to have been an act of terrorism by Dutch or French agents, public order was maintained by the intervention of royal troops, and the king provided a calming presence appearing personally in the refugee camp in Morefields on 7 September to assure the victims that the Fire was an accident and not a plot. The structures of civic government were rapidly re-established: the Guildhall almost immediately moved its operations to Gresham College in the undamaged north-eastern quarter of the city; livery companies resumed their meetings within days of the conflagration; parish officers continued to be chosen even though the electors were resident elsewhere; some parishes even continued their Rogationtide processions amidst the ruins.

What was achieved was, in the circumstances and in such a time scale, pretty remarkable. As early as 13 September the king set out the objective of rebuilding in brick or stone and proposed street widening schemes, the details of which were left to commissioners jointly appointed by the city and the crown; the first Rebuilding Act which laid down standards for construction received the royal assent on 8 February 1667; the city's common council approved the plan which included the realignment of some of the city streets by the end of April. Given the interminable delays to which seventeenth century legal process could be subject, another essential component in the smooth rebuilding process was the establishment by parliament of the Fire Court, which essentially arbitrated disputes between landlords and tenants over the allocation of the cost of rebuilding. It provided pretty swift and effective justice, and it was emphatically not a tool merely for the protection of landlords' interests. Crucial to its success was the fact that appeal was only allowed to a wider body of judges in the same court. As William Petty put it, it was a 'legislative power to cut all knots'.

In March 1672 it was remarked that the city had 'recovered itself in great measure out of its ashes'

Above: The fire as seen from a boat in vicinity of Tower Wharf, c.1700

It is true that the pace of rebuilding was initially slow; that was an inevitable result not only of the need to settle some of the legal issues, but also of gearing up the building trades. There was for example an immense investment in new brickworks around London: nearly 400 million bricks were needed for the replacement of the housing stock alone. To pump up the labour supply, and much to the chagrin of some of the guilds, the City relaxed its attitude towards builders lacking the city freedom. But all this took a while to take effect. Rebuilding only really got underway in 1668 when 1,450 houses were built; by the end of 1670 about 6,000 houses had been completed. In March 1672 it was remarked that the city had 'recovered itself in great measure out of its ashes'. Most company halls were rebuilt between 1668 and 1673; by 1674 all the public buildings apart from Bridewell Hospital had been completed. Recent historians have questioned the degree to which the face of the city was transformed, pointing out that the building regulations had much in common with those of the early Stuart kings, that there was little change in the basic room structure, and that the unburnt area of the city retained its traditional form. But there was surely a difference from early Stuart measures in that the Rebuilding Acts had real teeth; the pace of change was massively accelerated.

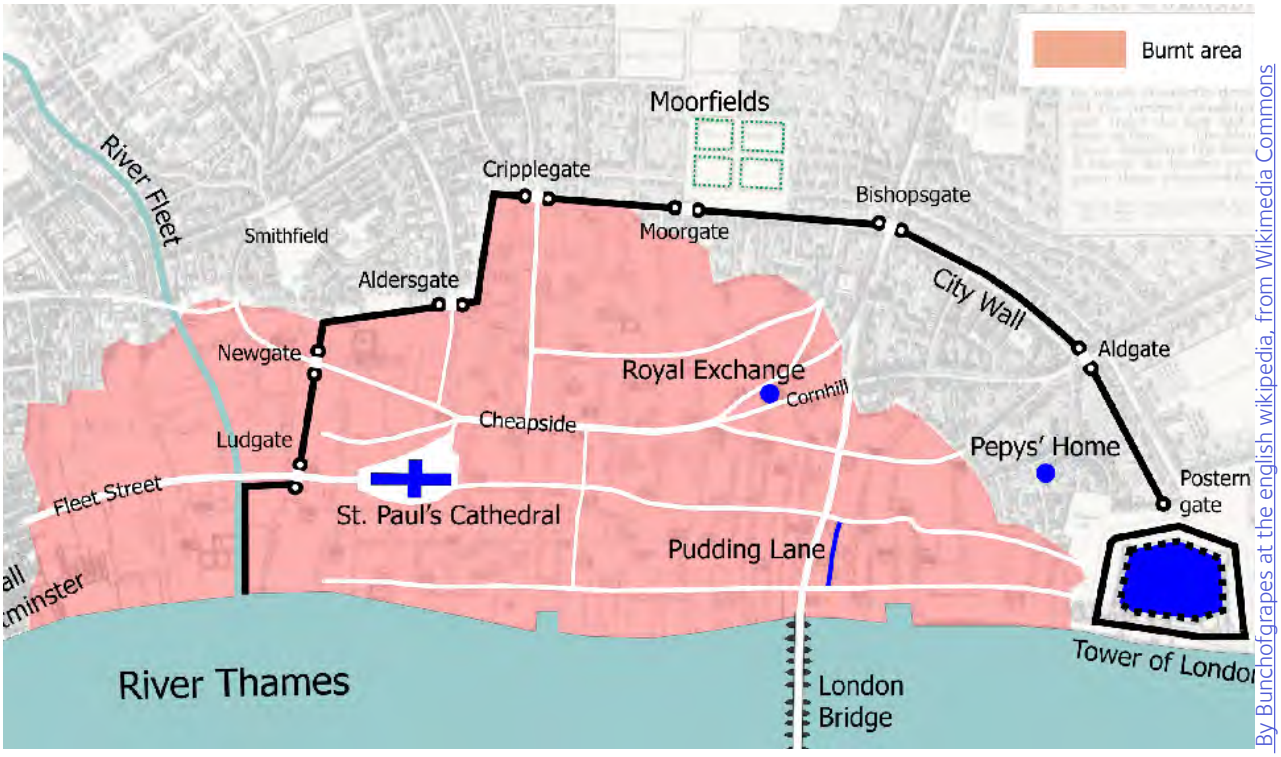
How was all this possible? The answer is made more puzzling by the fact that metropolitan government in the later seventeenth century does not have an altogether spotless record, and its flexibility in handling the post-Fire situation is therefore in some ways anomalous.

The City's own finances were in a state of spectacular disarray leaving the corporation dependent on the central government for

solutions. The lord mayor at the time of the Fire, Sir Thomas Bludworth, the man who infamously said that 'a woman could piss it out', was widely criticised for his 'simplicity'; his successor ended his civic career ignominiously, having been found guilty of embezzling some of the money collected for victims of the Fire. The city corporation was capable of extraordinary pig-headedness in the protection of its privileged position, opposing the development of any new markets or a new river crossing. But it seems that the conviction among politicians that London simply could not fail (its commerce was too critical to state revenues), and some unusually decisive leadership from the crown, meant that flexible solutions were found. The city was also fortunate in the calibre of some of its agents. The energetic and (by seventeenth century standards at least) disinterested service of the polymaths Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke in the rebuilding was an extraordinary boon.

In retrospect some have seen the Fire as a lost opportunity to build a fully remodelled city in the grid-iron formation favoured by those like Wren, Hooke and John Evelyn who submitted plans in the aftermath of the disaster. Wren's son claimed that it was the opposition of the petty-minded businessmen who ran the city that prevented the plans from coming to fruition, but the truth is that their fulfilment would have required additional investment in funding for the compensation of property owners on a scale which was simply not available. In the event, the levy on coal imported into London to fund the necessary infrastructural projects and the rebuilding of St Paul's Cathedral and 51 of the city churches was the most that the political system could deliver.

-Ian W. Archer



By Bunchofgrapes at the english wikipedia, from Wikimedia Commons

Above: A map showing the extent of the damage caused by the fire in London

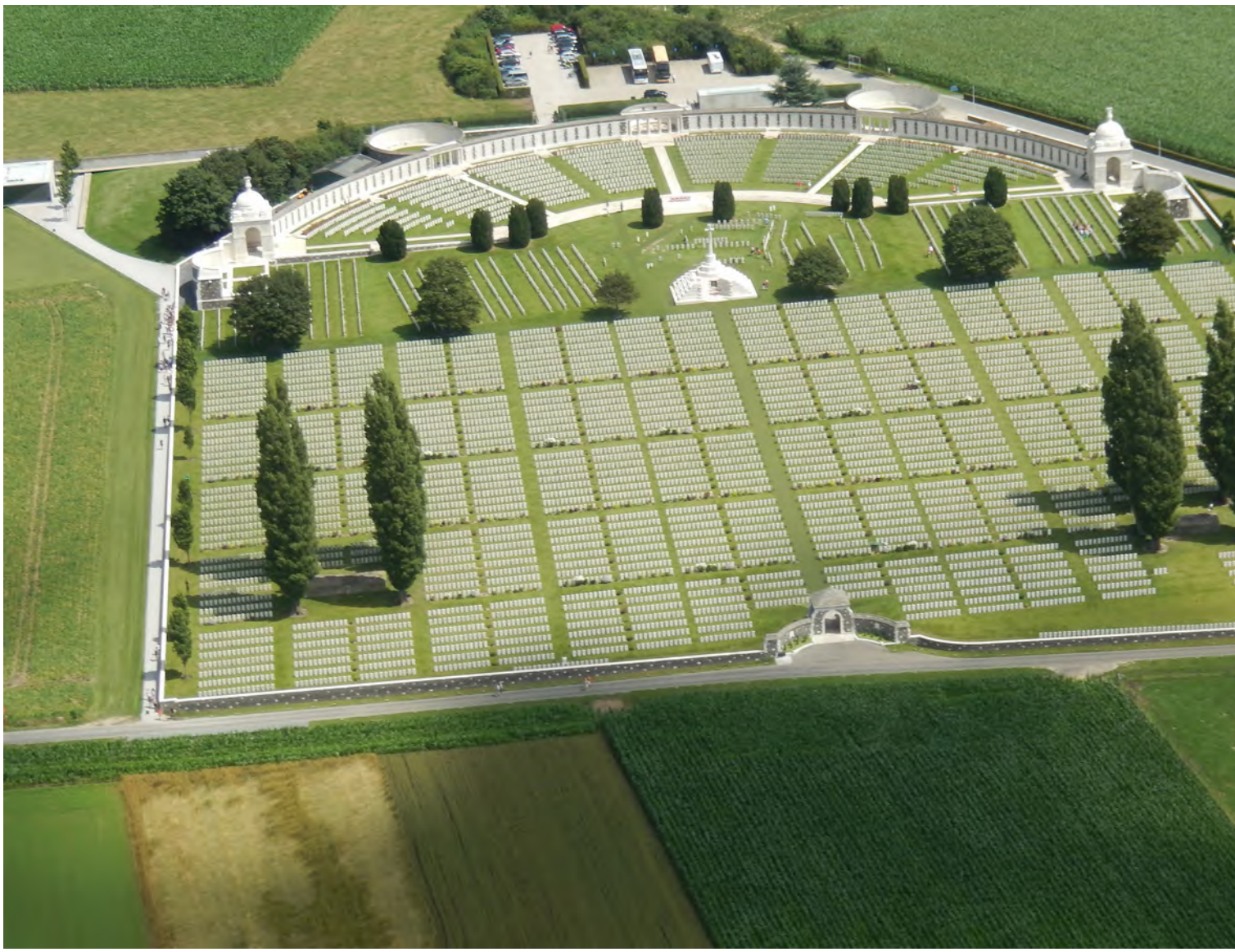
Below: Graves at the Bayeux Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery

By Nick-D, via Wikimedia Commons

Soldiers' bodies, commemoration, & cultural responses to exhumations in the Great War

Laura Tradii, MSc in the History of Science, Medicine, and Technology (2015-16) shares the details of her research.

In March 1915, to avoid the unsanitary transportation of war casualties, the British government issued a ban on the exhumation and repatriation of Imperial soldiers, which was to be observed until the end of hostilities. Nevertheless, after the illegal exhumation of an officer following pressures from wealthy family members, the ban was reinstated "on account of the difficulties of treating impartially the claims advanced by persons of different social standing". This decision applied the principle which was to become the very core of the Imperial War Graves Commission: the equality of treatment.



Above: Tyne-cot Cemetery, an example of commemoration for the fallen from the Second World War

Military cemeteries were then decided upon as the most adequate solution to dispose of and commemorate the dead. For the first time in Europe, soldiers would have been individually buried, without distinctions of class and rank, near the battlefield where they had died, with an engraved tombstone to preserve their name.

When the project of military cemeteries was announced and the ban on repatriation was made permanent, the news sparked protests across the British Empire. Although the percentage of the population requesting a lift of the ban remains uncertain, the discussion gained the proportions of a significant public debate. Soon after the publication of the plans, the Spectator and the Daily Mail ran campaigns against the Commission, even targeting some of the Commissioners personally; the question of repatriation and military cemeteries was repeatedly discussed in Parliament; and the public debate involved some of the most influential British figures of the time. What was at stake in these debates was the question of what constituted a decent handling and disposal of the dead bodies of soldiers.

Historians have generally focussed on the drastic changes in military commemoration which followed the Great War, analysing the phenomenon mainly in terms of the symbolic


© Rutland Remembers

function that commemoration provided to a nation traumatised by the horrors of the First World War. My research, based on the archival material of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (Maidenhead), shifted the focus from monumental architecture to the dead bodies of Imperial soldiers. Building on cultural histories of the body, I explored how the Imperial War Graves Commission negotiated the demands of public opinion for adopting civilian notions of decency in the burial of soldiers with the difficulties posed by the necessity of exhuming, transporting, and burying hundreds of thousands of cadavers. The fact that soldiers had been volunteers and conscripts as opposed to professional soldiers, it emerged, had a crucial role in this negotiation, as the public demanded a civilian treatment in the burial of the fallen. In the aftermath of the war, notions of decency in death were changing in complex ways: the pre-war military practice of the common grave was no longer acceptable for an army of civilians, and neither were the Commission's deviations from civilian decency (such as transporting bodies huddled together, not making use of coffins, and leaving bodies exposed to public view). When the Commission's practices came into conflict with public opinion, failure to negotiate successfully between material limitations and the wishes of the public led to bitter criticism.

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At the same time, the fact that the task of honouring and reverently caring for the dead was taken over by the state made the disposal of soldiers an explicitly political matter. In July 1920, the Commission was publicly accused in the National Review of having been "captivated by the Socialist ideal, the State as opposed to the individual", and of enforcing a "conscription of bodies [...] worthy of Lenin". Matters were further complicated when, in 1931, a scandal exploded following the publication of an article titled "British War Dead Smuggled Home: Bodies exhumed from graves in Flanders. – Families pay thousands to Belgian smuggler". According to the article, in the previous ten years Belgian smugglers had been paid between £250 and £500 to exhume illegally the remains of British soldiers and transport them overnight by motor boat to the Essex coast. The Sunday Express, where the article was published, did not refrain from issuing a judgement on the matter:

"When wealthy persons are approached to pay for the transport of their war dead home to their family graves they should think first whether they are not rather dishonouring than honouring the dead by removing them from the great family of heroes."

Regardless of the truthfulness of the rumours, the outcry caused by the scandal several years after the end of the conflict testifies to the ongoing resonance of the question of the war dead, and the active involvement of public opinion in debates over their disposal. The scandal also highlights how two broad understandings of what constituted a decent way of honouring dead soldiers were coming into conflict. While burial in monumental cemeteries was seen as the most honourable course for the Commission, the opponents of the policy saw this appropriation of dead bodies as simply "not decent", and demanded instead to have the right to honour privately their deceased relatives. The article in the Sunday Express perfectly exemplifies this tension. According to the newspaper, it was "wealthy persons", and not the state, who were dishonouring the deceased by expropriating their bodies from their new family, the "great family of heroes". The liveliness of public discussions over the question of repatriation demonstrates that contested notions of how to best honour the fallen were not marginal or private matters relegated to the sphere of personal beliefs. Rather, they were the object of heated public and Parliamentary debates in which factions were in fundamental disagreement over what decency in burial was to mean.

It was "wealthy persons" ... who were dishonouring the deceased by expropriating their bodies from ... the "great family of heroes".

I would like to conclude this summary on a personal note. On explaining the topic of my research to my relatives after submitting the dissertation I discovered, to my greatest amazement, that the person who had sold to the IWGC the machines to identically engrave the tombstones after the Second World War was my own great-uncle, Tiziano Malaguti, who owned a large firm of funeral-engraving machinery near Bologna (INCIMAR). He can be seen in the picture at the left of my grandfather, serving as best-man for my grandfather at his wedding.

-Laura Tradii

Left: The gentleman on the left-hand side of the picture is INCIMAR owner Tiziano Malaguti

***Aotearoa:** the Māori name for New Zealand.
It means Land of the Long White Cloud.

From Aotearoa* to Oxford: Commemorating New Zealand Soldiers buried at Botley Cemetery

As a light rain began to fall at Botley Cemetery, Brigadier Evan Williams reminded me that, for Māori, rain during a sacred ceremony symbolised divine sorrow. New Zealand's most senior military representative in Europe had joined us to commemorate the lives of the nine New Zealand soldiers who fell during the First World War and who were buried in Botley Cemetery. As the High Commissioner for New Zealand, His Excellency The Right Honourable Sir Lockwood Smith, highlighted in his talk, the nine soldiers had travelled 12,000 miles from their homes to fight first on the Eastern and then on the Western Fronts, before dying at the 3rd Southern General Hospital in Oxford. Approximately 200 people gathered at Botley to acknowledge the journey – the footsteps ngā tapuwae – that had brought them here.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission photographer

Above: Botley Cemetery 8 October 2016

The event was organised as part of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Living Memory project, to highlight Commonwealth war graves across the UK during the centenary of the 141 days of the 1916 Battle of the Somme.

New Zealand, then a dominion of the UK, pledged support to the British Empire at the start of the war in August 1914. The first of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF) – numbering some 8,454 men – left Wellington in October 1914. The country, with a population at the time of 1.1 million, sent 100,444 troops and nurses overseas during the four years of the war. Ultimately, 16,697 men were killed and 41,317 wounded, a 58 per cent casualty rate. The Somme offensive alone accounted for 8,000 casualties, of whom more than 2,100 men lost their lives. It was New Zealand's first major engagement on the Western Front and it was to be its most costly. Despite nearly 60,000 British soldiers losing their lives or being wounded on the first day of the Somme, 1 July 1916, the offensive continued. New Zealand soldiers joined the battle later that year on 12 September, and the third Allied push began on 15 September, aiming for a significant advance on the German lines. The plan was to break the stalemate of trench warfare. It failed for many reasons; most notably the inability to overcome the German artillery. On 5 October, the New Zealand infantry was withdrawn, followed by its artillery on 25 October. By the end of the Battle of the Somme, some four and a half months after it had started, the Allies had advanced ten kilometres.

John Moffatt Hampton was 25 when he enlisted on 15 August 1914 at Timaru, Canterbury. A farmer from Hinds in Canterbury, he departed from Port Lyttelton, near Christchurch, on 16 October 1914 and arrived in Suez on 3 December. He was one of many New Zealanders who fought on the Dardanelles. It was there that he received gunshot wounds to both thighs on 30 May 1915. Following hospital treatment, he was discharged on 7 August and returned to light duties. On 16 September 1916, whilst fighting in Armentières, he received gunshot wounds in his right leg during the Battle of the Somme. He was admitted to the 3rd Southern General Hospital in Oxford on 30 September, dying there on 5 October, age 27. He was buried on 7 October at 2 p.m., at Botley Cemetery. A local newspaper reported that Dr Freeborn 'kindly drove three of [Hampton's] wounded comrades to the funeral in his motor, so that they might pay their last tributes of respect to their friend.'

The hospital where Hampton died was established almost as soon as the war started. The University of Oxford's Examination Schools had already been identified as an ideal location. Confidential plans – apparently unknown even to the Vice-Chancellor – envisaged turning the building into a 520-bed hospital if and when the

Above: John Moffatt Hampton

Above: A member of The Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Army Cadet Force laying an arrangement of New Zealand foliage on the grave of Private Benjamin Bland Booth

need arose. Emergency arrangements were also made to staff the hospital, and to obtain beds and bedding from nearby colleges. Mobilisation on 4 August 1914 triggered the implementation of these plans. The Clerk of the Examination Schools was 'bundled out of his office, without time allowed him to write out the records of two examinations then finished.' Preparations, which included taking the Kaiser's portrait off the wall, went ahead so quickly that what became known as the 3rd Southern General Hospital was ready for use by 16 August.

From early in the War, it was inevitable that there would be deaths among the patients at the hospital, and Colonel George Ranking of the Royal Army Medical Corps, Administrator of the 3rd Southern General Hospital, soon approached the City Council for burial space. The Cemeteries Committee decided that an area of Botley Cemetery should be defined for military burials and that soldiers should be buried free of charge if they were British or Allied troops, but for a fee of 12/6 (62½p) per burial 'in the case of alien enemies.' Botley Cemetery was presumably chosen because it was closest to the city centre, and it also served an area where population growth was limited. The majority of men buried at Botley were British but foreigners included twelve Canadians, eight Australians, nine New Zealanders, and a South African, demonstrating how men from across the British Empire supported, and died for, the Allied war effort.

On 8 October 2016, 100 years after the New Zealand infantry withdrew from the Somme, an audience of New Zealanders, local Oxford residents, military dignitaries and members of the University gathered to pay their respects to the New Zealand soldiers. Talks by local historian Dr Malcolm Graham and the High Commissioner for New Zealand were followed by James Belich, Beit

Professor of Imperial and Commonwealth History, reading out the names of each of the soldiers. As he did so, nine members of the Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Army Cadet Force laid arrangements of New Zealand foliage on each of the graves. Regimental Serjeant Major Instructor Phil King, Bugle Major, Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Army Cadet Force, and Rifleman James Howard, 7 Rifles, then sounded the Last Post, while the New Zealand flag was lowered.

The commemoration in the cemetery was followed by a series of talks in the Botley Women's Institute Hall just across from the cemetery. James Belich began with an overview of New Zealand's role in the First World War, focussing particularly on why New Zealanders volunteered to fight. Dr Adrian Gregory, Director of GLGW, then outlined the Somme Campaign, and particularly New Zealand's role in it. Finally, Liz Woolley, coordinator of the local history project 66 Men of Grandpont 1914-18, spoke on the 3rd Southern General Hospital in Oxford and how so many soldiers from across the world came to be treated there.

Dr Jeanette Atkinson

- For further information on the role of the New Zealand forces in the Battle of the Somme see here.

- For more information about the Globalising and Localising the Great War Project, go to http://greatwar.history.ox.ac.uk/

Commonwealth War Graves Commission photographer

Above: The Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Army Cadet Force

**All historical information relating to the 3rd Southern General Hospital and Botley Cemetery reproduced in this article is taken from Dr Malcolm Graham's paper 'Botley Cemetery and the Great War'

Life as an Historian

Dr Peter Frankopan discusses what influenced him to become an historian, why he chose Oxford and his recent activities

I first thought of coming to Oxford at the start of my final year at Cambridge. I had been captivated by a paper I had chosen on Byzantium and its neighbours, 800-1204 and went to talk to my supervisor, Jonathan Shepard, about carrying on to do post-graduate work. I explained that I was torn between the Byzantine world and Russia at the turn of the 20th century, my true first love, but was certain I wanted to do a doctorate. Jonathan, one of the most brilliant scholars I've ever met (and now a good friend), told me that he had once had the same choice to make and had never regretted choosing medieval Constantinople over modern Moscow. If I wanted to do the same, he said, there was only one place to go next: Oxford. So that's how I ended up here in 1993.

I never looked back. The resources for Late Antique and Byzantine Studies in Oxford are astonishing, ranging from the collection of mediaeval Greek manuscripts in the Bodleian to the holdings of the Ashmolean Museum. Above all, however, is the strength in depth of the academic community. I was extremely fortunate to be able to listen to and learn from Cyril Mango, Nigel Wilson, Elizabeth Jeffreys, Mark Whittow, Chris Wickham and Bryan Ward-Perkins, and above all to have the inspirational James Howard-Johnston as my thesis supervisor.

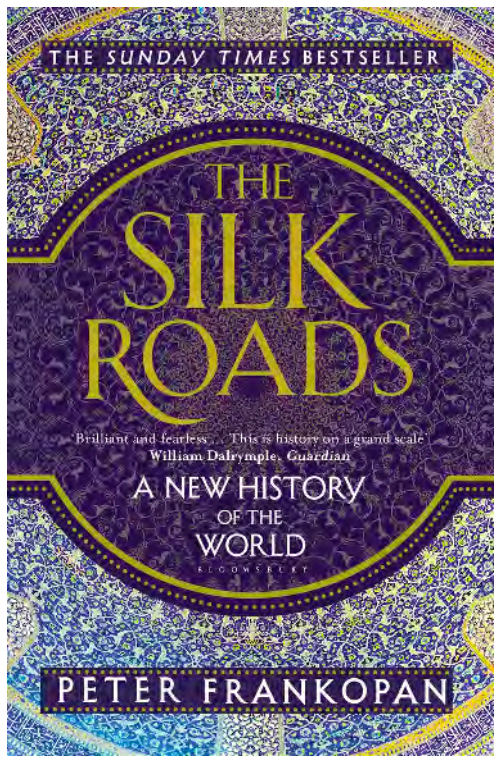
My D.Phil was on the history of the Balkans, Southern Italy, Asia Minor and Eastern Mediterranean in the 11th century, a time of Norman conquest of Apulia, Calabria and Sicily, a sudden and dramatic collapse of the Byzantine empire's position in the east as Turkish raiders built up a string of emirates in Anatolia, changing relations and a moment of reconciliation between Constantinople and Rome following the schism of 1054.

The main source that I worked with, The Alexiad by Anna Komnene, was very well known, but had been badly understood and poorly exploited by historians who tended to follow Edward Gibbon's withering comment that the text 'displays in every page the vanity of a female author.' In fact, the account is astonishingly rich, but also very complicated. Producing a new translation (for Penguin Classics) was really tough.

Unravelling Anna Komnene's sources, picking apart a chronology that was flawed and misleading and reconstructing a new sequence of events using other documentary evidence in Greek, Armenian, Syriac and Arabic yielded dramatic results – ones that not only transform the way we look at the Byzantine Empire in this period, but revolutionise the way we understand the First Crusade: The Times described a book I wrote on the subject as 'overturning a millennium of scholarship.' That's not a bad epitaph for a historian to have on their

tombstone.

My most recent work was called The Silk Roads: A New History of the World. It focuses on exchange of goods, ideas, faith and disease across the spine of Asia from antiquity to the present day. It is an ambitious book that seeks to shift attention away from the West. I have been amazed by the reception it has had around the world, where it was described as 'breathtaking and addictively readable' (Daily Telegraph), 'magnificent' (Sunday Times), 'fearless and brilliant' (Guardian), 'a dazzling piece of historical writing' (South China Morning Post), 'majestic, brilliant and extraordinary' (Open, India). The Wall St Journal said that it is 'a rare book that makes you question your assumptions about the world, while the Berliner Zeitung said that it is'not just the most important history book in years but the most important in decades'. It has topped the non-fiction charts in many countries, including the UK, Ireland, India and China.



Since it came out I've spent a large part of the last year on planes, lecturing at universities like Yale and Harvard, at institutions such as the UN, UNICEF and the EBRD, and giving talks to heads of state, ministers and senators in China, Pakistan, India, Central Asia, the Gulf and a host of European countries about the importance of history and about what the past can teach us about the present.

Alongside all this, I've been busy in Oxford with teaching and examining, trying to catch up on my research for future projects and also in my role as Director of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research (OCBR) that sits across five faculties within the university (History, Classics, Theology and Religion, Medieval and Modern Languages, Oriental Languages) as well as the School of Archaeology. There are nearly sixty post-holders, researchers and emeriti who work on matters that intersect in one way or another with the Byzantine world. We help arrange colloquia and conferences, host special lectures, award travel grants and a great deal more. We have been very successful in raising money to support positions in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies, graduate scholarships and our running costs over the last seven years, and I am incredibly proud of how much we have achieved since the OCBR was set up nearly seven years ago.

Oxford has been a wonderful environment to work in over the last two decades. I have enjoyed many happy years at Worcester, where I have been Senior Research Fellow since 2000, and have greatly appreciated the support of my colleagues in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies. These are difficult times for the Humanities, regardless of the long-term implications of Brexit. It is important to make those outside academia realise what it is that we do at Oxford, and at other universities in the UK. That does not mean making history 'relevant', or trying to make it have an impact beyond the dreaming spires. But if I've helped keep History at Oxford in the public eye then that can only be a good thing.

Dr Peter Frankopan is Senior Research Fellow at Worcester College, Oxford. The Silk Roads: A New History of the World is published by Bloomsbury.

The Newton Project

The Newton Project, which has recently moved to the University of Oxford, was created in 1998 by Rob Iliffe and Scott Mandelbrote (Peterhouse, Cambridge). For most of its existence, the Newton Project has been primarily concerned with publishing Newton's theological writings but in the last decade, the Project has released detailed diplomatic transcriptions of all of his major scientific and mathematical texts, including all of his optical correspondence. The Project is now embarking on an edition of Newton's financial and administrative papers, created as a result of Newton's tenure as Warden and then Master of the Mint (1696-1727).

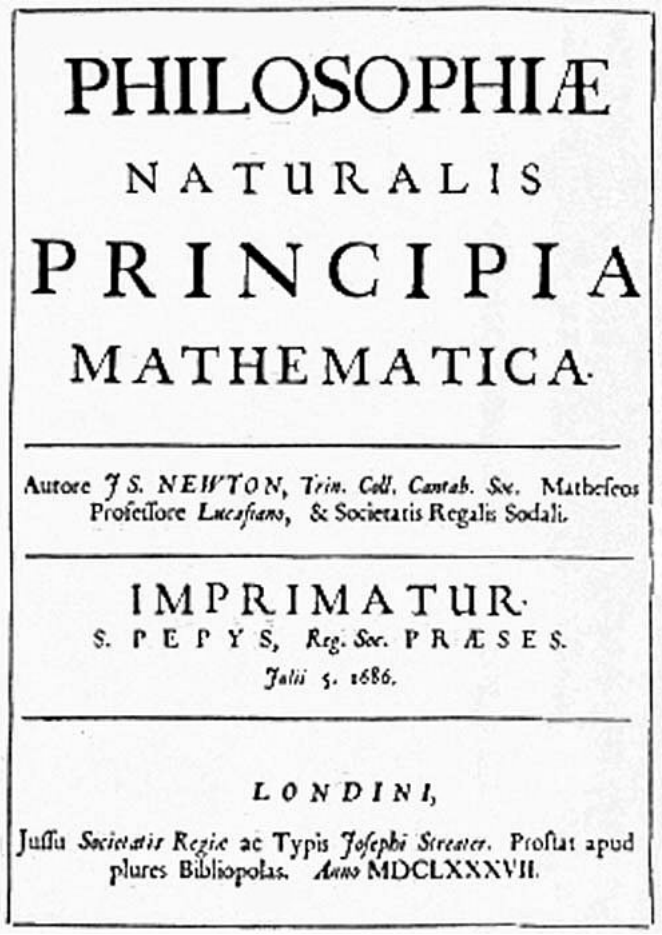
By attributed to 'English School' (Bonhams) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Above: Portrait of Sir Isaac Newton, c.1715

The vast activity that has gone into the process of creating an online edition of Newton's papers has been motivated by a number of related concerns. These include the view that the audiences for such materials should not be restricted to academics; that, where possible, the materials should be Open Access; and that readers should have access to 'everything', that is, to the entirety of Newton's surviving writings (amounting over 10 million words). The last point seems to be vital for serious twenty-first century scholarship. Not only might stray and ostensibly uninteresting notes allow editors to date various writings, but a proper understanding of his individual works requires a grasp of how they fit into a larger whole and vise versa. Moreover, a digital edition of Newton's writings not only allows the materials to be searched and browsed, but also allows tools such as Voyant and Latent Semantic Analysis to be used for textual analysis.

Newton's status as a multi-faceted genius who transformed conventional thinking in a spectacular burst of creativity is matched only by the scientific standing of Albert Einstein. In his 'annus mirabilis' of 1665-6, he discovered that white light was heterogeneously composed of more basic (primary) coloured rays, and became the first person to express the fundamental algorithms of the differential and integral calculus. Just over twenty years later, in 1687, he published the *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, in which he expressed the three Laws of Motion, the modern concepts of 'force' and 'mass', and the novel and daring concept of universal gravitation. All of his major texts in the exact sciences are now online, including both early and more mature enunciations of calculus techniques, various drafts of his *Principia Mathematica*, and with his optical papers and letters.

More significantly (as Newton evidently saw it), he spent most of his life immersed in theological research. His interests ranged from early Church history, prophecy, Scriptural



PHILOSOPHIÆ
NATURALIS
PRINCIPIA
MATHEMATICA.

Autore *J. S. NEWTON*, *Trin. Coll. Cantab. Soc.* Matheseos Professore *Lucasiano*, & Societatis Regalis Sodali.

IMPRIMATUR.
S. PEPYS, *Reg. Soc.* PRÆSES.
Julii 5. 1686.

LONDINI,
Jussu *Societatis Regiæ* ac Typis *Josephi Streater*. Prostat apud plures Bibliopolas. *Anno* MDCLXXXVII.

Above: The title page of Newton's Principia

exegesis, Ancient Chronology and Natural Theology. As in his scientific research, he brought to all of these fields a critical acumen guided by a powerful sense that he was a gifted and godley man, with a religious obligation to engage in independent and rational study. The texts published by the Newton Project, almost all of them for the first time, show that Newton was intrigued by these different topics until the end of his life, but they also show that he had thrown himself into the same areas of study early on in his academic career. Crucially, these writings demonstrate that it was early in his life that he developed the heterodox view that the doctrine of the Trinity was a diabolical corruption of true Christianity introduced by Athanasius and his henchmen in the Fourth Century CE.

Many of these texts have not only changed

Courtesy of the British Museum.

Above: "The South View of the Tower of London" engraving, published in 1737

our understanding of Newton, but more broadly they have been of great interest to historians of culture and religion. These writings include early treatises on prophecy from the late 1670s and 80s; his examination of the morals and actions of Athanasius; his account of how post-Noachid cultures worshipped according to Vestal-Newtonian precepts; his account of the background to and consequences of the Council of Nicea in 325; his letter to Locke (from November 1690) on Trinitarian corruptions of Scripture; his analysis of the sexual practices of early eremites; his account of the dimensions of Solomon's Temple; and his monumental history of the early Christian Church.

More recently, in 2016 the Project began to publish Newton's administrative writings, deriving from his time as Warden and Master of the Mint (1696-1727). These papers, now in the National Archives, represent the great terra incognita of Newton studies. Newton was linked to a position at the Mint from as early as 1690, and was involved to varying degrees with Mint business during the Financial Revolution, the Great Recoinage, monetary union between England and Scotland in 1707, the fixing of the value of the guinea in 1717, and the South Sea Bubble.

Of greatest general interest will be the papers relating to Newton's prosecution of 'clippers' and 'coiners', a practice that he pursued with gusto. The Newton Project has already published the heart-rending final letters from his ill-fated nemesis, William Chaloner, and will soon release transcriptions of the large number of depositions that were sent to him for more than a decade by agents and informers. It is not clear yet whether the much heralded film of Newton's life as a detective will make it to the Big Screen, but if Iron Man and Fast and Furious director Rob Cohen is unable to make the story and its hero as exciting as the real thing, then Blade producer and Batman vs. Superman writer David Goyer may do so.

The edition has been made possible thanks to the work of over 60 scholars, transcribers and computer scientists, and it has benefitted from a number of collaborations with partners based in the US, the UK and Europe. It is by some degree the largest text-encoding project in existence, and at present contains over six million words of Newton's own writings, transcribed according to the guidelines of the TEI (Text Encoding Initiative). The Project was supported from 1998-2014 by three large AHRC research grants, and one large EU award. Since 2007, a number of private donations and two JISC awards have enabled the Project to publish Newton's major scientific and mathematical works.

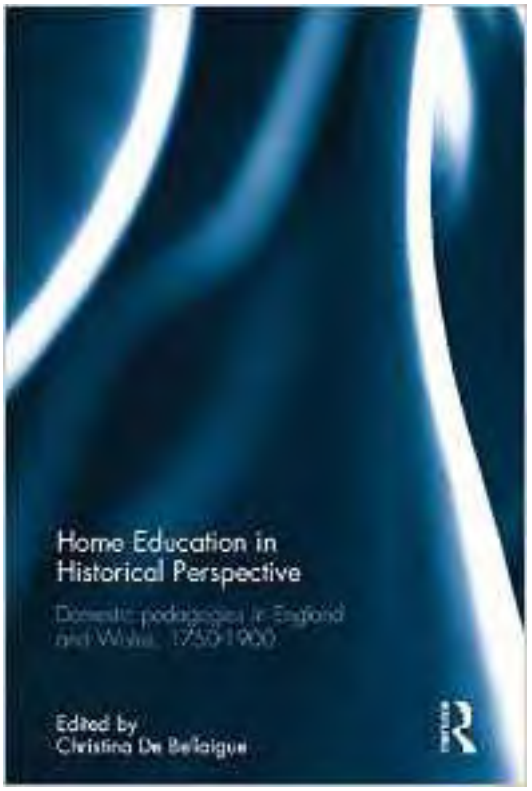
Robert Iliffe

Home education in historical perspective: domestic pedagogies in England and Wales, 1750-1900 (Routledge, 2016)

Christina de Bellaigue talks about her new publication

Since the seventeenth century a growing body of advice literature, educational treatises, parenting manuals and policy documents has been encouraging parents to play an active part in the education and instruction of their children. Yet because the focus of historians and policy-makers has been on the development of institutional instruction, and on the role of the state in education, the history of this domestic learning has been neglected. New research on the history of the book and the history of childhood, and on the history of literacy, however, reveals the significance of domestic instruction among middle- and upper-class families in the late eighteenth century, and the importance of home learning and self-education for the children of the working classes in the nineteenth century. Current educational studies have also drawn attention to the role of home and family in education, noting the impact that family culture can have on educational outcomes. The number of children being educated primarily at home is growing, rising in the UK from about twenty families in 1977 to 80,000 families in 2009.

This book seeks to extend our understanding of the history of education beyond the school walls, both as a philosophy and as a practice. It draws on evidence from fiction, from book history, from advice literature, from prison records, memoir, correspondence, and diaries, to shed new light on home education in Britain from the late-eighteenth to the early-twentieth centuries. In the process, it demonstrates the continuing importance of the education offered at home even as institutional provision was expanding.



Focusing on home education in Britain offers insights into ideas and practices of domestic instruction that were particularly influential and enduring. While the nineteenth century saw the gradual expansion of school provision and the professionalization of teaching, in England

and Wales, this process was slower and more complex than in France, Germany, or the USA. It was not until the Forster Act in 1870 that anything like a system of elementary schooling for the working classes was established in England and Wales, and only in 1902 that secondary schooling was systematically provided and funded. And yet, literacy rates were as high as 60% in 1833 well before the Forster Act. Such figures testify to the longevity of a vital educational culture that did not depend on formal schooling. Instead, differing ideas and practices of home education competed with, co-existed with, and complemented, institutional instruction.

The late eighteenth century saw the articulation of a confident philosophy of home education. From the 1760s, theorists influenced by Rousseau had begun to develop new progressive methods emphasizing child-centred learning and questioned what was taught in contemporary schools. Michele Cohen's work on the pedagogy of conversation, research by Matthew Grenby on the use of children's literature in the home, and by Katherine Halsey on the representation of domestic instruction in Romantic fiction, all shed new light on this important movement. Such ideas were principally directed towards the middle and upper classes, who might have the luxury of choice in determining how their children should be educated. However by the beginning of the nineteenth century, arguments about the need for an education that would shape national character undermined those in favour of the individual approach. A growing number of voices began to argue that school education was necessary - particularly for middle-class boys - who needed to leave the feminine domestic world and to experience the rigours of institutional life in order to achieve manly independence. The home was losing its legitimacy as a source of education. Even in the 1880s and 1890s, however, as my work on Charlotte Mason demonstrates, significant numbers of elite parents were drawing on eighteenth-century models to educate their children at home, choosing something other than the dominant public-school model.

For many families lower down the social scale, however, the question of choice was moot. Rosalind Crone's work on modes of learning in the working-class home in the nineteenth century, and Gillian Sutherland's analysis of self-education in the lower middle class at the turn of the nineteenth century suggest that those with fewer resources needed

The Yorck Project: 10.000 Meisterwerke der Malerei. DVD-ROM, 2002. ISBN 3

Right: Joseph Highmore's illustration of Pamela teaching her children (1743–45); in volume four of Samuel Richardson's novel, Pamela

to make the most of what was available. From the 1780s, growing numbers of working class children were attending Sunday Schools, private working-class schools, and the expanding body of religious establishments. Working-class families were keen to use schools where they were available: evidence from prison records suggests that those who were literate had usually attended school. By the late nineteenth century, mass schooling was fully established; however, this did not preclude educational activities in the home. The late nineteenth-century saw large-scale engagement in efforts for self-improvement of the kind engaged in by Ruth Slate and Eva Slawson, the subjects of Sutherland's analysis. Thus more than 20,000 students were enrolled on the Oxford University Extension lecture courses in 1890-1.

Examining ideas and practices of home education in the past, then, reveals that instruction at home formed part of the varied educational itineraries of children of all classes in the past, and continued to be significant even after development of mass and compulsory schooling. Rather than seeking to set up dichotomies between home and school and between formal and informal education, it is more fruitful to think in terms of the individuals experiencing a range of educational environments and influences along a spectrum of formal to informal. Exploring the history of domestic learning also emphasizes the narrowness of twenty-first century conceptions of education. As Crone comments, the domestic curriculum could be usefully defined to include 'learning to crawl or speak, developing an awareness and later knowledge of identity and community, and cultivating and expanding the imaginative faculties'. Similarly, home education might be defined to include occupational training. Charlotte Mason's conception of the educational work done by parents was also broad, incorporating the training of habit and character, nutritional choices, physical education, as well as activities more conventionally defined as educational. These expansive definitions undermine the modern notion of education as synonymous with schooling and propose a more flexible and inclusive conception of instruction and learning. They suggest ways in which we might try to begin to expand twenty-first century understandings of education, and to do more justice to the educational work done by agencies beyond the school, and by parents of all classes and cultures.

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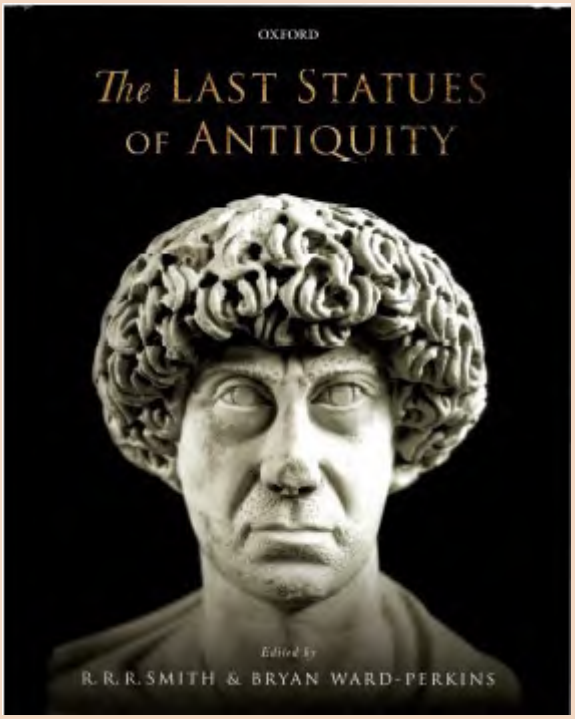
The Last Statues of Antiquity edited by R.R.R. Smith and Bryan Ward-Perkins, (OUP, 2016)

Bryan Ward-Perkins discusses the influences behind this book as well as the implications of what it raises.

Access to substantial research grants, and the possibility of collecting large quantities of data digitally, so that it is easily stored and readily searchable, opens up areas of research in the Humanities that could never be tackled by the classic 'lone scholar' working with pen and



paper, however assiduous he or she might be. In 2009, I and a colleague in Classics, R.R.R. (aka 'Bert') Smith, were awarded a large grant by the Arts and Humanities Research Council to study the 'Last Statues of Antiquity'.

Public statuary, of emperors, grandees and local benefactors, played a major role in the cities of the Roman empire, lubricating the relationship between the city-councils and the important men (and occasionally women) whose goodwill they needed to court. Quite unlike statuary in the modern West, where statues are rare and generally set up to the dead, to serve as cultural and historical symbols, statues in Antiquity played a lively and active role in contemporary politics. An important city, such as Aphrodisias in today's Turkey, might well have had up to 300 statues standing in its streets and squares, all originally set up to living men and women, and all jostling for attention; while a megalopolis like Rome would have had literally thousands. In 'Late Antiquity', the period from around AD 300, the 'statue habit' remained important, although increasingly focused on emperors and imperial officials, and produced some spectacular pieces of art (like the late-fifth-century head of the governor Palmatus, from Aphrodisias, who graces the cover of our book). However, the number of new statues erected steadily declined, and the 'statue habit' eventually disappeared completely in the early seventh century – the very last statue we know of was set up in Constantinople sometime between 610 and 625. Bert Smith and I realised it would be a fascinating project to study the final phase of ancient statuary, and that between us we had the necessary skills to do this: Bert's expertise is in the Greek-speaking eastern empire and in Roman statuary, while mine is in the Latin West and in city life.

Having been successful with our application

to the AHRC, we were able to employ two admirable researchers to work in Oxford for three years: Ulrich Gehn, to work primarily on the inscribed marble statue-bases, on which our statues once sat and which tell us a great deal about the people commemorated and why they were being honoured, and Julia Lenaghan to work primarily on the surviving statuary itself, much of it reworked material from an earlier period. As so often with a project, the quantity of the data exceeded what we had expected – in the end we documented nearly 900 individual pieces of statuary, nearly 1,700 statue-bases, and over 200 literary references to statues that are now completely lost. All of this material was collected, described and assessed, and mounted in a readily searchable database (often illustrated with multiple photos), that is now freely available worldwide: http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/. There you can readily discover simple information – such as where statues are known for Justinian's wife, Theodora – but also make much more complex and recondite searches – for instance, to find out how many statues to praetorian prefects were set up in fourth-century North Africa, and who paid for them.

We are justifiably proud of the Last Statues of Antiquity database, which is extensively used by scholars, students and the wider interested public alike; but we knew we should also put into print the major conclusions of our project, and earlier this year we published the book which is the subject of this short article. It opens with two general chapters, one by Bert and one by me, on how statuary was used in Late Antiquity, before moving on to fifteen chapters surveying the late-antique statue habit across the empire

Above: The fragments of a colossal statue of Constantine, now in the Musei Capitolini, Rome

Above: The bronze statue of a fifth-century emperor, from Constantinople, now in Barletta, southern Italy

– focused first on broad regions, like 'Italy' and 'Asia Minor', and then on key cities, such as Rome, Aphrodisias, and Athens. The volume closes with six thematic chapters, covering topics like female statuary and portrait styles, and a final chapter by me on how and why the ancient statue habit eventually died. Seventeen experts, working in eight different countries, contributed to this volume, a testimony to the international nature of modern research collaboration.

There is one feature of the book that is unusual and innovative: many of the foot-notes refer the reader for more information, not to print volumes, but to the Last Statues database. We do this because this database is much more readily accessed than the authoritative corpora that are the usual stuff of foot-notes. Of course, there is a risk and a challenge here: those corpora are safely preserved in print, while the Last Statues database exists only electronically. Will it survive? This is a real challenge for Oxford University, which is creating and hosting more and more databases of this kind, and for the scholarly community at large, which is becoming increasingly dependent upon them. It is a particular challenge for us in the Humanities, because our databases could well be useful for hundreds of years, while our research funding is strictly limited, and currently insufficient for the maintenance, let alone up-dating, of the electronic resources we create, however useful they might be.

Bryan Ward-Perkins

The Last Statues of Antiquity is published by Oxford University Press

Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet by Lyndal Roper (Bodley Head, 2016)

In October 1517, Martin Luther posted his Ninety-Five Theses to a church door in Wittenberg. He was protesting against the practice of selling of indulgences, which were used to grant sinners exemption from purgatory. The catalyst for his action was the preaching of a Dominican Friar, Johannes Tetzel, who was making outrageous claims as to the power of his indulgencies. In contrast, Luther believed that people must feel real penitence for their sins and could not buy their way out of God's punishment. Although others had previously argued against this practice, Luther's actions heralded the start of a major attack on the Catholic Church. With the anniversary of this event, which impacted on Martin Luther's life profoundly as well as the entirety of Catholic Europe, the timing of this biography could hardly have been better.

Lyndal Roper's work follows Luther's life chronologically, spending a significant amount of time on his earlier life, his relationship with his family and his early schooling. This gives the author the perfect opportunity to analyse what shaped and moulded his personality and opinions, which Roper states is the 'overarching purpose of the book'.

The many previous works on Luther tended to concentrate on his actions and the effects that these have had on the world, but Roper has chosen to follow a different path. In addition to considering both Luther's actions and their ramifications, her main focus is his motivation and what lay behind it. What was Luther like personally? Why did he hold those views and what made him act as he did? Her concern is more with how his actions changed and affected him as a man, rather than their effects on the wider society.

Roper does not pull her punches, exposing the good, bad and strange in Luther's personality. He was certainly not shy in discussing his medical issues and his letters in which he discusses his constipation and piles make particularly interesting reading.

From the very start, one can feel that this is a subject that Roper is especially passionate about. Her treatment of Luther is fair and compelling, inspiring an admiration for and understanding of his motivations, even for those who may not agree with this divisive figure.

Read more reviews of Lyndal Roper's Book at The Guardian, Literary Review and The Spectator

Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet was written by Lyndal Roper and published by Bodley Head

The Oxford Historian