

The Medieval Magazine

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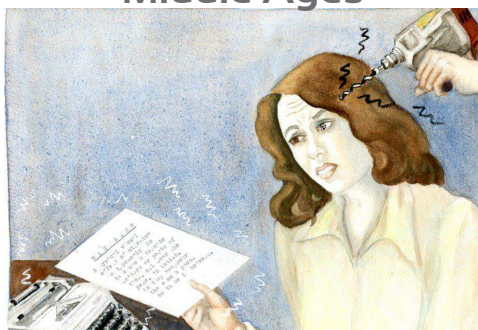
Hastings 950: Celebrating 1066



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French Swords**



**Migraines in the
Middle Ages**



**The English Language:
A Beautiful Platypus**

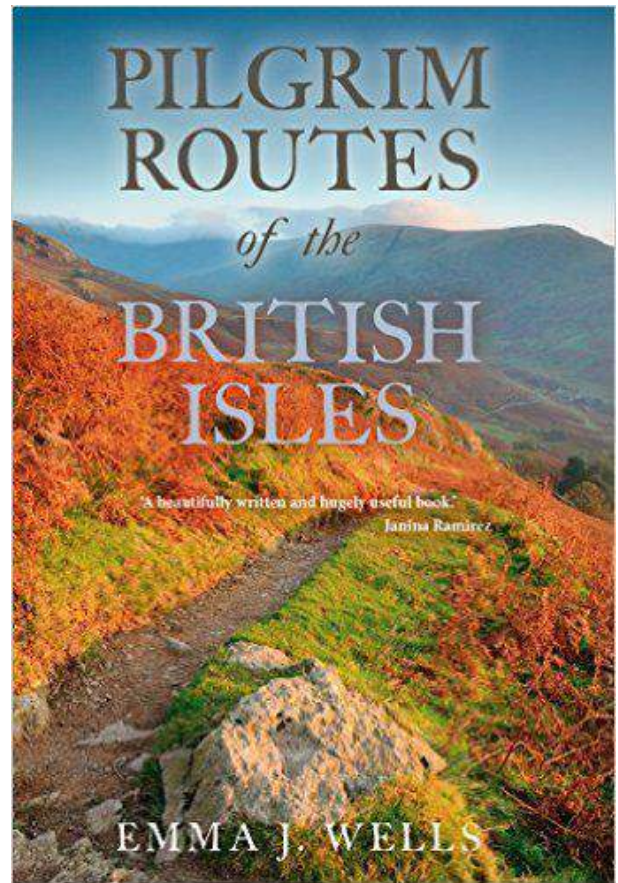


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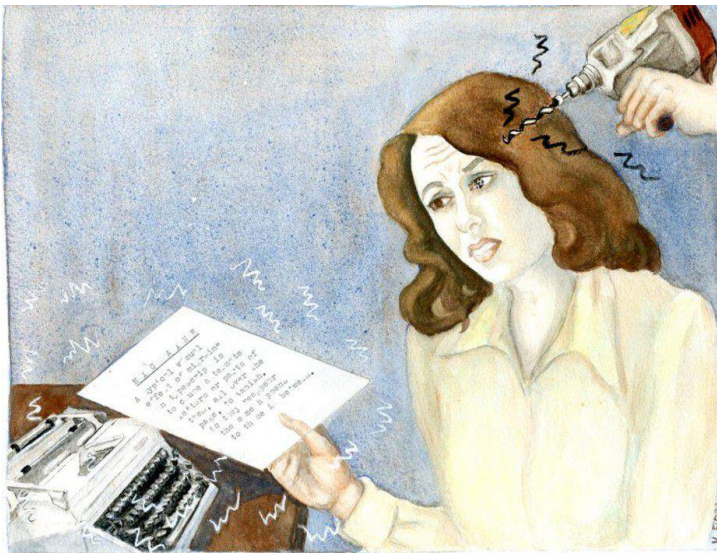
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THE MEDIEVAL MAGAZINE

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Cover Photo Credit: Photograph by Sandra Alvarez for Medievalists.net at the 950th Anniversary of the Battle of Hastings produced by English Heritage

Norman Conquest Special Edition: Celebrating Hastings's 950th Anniversary

Dear Readers,

This month marks a pivotal moment in England's history, the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. On October 14th, 1066, William the Conqueror and Harold Godwinson met on Senlac Hill, near the spot where Battle Abbey stands today and ushered in a new era in English history. This issue focuses on that Battle and its aftermath. I attended the 950th anniversary celebration of the Battle of Hastings, walked through the Saxon and Norman camps, and watched the two clash in an incredible display in front of hundreds of people. It was a moment to remember.

As always, we have a book review and excerpt. In this month's book review, we revisit medieval pilgrimage with a modern twist in Emma J. Well's latest: *Pilgrimage of the British Isles*, and enjoyed a book excerpt on the Battle of Hastings, Teresa Cole's *The Norman Conquest: William the Conqueror's Subjugation of England*. This month's travel tip whisks us off to Bayeux, France, while for our newest feature, Londinium, we take a sneak peek into Medieval London.

With all this talk of battles, we also give a nod to how current trends in academia are affecting medieval research. Dr. Tony Pollard, Professor of Conflict History and Archaeology, gives his opinion on why trigger warnings should be used in some educational contexts and are absolutely necessary. We hope that you'll share your opinion on trigger warnings in medieval studies and explore our battle videos on the Medievalists.net social media pages! Enjoy this coverage of #Hastings950 and this issue of *The Medieval Magazine*.

Warmly,

Sandra & Dani

Sandra Alvarez

Sandra is the co-founder and editor of Medievalists.net, and The Medieval Magazine. Sandra has a Hon. B. A. from the University of Toronto in Medieval Studies, & a diploma in Human Resources from George Brown College. She is a content writer for a digital marketing agency & lives in London, England with her Jack Russell Terrier, Buffy. When she's not doing something medieval, she can be found with her nose in a book, attempting to learn 3 languages, & planning her next adventure. You can follow her on Twitter @mediaevalgirl or check out her blog Mediaevalgirl.com.



Danielle (Dani) Trynoski

Danielle earned her MA in Medieval Archaeology at the University of York in England. She is passionate about "the stuff" beyond the text of primary sources, & how modern people engage with medieval culture. When she's not visiting museums and historical sites, she's riding horses, reading about Vikings, or making loose leaf tea in a French Press. She currently lives in southern California and manages CuratoryStory.com. She is a contributor to Medievalists.net & editor at The Medieval Magazine. You can follow Dani on Twitter: @MissDaniTryn.



Danièle Cybulskie

Also known as The Five-Minute Medievalist, Danièle studied Cultural Studies & English at Trent University, earning her MA at the University of Toronto, where she specialized in medieval literature & Renaissance drama. Currently, she teaches a course on medievalism through OntarioLearn, & is the author of The Five-Minute Medievalist. When she is not reading or writing, Danièle can be found drinking tea, practicing archery, or building a backyard trebuchet. You can follow her on Twitter @5MinMedievalist or visit her website,



Peter Konieczny

Along with being a co-founder and contributor at Medievalists.net, Peter is the editor of Medieval Warfare Magazine, and the web admin at De Re Militari: The Society for Medieval Military History. He has been working to spread knowledge about the Middle Ages online for over 15 years. Peter lives near Toronto, Canada, and enjoys all the books publishers send to him. When he is not reading about medieval history, you can find him trying to keep up with his son in Minecraft. Follow Peter on Twitter @medievalicious.



Special Edition

The Battle of Hastings: Celebrating #Hastings950

By Sandra Alvarez

*This weekend was the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. **English Heritage** hosted an epic two-day battle extravaganza to celebrate this momentous turning point in English history. I travelled from London to Battle to catch the first day of the weekend's festivities.*



*William the Conqueror , the new King of England!
(Photo by Medievalists.net)*



Above, in the Norman camp, a soldier checks on the shields before battle. **Below**, Norman soldiers rally right before heading onto the battlefield.

The gates opened at 10am and I wandered around the site to catch a glimpse of pre-battle preparations. English Heritage had a series of events running over the course of the day; Have-a-Go Archery, Falconry, Music, a Literary Stage, a book seller's area, and even a Kids Battle of Hastings. There was something for everyone. The event was extremely family-friendly in spite of being entered around a battle.

The battle itself took place as one of the final events of the afternoon at 3pm. It was narrated like a wrestling match with the announcer egging on the crowd to cheer or boo for **Harold** and **William**. All through the crowds, little pennants fluttered in the breeze with either Harold's red and white

warrior or, warrior or the William's white, green and yellow. I had a clear view from behind the Anglo Saxon line and watched the Normans approach. First a lone rider, the minstrel **Taillefer**, who supposedly sang the **Chanson de Roland** as he singlehandedly attacked the Anglo Saxon ranks and was hewn down. Then archers with a volley of arrows, then cavalry, and then the clash of hand-to-hand combat. This was repeated several times until Harold was pronounced dead and cheers rose up for the new King of England, William the Conqueror. Whatever people might think of medieval battle based on Hollywood movies,





Left: Anglo-Saxon family. **Right:** Harold's red and white banner flying in the Saxon camp. (Photos by Medievalists.net)

it's certainly not as it appears onscreen. It takes time to muster troops on either side and moving across a field takes longer than these glitzy films portray. On top of that, this was orchestrated to be a much safer, tamer version for people to watch. The slower pace worked well because instead of a blur of fighting, you could see each charge forming, along with the announcer telling the crowd what was about to happen. At the end, the "dead" rose up to a thunderous applause from the crowd for their fantastic efforts.

As exciting and fun as the battle was to watch, by far, the best part of the day for me was being able to walk around the Norman and Saxon camps and chat to participants. In the Saxon camp, many re-enactors had been camping since Wednesday night. This weekend is the last big re-enactment event of the year for some groups who do a yearly circuit that starts up again in February. Participants lived under the exact same conditions the armies would have experienced at that time, in full period garb, using only period tools and materials. In the Norman camp, quite a few re-enactors came from Germany, France, and as far as Poland. Entire families camped together, not just soldiers; but women and children. On both sides, participants spent their time practicing fighting techniques, or demonstrating various skills such as weapon making, needlework, and woodworking. They were passionate about their work, enthusiastic about talking to visitors and posing for photos. It was great to get up close, talk, and see how people lived 950 years ago.

The army camps gave you a sense of what life was like during The Norman Conquest in ways that the battle couldn't.

The battle is re-enacted yearly, however, this year being the 950th anniversary saw bigger crowds than usual and tickets sold out quickly. For next year's battle, even though it will not be a milestone year, it would be advisable to pre-purchase tickets before travelling to Battle and risk being turned away.

For more information about your next visit:

English Heritage events

English Heritage on Twitter:
@EnglishHeritage

Learn more about Early Medieval re-enactment: ***The Vikings***

Watch our Facebook video coverage of the Battle of Hastings:

Video 1

Video 2

Video 3

Video 4



Above: Shields in the Anglo-Saxon camp.

Below: Norman soldiers about to march to the battlefield. (Photos by Medievalists.net)



King Harold the Great: What Might Have Been if the English Had Won at Hastings

Charles West (University of Sheffield) &
Alyxandra Mattison (University of Sheffield)



Scene from the Bayeux Tapestry: Edward the Confessor sends Harold to Normandy.
(Wikipedia)

We may not know exactly how England's King Harold died at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 – was he cut down by swords or **was it that fateful arrow?** – but die he certainly did, in spite of fanciful later rumours that he fled and **became a hermit**. But what if it had been Duke William's lifeless body stretched out on English soil, not Harold's? History would obviously have been very different – but not necessarily in the ways that might seem obvious.

Harold's ascent to the English throne as Harold II had taken place just a few months before he met his fate. But his coronation in January 1066 was the result of years of careful planning that put him in pole position on King Edward the Confessor's death, even though he was not related by blood.

Yet the new king had hardly begun to enjoy the fruits of his strategems when he was faced by **enemy invasion**: the seasoned Viking warrior Harald Hardrada landed in the north, marching in collaboration with Harold's rebel brother Tostig. No sooner had Harold won a stunning victory at **Stamford Bridge**, which left both Hardrada and Tostig dead, than news reached the English king of a second invasion, this time in the south, by the Norman Duke William "the Bastard". Harold raced from Yorkshire to Sussex to meet the challenge and the armies clashed at a site known to this day as **Battle**.

William's defeat, and death, was certainly a plausible outcome of his invasion. After all, Hastings was an **unusually long-lasting and hard-fought battle**. Our sources give the impression of two evenly-matched armies, each composed of several thousand soldiers, and of a whole day's fighting that inflicted heavy casualties on both sides.

Historians have made much of the Normans' supposed military advantages – notably their use of sophisticated cavalry tactics – but Harold was an experienced general commanding battle-hardened soldiers. And unlike William, he could have expected reinforcements had he only managed to make it through to evening, as further Saxon troops arrived from Yorkshire.

The Norman duke, on the other hand, was at the end of a very long and uncertain supply chain, isolated in hostile territory. Anything less than a knockout blow at Hastings could have been fatal to his plans, and perhaps to him, too.

On the cusp of glory

Had Harold survived and won, he would probably be celebrated today as one of England's greatest warrior kings, on a par with **Richard Lionheart** and **Edward I**, and indeed **Æthelstan** – we would probably pay much more attention to the earlier English kings without the artificial break provided by the Conquest. He would have defeated mighty enemies in pitched battles at opposite ends of the country within weeks of each other: quite a feat. Indeed, we might well be talking of King Harold the Great, and perhaps of the great dynasty of the Godwinsons.

And yet we might know much less about the England that Harold would have ruled. After all, the single greatest store of information about 11th-century England, **Domesday Book**, was a conqueror's book, made to record the victor's winnings, and preserved as a powerful symbol of that conquest. Without Domesday Book, which has no serious parallel in continental evidence at this date, many English villages and towns could have languished in obscurity for another century or longer.



Bayeux Tapestry - Scene 23: Harold swearing oath on holy relics to William, Duke of Normandy. (Wikicommons)

So Harold's England would be less visible to historians. If, of course, an England had survived to be ruled over at all. One of the most striking characteristics of pre-Conquest England are its deep political divisions. It was these divisions that had paved the way for Harald Hardrada's invasion in the north, allied with powerful English rebels including Tostig – and it was these divisions that had created the circumstances for William's invasion, too, ultimately a byproduct of the rivalry between Harold's family and King Edward the Confessor.

King Harold II after Hastings would have been rich, but he would still have faced dangerous enemies and rivals – not least the **young Edgar**. Edgar's family claim to the throne – he was the grandson of the earlier king, Edmund II Ironside, and so a direct descendant of Alfred the Great – was far stronger than Harold's. There would have been more crises to come after Hastings.

One of the merits of counterfactual history is to remind us that things could have been different: it challenges our assumptions and prejudices. Now, the thriving of medieval England seems obvious, but at the time of the conquest, contemporary France had torn itself apart in what has become known as the Feudal Revolution.

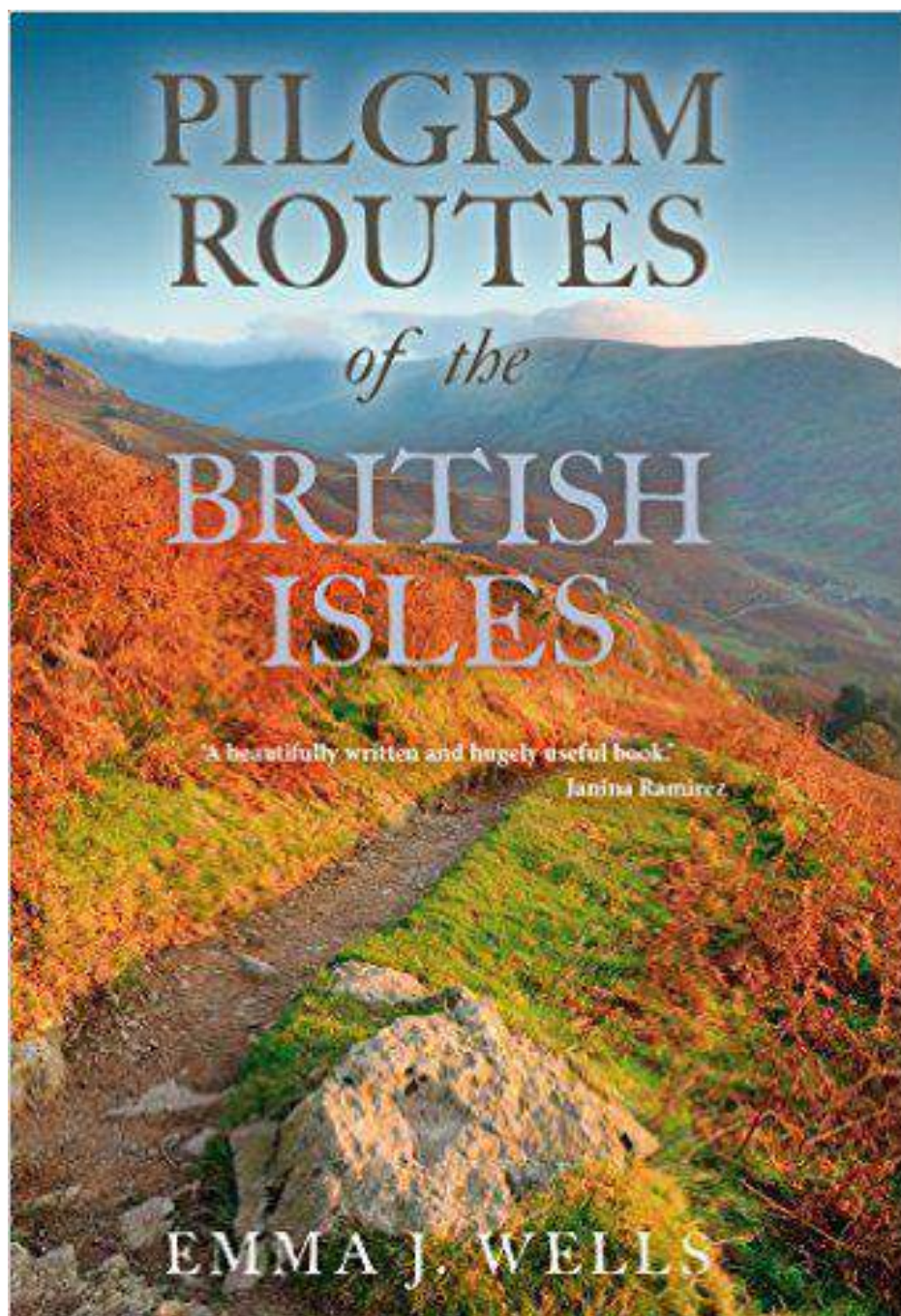
A similar fate could have awaited an English king after the shortlived triumphs of 1066: civil war, fragmentation, and the localisation of power. King William, by contrast, had a blank slate and could start (almost) from scratch, creating a new aristocracy that owed everything to him. So it's not the least of the ironies of William's Norman Conquest that it perhaps helped to save the country that it also brought to its knees.

Originally published in The Conversation.

Pilgrim Routes of the British Isles by Emma J Wells

by Sandra Alvarez

"Places gather meaning through human interaction with sites. It is therefore worth retaining the question throughout: what makes a place holy?." ~Emma J. Wells



What was pilgrimage like in the Middle Ages? Do modern day routes faithfully retrace the steps of long ago pilgrims? How has pilgrimage changed over the course of hundreds of years? Tourist? Pilgrim? Or both? What is the meaning of pilgrimage today?

In ***Pilgrim Routes of the British Isles***, Emma J. Wells takes us back in time on the spiritual and cultural journey of pilgrimage as it was experienced in the Middle Ages and also examines the evolution of this ancient practice. She covers seven major pilgrimage routes:

- St. Andrew's Way
- St. Cuthbert's Way
- The North Wales Pilgrim's Way (Holywell to Bardsey Island)
- Our Lady of Caversham Pilgrimage Walk
- The Pilgrim's Way (beginning as St. Swithun's Way)
- The Saint's Way, or Forth An Syns
- The Pilgrim's Trail (Hampshire to Normandy)

The book organizes the journeys geographically starting from the north in Scotland, moving gradually south. The book touches on interesting landscapes, art, architecture, and cultural aspects along the way.

What is a Pilgrimage?

It seems obvious but the typical answer: 'any kind of journey taken for a specific religious purpose, with an over night stay at a pilgrim centre' has expanded over time. According to Canon Law, medieval pilgrimage was any mandatory journey undertaken as a form of penance for wrongdoing or, a voluntary act under oath. *'A vow was recited, and the symbols of a pilgrim were taken on by the traveller, i.e., the Pilgrim's staff and insignia denoting the purpose of their journey' (p.11).*

Pilgrimage was a booming business, and remains so today. It has witnessed a recent resurgence in popularity, with many people embarking on a soul searching journey for religious and personal reasons. In the Middle Ages, when pilgrimage was at its peak, authentic relics brought pilgrims flocking to a particular church or site and increased the coffers of the clergy. Churches, abbeys and Cathedrals, vied for the prestige, coins and attention of these holy travellers.



Woodcut of a pilgrimage (c.1490)

In the Late Middle Ages, pilgrimages were considered indulgences. One could absolve themselves of sin by embarking on a pilgrimage as a form of 'buying salvation'. As with any popular activity, there were bound to be unscrupulous con artists. Relic scams were rampant; when rival churches claimed to have the same sacred piece of a saint, it planted seeds of disbelief. Accusations increased in the later medieval period as pilgrimage grew more popular and stories of churches substituting animal bones and other kinds of fraud became common. The increase in relic fraud eventually led to disillusionment with the cult of relics and pilgrimage during the Renaissance and Reformation.

An Epic Quest?

According to Wells, pilgrimages weren't always epic journeys that spanned hundreds or thousands of miles to far off exotic places. Pilgrimages could be local, such as a trip to a nearby shrine or space. These short stints counted as much as longer journeys so long as the purpose behind the pilgrimage remained the same:

"Pilgrimage was still pilgrimage so long as the concepts of self-abnegation and abandonment of everyday life and familiar ties were present, even in small form."(p.14)

Pilgrimage now is a mix of tourism, self-discovery, and faith. People who dislike attending church seem to flock to pilgrimage sites and enjoy them from a cultural perspective. Wells also mentions that modern conservation and heritage groups help promote and connect the past to the present along these routes. St. Cuthbert's Way in conjunction with the Scottish Tourist Board, worked together to recreate St. Cuthbert's pilgrimage route and used the saint's gold and garnet pectoral cross as markers along the way.

Examining the Sites: St. Andrew's Way

What do we learn about the sites in this book? Of all the sites, listed in this book, St. Andrews's Way in Scotland is the most authentic of the medieval pilgrimage routes. The 1,000 year old route was relaunched in 2012 with markers denoting the original path medieval pilgrims took. It is 115km (71 miles) long, a route from St. Andrews to Edinburgh spanning approximately four day's journey. St. Andrew's was built upon a more ancient Christian site that dates back to the eighth century. Various stories indicate the relics of St. Andrew were brought to the site between the fourth and eighth century. The Cathedral was founded in 1162 and completed in 1318. Pilgrimage was so popular to St. Andrews during the Middle Ages that pilgrims were kept in holding areas before being processed to the relics, and even the town was laid out to accommodate pilgrim traffic.

Wells takes time to detail each of the seven routes for those interested in embarking on a pilgrimage. If you would like to go on a pilgrimage within Britain, this book is a must-have before you set one foot outside your door. Each route is described with useful tips, highlights, and pertinent historical background. Wells has also added some fantastic photos and maps for further reference of what to look for along the journey. Whether your goal is spiritual, or cultural, ***Pilgrim Routes of the British Isles*** will be a welcome addition to your journey.



Follow Emma J. Wells on Twitter:

@Emma_J_Wells

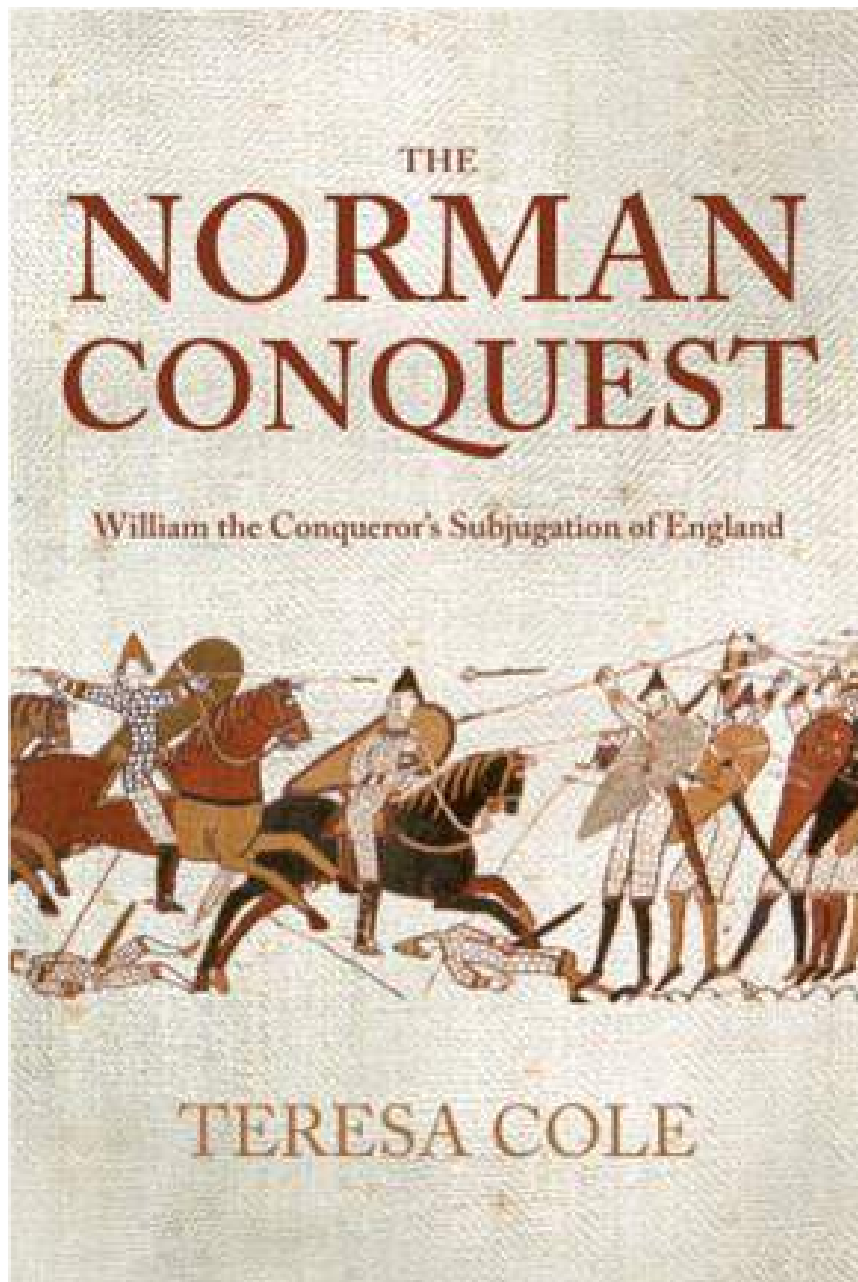
For more information about Emma J. Well's work, please visit: **emmajwells.com**

Left: Author Emma J. Wells. Photo courtesy of Emma J. Wells.

Book Excerpt

The Norman Conquest: William the Conqueror's Subjugation of England

By Teresa Cole



Author Teresa Cole looks at the origins, course and outcomes of William the Conqueror's conquest of England 1051-1087. The book has been published to coincide with the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings on October 14, 2016. English Heritage is planning many events this weekend to celebrate this historic event.

Book Excerpt



A segment of the Bayeux Tapestry depicting Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, rallying Duke William's troops during the Battle of Hastings in 1066 (Wikipedia).

In that fateful year of 1066 three kings ruled England in succession. One was a saint, one a soldier and one a Frenchman. Tradition tells us the conquest of England by the powerful Normans was inescapable, and suggests England benefited almost at once by closer links with Europe. New discoveries however, have thrown doubt on these long accepted truths. The Battle of Hastings itself has been re-assessed, its very site disputed, as too are the whereabouts of the mortal remains of the defeated King Harold. As for the kings themselves; was Edward the Confessor as saintly and William as dominant as they have been portrayed, and was Harold more than just the hinge on which history turned? Nine and a half centuries later it is appropriate to look again at the course and outcomes of the Norman Conquest of England, the genocide committed in northern England, the wholesale transfer of lands to Norman lords, and the Domesday Book designed to enable every last drop of taxation to be extracted from a subdued kingdom.

The book includes 40 colour illustrations and is also available in Kindle, Kobo and iBook formats.

Amberley Publishing is offering a **20% discount for Medievalists' readers** until November 30th! Head over to the **Amberley website**

The Norman Conquest: William the Conqueror's Subjugation of England by Teresa Cole The Battle of Hastings: October 1066 Chapter 8



The Bayeux Tapestry (Wikipedia)

William of Poitiers gives us a clear description of how William, down in the valley, organised his men. In the vanguard came the archers. Behind them were the heavily armed and armoured infantry, and to the rear the cavalry with William himself at their centre, from which position he could command the whole army. We are also told that the Normans among them filled the centre with the Breton mercenaries on their left commanded by Alan of Brittany, and the French, Flemish and others on the right under the command of Eustace of Boulogne, who had apparently decided to hitch his wagon to William's rising star.

Looking at the site today, standing below the abbey where re-constructions take place, it is easy to underestimate the actual slope of the battle field. However, on the day Harold's men would have been lining the very top of the hill where the abbey remains now stand and there is a marked difference in steepness at that point.

No doubt it took some time to get everyone in place. William of Jumièges records that the battle began at the third hour of the day, that is at 9 a.m. A bizarre little flourish is added by Poitiers who declares that, just as it is for the prosecution to the



*Re-enactors at the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings 950th, at Battle Abbey.
(Photo by Medievalists.net)*

The first attack was by the archers, advancing up the slope to discharge their weapons. Fired at that angle, though, they would have had little effect, either sticking in shields or passing overhead. In return the English hurled down on them javelins, axes and miscellaneous other missiles so that the archers were forced to retreat. The heavy infantry tried next but they could make no headway against the packed shield wall, and to save the situation William had to send in his cavalry. Many of these rode close up the hill to hurl their javelins, the usual form of attack and that depicted on the Tapestry. Others went even closer, using their swords to hack at the men in the shield wall. William of Poitiers acknowledges that at this stage the advantage was all on the English side, as they 'successfully repulsed those who were engaging them at close quarters,' while 'their weapons found easy passage through the shields and armour of their enemies'.

It was rare for medieval battles to last much over an hour. By that time some weakening of one side or the other usually proved decisive and at Hastings, too, there was just such a weakening. 'Panic-stricken by the violence of the assault,' says Poitiers, the infantry and Breton knights on the left wing fell back, causing their panic to spread along the line so that 'the whole army of the duke was in danger of retreat'. The alarm was fuelled by a sudden rumour that William was slain and in a moment the retreat could have become headlong flight.

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Pepper, Pig and Fewer Bodily Emissions – How the Norman Conquest Changed England's Eating Habits

by Ben Jervis, Elizabeth Craig-Atkins, Fiona Whelan, & Richard Madgwick



Re-creating Anglo-Saxon cookfires and camp life at the 950th Battle of Hastings. (Photo by Medievalists.net)

When we think about the archaeology of the Norman conquest it is usually castles, battlefields and cathedrals that spring to mind. But what can archaeology tell us about the impact on everyday life?

Food is central to all of our lives and the foods that we eat and the dishes that we prepare are closely related to both our economy and culture. By studying how food consumption changes in the 11th century, therefore, we might be able to better understand the long-term implications of the conquest on everyday life.

Archaeological research undertaken by Naomi Sykes a decade ago provided the first clues that food culture may have been changed by the Norman Conquest. Through studying the animal bones discarded on pre and post-conquest sites, she observed an increase in the consumption of pig, chicken and wild animals. These changes were most pronounced on elite sites, such as castles, and suggest that the incoming Norman aristocracy brought new tastes with them, mirroring consumption at similar sites in Normandy.

These changes in meat consumption might be associated with the development of a distinctive Anglo-Norman elite culture as influences from England and France mixed, and **studies of architecture** suggest that ideas moved in both directions across the channel. The zone of Norman influence extended into Italy and the island of Sicily and it is these links that might be reflected in the consumption of condiments which were not prevalent in Anglo-Saxon England, particularly black pepper. **Analysis** by archaeobotanist Alexandra Livarda shows that these changes, like the changes in meat consumption, are most closely associated with towns, particularly large ports such as London, and elite sites.

The flavours of conquest

The **archaeological evidence** therefore suggests the emergence of an elite food culture in which different meats were being cooked and prepared with new flavourings. A 12th-century text, the **Urbanus Magnus**, provides some insights into how these foodstuffs were combined, suggesting specific flavour combinations such as serving fish with pepper, perhaps to elevate a humble foodstuff associated with pious fasting to a meal worthy of the elite table, and matching beef and pork with garlic and wildfowl with a cumin sauce.

Urbanus Magnus is a didactic text which instructs on morals and manners in order to regulate how people should behave in the context of an elite household and the codification of these food pairings supports the idea of a new and emerging upper-class food culture.

It also provides information about behaviour during dining. It emphasises the need to respect social hierarchy and to exercise restraint in eating, gesture, speech and bodily emissions. It is tempting to contrast this behaviour with the bawdy behaviour that we might associate with an Anglo-Saxon culture, which was focused on drinking. It is a contrast well illustrated in two dining scenes on the Bayeux Tapestry:



Bayeux Tapestry depicting Norman dining. (Wikipedia)

The Saxon court drinking from horns, while William the Conqueror's sits at the table in a scene evoking depictions of the Last Supper. We must remember, however, that the tapestry is an artefact produced by victors who may have wished to cast their predecessors as uncultured and barbaric.

However, identifying a new elite food culture adds little to our understanding of the impact of the conquest on the everyday lives of the majority of the population. The animal bone evidence suggests that there was little change in the species consumed by everyday folk, with proportions of the main domesticated animals (cattle, sheep and pig) from ordinary domestic sites staying relatively stable. However, we don't know whether the extent to which meat contributed to the diet increased or decreased with the conquest. The analysis of **cooking pots from Southampton**, a major port in the south of England, suggests that new ways of cooking, perhaps inspired by French influences in the town, developed among this cosmopolitan community. But we do not yet know if this was also the case at inland settlements.

Uncovering Clues

In order to address some of these questions, our research team is using a range of scientific techniques to assess the impact of the conquest on ordinary households, focusing on the city of Oxford as a case study, **focusing on the city of Oxford as a case study.**

Situated on the River Thames, and at the boundary between areas of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian influences, Oxford offers an example of a cultural melting pot where the influence of the conquest might be particularly visible.

Our analysis focuses on two sources of evidence from before and after the conquest: human remains and pottery used for cooking. Analysis of the human remains will help us to understand the impact of the conquest on dietary health. Do we, for example, see an increase in diseases associated with malnutrition such as rickets or conditions associated with particular food groups, such as dental caries which are caused by consumption of carbohydrates, particularly sugars?

Stable isotope analysis, a way of studying the chemical composition of bone, allows us to explore the contribution of meat, fish and plant-based foodstuffs to diet. For the first time, we will be able to understand whether we are really seeing the continuity in diet suggested by the animal bone evidence.

Whereas bulk isotope analysis of bone typically allows us to view an average of diet over a period of years immediately prior to death, a new technique, **incremental dental isotope analysis** gives us a detailed profile from which short term changes in diet and also health can be identified. By taking multiple samples from teeth we can see how diet changed over the period of time in childhood and adolescence when the adult teeth were developing. This technique will be particularly powerful in both understanding what was eaten in early life. The bulk and incremental techniques, in combination, can tell us about nutrition throughout people's lives.

There is little visible change in the types of pottery used in cooking before and after the conquest, but we can again turn to science to understand the foodstuffs cooked in them through the **analysis of absorbed food residues**. Not only can we see what types of food were consumed, but also how they were mixed together. This will allow us to understand, for the first time, the impact of conquest on the dishes prepared by the people of Anglo-Norman England.

A key question to be resolved is whether the conquest stimulated change or accelerated processes that were already taking place. We know, for example, that the **consumption of cod increased dramatically** around 1000AD, probably due to increasing urbanisation fuelling demand. Other processes, such as the dividing of the landscape into manors, once associated by some with the conquest, can also now conclusively be shown to have already begun in the Anglo-Saxon period.

It is only by resolving whether changes in diet and other areas of everyday life were a part of a similar longer term processes, or were sudden developments, that we can truly understand the implications of conquest for everyday life in England.

This article originally appeared in *The Conversation*.

Mystery of the Medieval Swords to be featured on *Medieval Dead*



York archaeologist to star in new series of *Medieval Dead*: A battlefield archaeologist from the University of York has helped shed new light on the so called Swords of Castillon – a batch of medieval weapons discovered in a river in France.

Tim Sutherland, an international expert in conflict archaeology, teamed up with Sheffield-based documentary producer Jeremy Freeston to investigate the story behind the swords. The weapons, discovered in the River Dordogne in France in the 1970s, have intrigued historians and collectors for decades.

Were they used at the Battle of Castillon in 1453? And how did they end up on the bottom of a river?

The intriguing story is just one of six featured in the documentary series *Medieval Dead*, now in its third series and which is broadcast on Tuesday 18 October at 7pm on Yesterday.

The University of York has worked with Dragonshead Productions Limited on the previous two series, which blends medieval history with archaeology and forensic research.

The current series was filmed on location in the UK, France, Italy, San Marino, Israel, Switzerland and Ireland.

Tim Sutherland said: "These swords have been the star exhibits whenever they come up for auction in prestige antique salerooms.

"They appeared on the market in the 1970s and we always knew there was a cracking story to tell. Jeremy used real detective work and painstaking research, talking to auction houses and dealers, to get the full picture of what happened.

"The most likely explanation is they were on a boat or barge that sunk on the Dordogne, probably stored in a huge barrel.

"We used some brilliant archaeology to investigate the story and establish the truth behind the rumours and myths."

Another episode explores the

archaeology of the crusader castle which was captured and destroyed by Saladin in 1179AD. If it had been completed it would have been the largest crusader fortress in the Holy Land.

In another programme the team visit Carl Wark, an enigmatic stone enclosure in the Peak District, Derbyshire.

The programme follows the story of Carl Wark's excavation in 1950 and come to some unexpected evidence of the site's use by armed forces in times much more recent than the Anglo Saxon period.

The series was written and directed by Jeremy Freeston, one of the UK's most experienced history and specialist factual filmmakers, a veteran of C4's *Secrets of the Dead* (*Gladiatrix*, *Murder at Stonehenge*) and Granada TV's *Battlefield Detectives* (*Massacre at Waterloo*, *Charge of the Light Brigade*, *Stalingrad*) and *Rescue Emergency* (*Iranian Embassy Siege*, *The Brighton Bombing*).

Further information:

<http://yesterday.uktv.co.uk/shows/medieval-dead/episodes/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usQ3vRyxBP8>

<http://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/>

On Twitter: @uniofyork

Migraines were taken more seriously in medieval times – where did we go wrong?

By Katherine Foxhall

"It feels as if there is hammering and pounding in the head. Sound or talking is unbearable, as is light or glare. The pain arises from hot, choleric fumes, together with windiness. And so one feels piercing, burning and ringing."

Have you ever experienced a migraine? If so, perhaps you recognise this quote (included above). Such a precise explanation of the pain and disorientation experienced during a migraine might have been written yesterday. In fact, it comes from an encyclopedia, compiled by the Franciscan monk Bartholomaeus Anglicus (Bartholomew the Englishman), in the 13th century. There aren't many ailments that have maintained so clear a course over so many centuries. And what's more, looking at the history of migraines reveals that the ailment was actually taken more seriously in the past, something we can learn a lot from today.

Hemicrania deciphered

We can pinpoint the beginning of the

history of migraine as a named disorder to Galen (c. 129 – c. 216/17 CE), the most famous philosopher and physician in the Roman Empire. Galen set migraine, or *hemicrania* as he termed it, apart from other types of headache: as a painful disorder affecting only half the head, caused by the ascent of vapours from the stomach that were excessive, too hot, or too cold.

The 12th-century text of *Causae et Curae*, which scholars generally accept as the work of the the celebrated

German abbess Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), gave a compelling explanation of why migraine seized only half the brain at a time: this was a bodily force so powerful, that if it seized the whole head, the pain would be unendurable.

This article was originally published by The Conversation.



Although Galen's writings were lost with the fall of the Roman Empire, Galen's term, *hemicrania*, persisted, being adapted and adopted into various languages over the centuries. For example, in Middle English, we find *emigranea* and in medieval Wales the term *migran*.

William Dunbar, writing in Middle Scots, used the term *magryme* in his poem describing the physical pain of migraine as being like an arrow piercing his brow, a pain so bad that he couldn't look at the light. Dunbar also captured the migraine aftermath, the "postdrome" that came with the new morning, when he sat down to write but was unable to find any words. His head "dulled in dullness", his body was unrefreshed, his spirit asleep. Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, a wealth of

recipe collections suggest a sophisticated general knowledge about this disorder. For example, Jane Jackson's recipe book, dating from 1642, gives six separate recipes for "Migrim in the Head", requiring various amounts of effort to produce. The simpler remedies could be made in a few minutes from common garden ingredients (mix houseleek and earthworms with flour, spread it on a cloth and bind to the forehead), but the most complex concoction required equipment, planning and financial outlay to produce a medicine that would last 20 years.

As well as taking migraine seriously, Jackson's recipe book suggests that people of the 17th century

appreciated that migraine could occur on a spectrum, from the occasional acute attack to a chronic illness that could last for several days.

Losing legitimacy

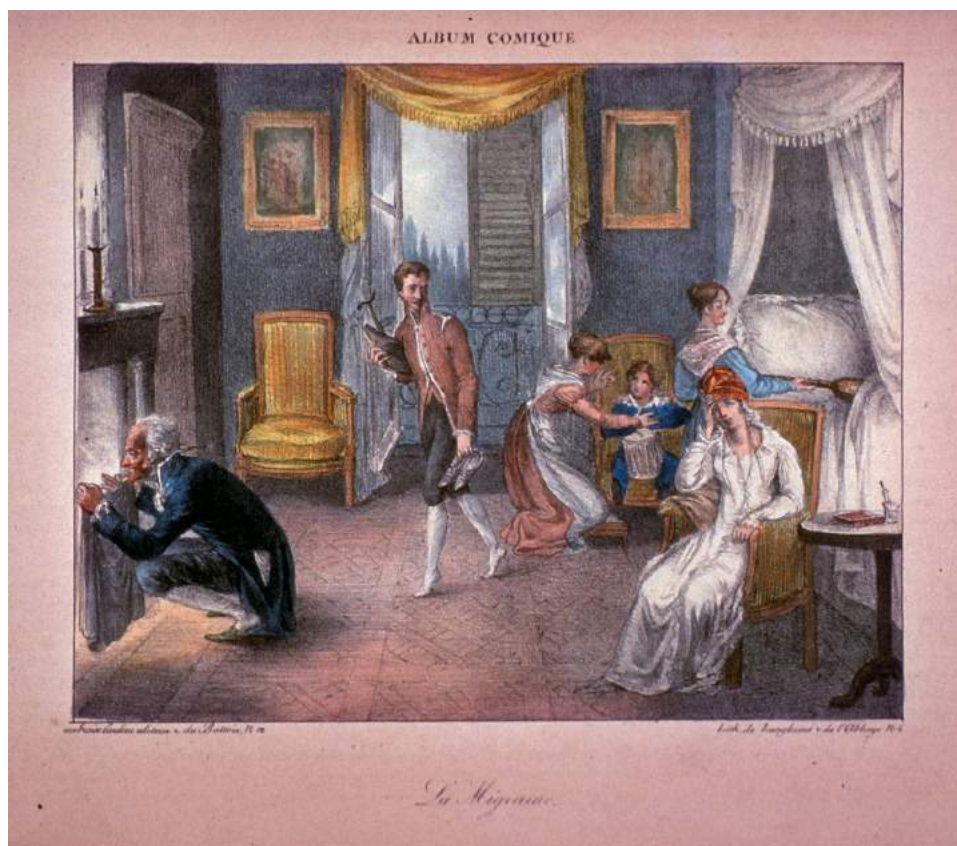
These historical descriptions of migraine reveal that we have lost something. In all of the sources from the medieval and early modern period that I have come across during the five years I have spent tracing the history of migraine, one thing is clear: these people took migraine seriously.

This is important. Migraine is now accepted as a "real" disorder which affects around one in seven people, two-thirds of whom are women, and is recognised by the WHO as the sixth

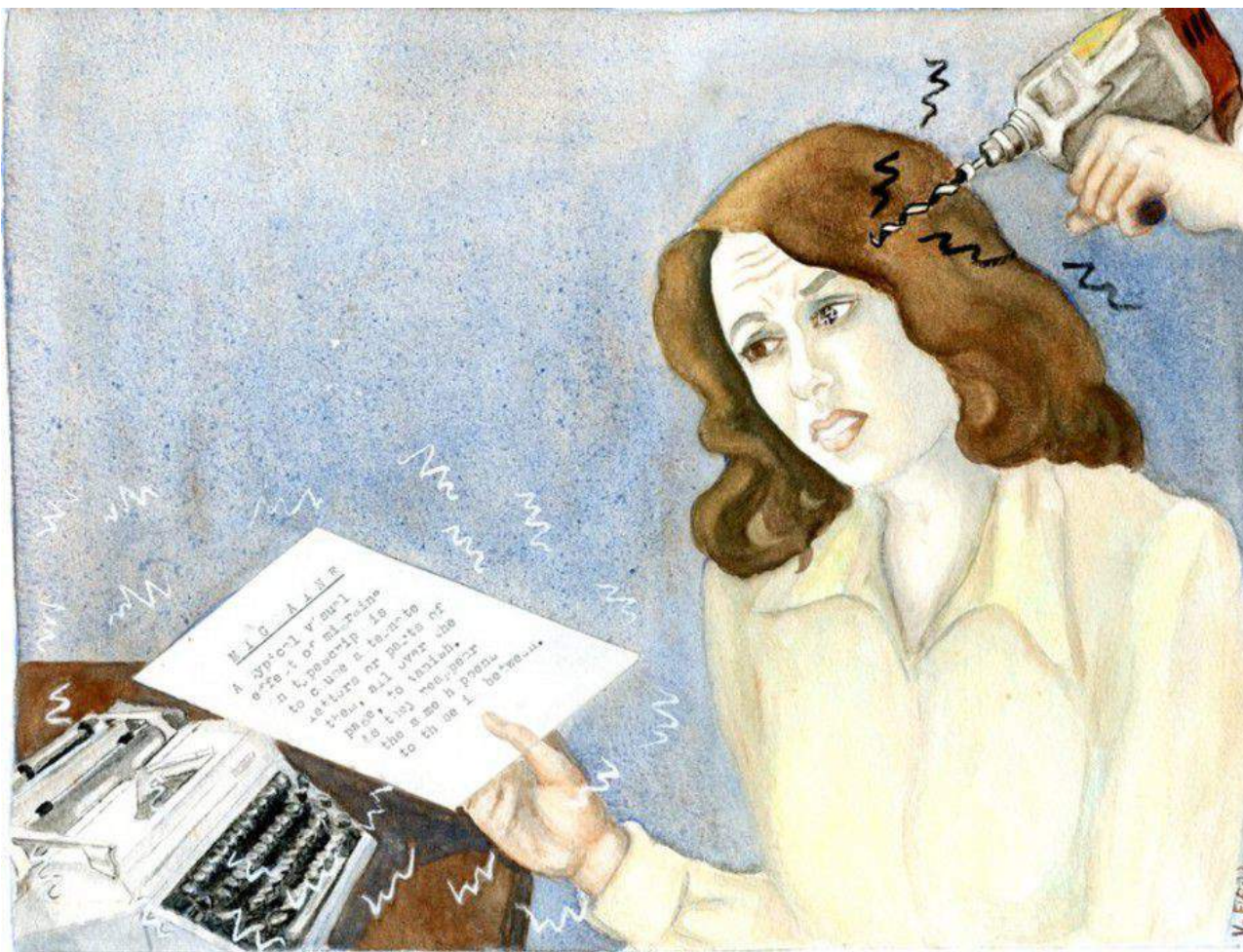
highest cause worldwide of years lost due to disability (YLD). But despite this, it (along with other headache disorders) is nevertheless chronically under-funded, its sufferers often ignored, dismissed or blamed, and their ailments under-diagnosed and under-treated. In her recent book *Not Tonight*, the sociologist Joanna Kempner has described this situation as migraine's "legitimacy deficit". So what has happened? Historical sources suggest that the question we need to ask is not how we can begin to give migraine the legitimacy it needs, but when and why we stopped taking it seriously in the first place. Over the course of the 18th century, something changed, as migraine became the stuff of ridicule. In May 1782, for instance, a flamboyant character graced the King's Theatre

Masquerade in London, and introduced himself to the gathering as "Le Sieur Francois de Migraine, Docteur en Medicine". And in the summer heat of August 1787, the *General Evening Post* described how "half Paris had the migraine, and no lady of fashion could be prevailed upon to quit her boudoir". Migraine was becoming something to joke about, a complaint that affected a particular kind of person, usually female.

By the 19th century, physicians routinely talked of young female "martyrs", and of sick headache and megrim as a disorder of "mothers in the lower classes of life" whose minds and bodies had been weakened by daily toil, disturbed sleep, insufficient nourishment and constant lactation.



La Migraine, 1823. Migraine Action.



Migraine Action

During the 1980s, many migraine sufferers took the opportunity to share their experiences of migraine by entering four international art competitions. The resulting collection, which includes over 500 pieces, reveals the powerful effect migraine has on people's lives. Perhaps most striking is the frequency with which motifs such as arrows, hammering, pounding, light, glare and disorientation appear in this art – seemingly as familiar to sufferers today as they were to the medieval poets and physicians who discussed this disorder nearly 1,000 years ago. For the first time, this collection is the subject of a dedicated website, which has now been launched by the charity Migraine Action as part of Migraine

Awareness Week.

These paintings, backing up a thousand years of historical sources, make it clear that migraine is more than just a headache. It needs to be taken as seriously now as it was by Galen.

Katherine Foxhall is Lecturer in History at the University of Leicester. She received funding from the Wellcome Trust (Grant No. 091650/Z/10/Z) for her research into the history of migraine. She collaborated with Migraine Action to develop the Migraine Art Collection website, with funding from the University of Leicester Impact Award. Follow her on Twitter @historikat.

English: The Mad and Beautiful Platypus of World Languages by Danièle Cybulskie



Happy platypus! Image from WikiCommons.

If you're on Twitter, you may have seen that on the anniversary of the Battle of Hastings, I mentioned that it was this battle that was the reason English became the "mad and beautiful platypus of world languages that it is". If I was to liken English to anything on Earth, it would be a platypus: half one creature, half another, and somehow an entirely different, wonderful animal that is more than the sum of its parts.

English was an entire, complete language before the Battle of Hastings; one that is only distantly recognizable today (more so if it's read aloud). Old English (also known as Anglo-Saxon) has Germanic

language roots which governed its rules – rules which turned verbs like "bring" into "brought" more often than "close" into "closed." It had complicated rules about how to match up parts of speech depending on how they related to each other (it used cases like Latin, for those who've taken Latin).

Old English squished words together to make more descriptive words, like German does, instead of stringing together so many separate adjectives. It gave us beautiful poetry that worked with alliteration (the similarity of the beginnings of words) rather than rhyme.

In 1066 CE, the Normans brought French over, and imposed it on the people as the new language of the overlords. Norman French was a completely different animal from Old English: French is a romance language derived from Latin, meaning that it comes from a totally different language family with totally different rules.

The nobility and clergy would have made this linguistic transition fairly smoothly – the educated classes spoke Latin across medieval Europe, so they didn't need to bridge a linguistic gap – but the common people faced the challenge of learning a completely foreign tongue, at least well enough to get by.

It's possible that, had the Normans wanted to, they could have phased out English by requiring people to learn French instead over generations, but this isn't what happened. Instead, English adapted. As the years went on, English integrated Norman words into itself, and

even changed how many verbs were usually conjugated in order to smooth things out.

At the same time, old words were retained instead of replaced, giving English a huge range of words to describe similar things. For example, English speakers can call one who steals things a thief, robber, bandit, burglar, pilferer, or something else entirely, depending on what's been stolen.

The dual Anglo-French nature of English is still evident in the everyday words we use, and it still shows traces of the social stratification of Norman ruler over Saxon peasant. For example, "house" has Germanic (Anglo-Saxon, peasant) origins, but "mansion" has French roots. We all know which one the rich people live in. Likewise, "sheep", the creature that would live in the peasant hovel, is Germanic, but "mutton", the form of the animal that's served up at dinner, is French.



An overview of the Anglo-Norman Period

It's the same with "swine" and "pork". Some languages don't differentiate between animal and food, but English can be very distinctive on this point. The fact that "meal" is Anglo-Saxon but "feast" is French is social, not coincidental.

When you take two completely different languages from two completely different linguistic families and mix them together, what turns out is interesting enough, but on top of both Anglo-Saxon and French, English is also heavily influenced by Latin. Often, Latinate English words can be found in the areas which were governed by the Latin-speaking, educated people in the Middle Ages; that is, the law and administration. "Administration", actually, is a case in point. "Affidavit", "interim", "prosecute", and "populous" are

all Latinate words that have woven themselves into the English language. Occasionally, we have Greek words, too, like "platypus."

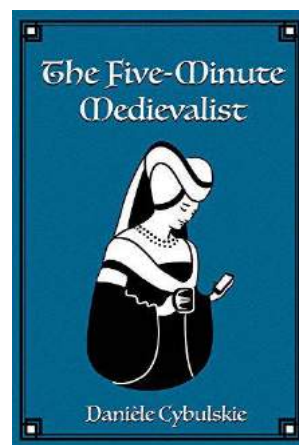
A platypus is a truly unlikely creature, much maligned even though it is perfectly amazing and well-suited to its purposes. So, too, has English been considered a mongrel language, much ridiculed for its purported lack of sophistication, and yet amazingly functional with its huge vocabulary and potential for expansion. English is mad and beautiful, and beloved by the people who know it. It's a lovable hybrid like a platypus is, and thanks to the Norman Conquest, will be impossible to spell for generations to come.



Beautifully illustrated in this conceptual film, here is one theoretical example of the conflicts which the Anglo-Normans may have experienced. (We couldn't resist the chance to throw in a little Monty Python...)

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Travel Tips

Bayeux, France

The charming town of Bayeux in the Calvados department of Normandy is host to one of the most well-known medieval items: the Bayeux Tapestry. While this medieval art work brings in a high number of tourists, travelers with medieval interests will also enjoy visiting the cathedral and ambling around the well-preserved city centre. The cathedral was dedicated in 1077 by William's half-brother Odo. The city purchased a municipal charter under the reign of Richard the Lionheart in the 12th century. Much of the current city is preserved from the 14-15th centuries and it was an important strategic location for many centuries, exchanging sides during the Hundred Years' War and the first city to be liberated in the Battle of Normandy. The cathedral was constructed slowly between the 12-19th century, with most of the building dating from the 15th century and showing excellent examples of French Gothic architecture. The crypt has conserved murals and high-quality medieval frescoes, and the stained glass is mixed with modern art installations and photos. Now, it's a delightful medieval warren, with stone houses, cobbled narrow streets, and plenty of bistros pouring Normandy's signature ciders. After visiting the tapestry museum and cathedral, find a café in a quiet place and have a drink while you drink in the medieval town of Bayeux! Oh, and no dogs or ice cream in the Cathedral!



Photos by D. Trynoski for Medievalists.net.

This page: Medieval timber-frame building and one of the cathedral crypt paintings. Opposite page top-bottom: Bayeux Cathedral with Gothic architecture, the Nave, Crypt, Tapestry museum, Cathedral West Facade.



THE BATTLE OVER TRIGGER WARNINGS: CONFLICT HISTORY PROFESSOR SAYS THEY'RE NECESSARY

by Tony Pollard



Conflict archaeology is disturbing - students need to be prepared.

Photo by ChameleonsEye/Shutterstock.com

This semester, I'm teaching my history undergraduates about the Falklands War. As I prepared for one recent class, I gathered examples from my own collection of British tabloid newspapers from 1982 as a primary source. I was however concerned about six copies of the Daily Star, which included photos of topless women. Determined not to offend my students or prompt a complaint, my first inclination was to remove the pages, but I did not want to censor content, particularly as some of these images reflected on the jingoistic coverage of the war – showing models sporting a sailor's cap or toting a rifle.

I settled for a trigger warning at the beginning of the session: "If you are going to be upset by images of semi-naked women don't look at the Daily Star, pick one of the other papers." Some chose to look at it, some didn't.

It was all very light-hearted, and made my previous worries seem unwarranted. But would it have passed so well without the trigger warning? Possibly not. As it was, I had the opportunity to do the right thing and allowed the students to make their own decisions.

We had barely finished flicking through those old newspapers when today's press once again got exercised about that old chestnut: political correctness gone mad. A trigger warning given by one of my colleagues, Gabriel Moshenska, an archaeologist at University College London, was lambasted in articles in the Daily Mail and The Spectator. Like me, he teaches conflict archaeology, which sheds light on human experience through the study of the physical remains of past wars and other forms of conflict. Also like me, he provides a trigger warning before classes with potentially upsetting content, telling students they can step outside if they wish to. He is right to do so.

Mass graves are traumatic

Archaeology is not just about old bones. There are times when skin, hair and fluids are involved, and yes, even old bones can heighten stress levels. I think back to the mass graves of Australian soldiers buried by the Germans at Fromelles in 1916. My team and I located and evaluated them on behalf of the Australian

government and although the remains were skeletal they were still upsetting, with many of them exhibiting the trauma caused by a machine gun burst or grenade blast. Even now when I lecture about the project, it's hard not to get a little choked up about those young men who died such brutal deaths.

This doesn't make me or my students a wuss or mean that I need to man up – it makes me a human being and one sensitive enough to deal with the remains of the dead in a professional and respectful manner.

Some of the material I refer to in my classes is disturbing, with images of the dead appearing regularly. Some of it is material that disturbed me when I first encountered it, and it might well disturb my students. Students are a diverse group, and some of them might have suffered domestic abuse, violent attack or trauma in war – and in some of my classes I know that they have. In these cases, such exposure might trigger flash backs or aggravate recently suppressed trauma. It is only common sense to provide these individuals, and those who just can't stomach images of dead bodies in shallow graves, with the option to walk out of the classroom.

As part of the Masters course on conflict archaeology and heritage at Glasgow University we present examples from forensic archaeology, at times using examples from crime scene cases we have worked on, some of them very unpleasant. It would be totally irresponsible for us not to issue a trigger warning before the class – which would allow the student to leave the room and catch up on course content in a manner more comfortable to them. Responses to this material are difficult to gauge and the suggestion that students shouldn't have chosen the subject in the first place fails to accommodate the complex nature of individual responses, which might even fluctuate from one day to another.

Trigger warnings have their place

For some time now, the British press has been looking aghast at the situation on university campuses in the US, where trigger warnings and safe spaces have become common place. Now that the trend has crossed the pond there is greater urgency and indignation that the dreaded "PC

brigade" are being molly-coddled by left-leaning academics. In some areas there is perhaps cause for concern, and most definitely debate, if it panders to one group over another prompting an air-brushing of history or threatens freedom of expression. For example, Oriel College at the University of Oxford will not remove a statue of the 19th-century imperialist Cecil Rhodes despite pleas from some quarters that it caused upset. British universities have also experienced a wave of no-platforming of speakers likely to cause offence. But when it comes to teaching courses with graphic and traumatic content involving past atrocities and death, caution is a must. Do these same journalists get so agitated when a film on TV is preceded by a simple warning that it contains scenes of a sexual nature and graphic violence? I suspect not. It is my opinion that a trigger warning is a mutually satisfying arrangement between student and teacher, and I for one hope they are here to stay.

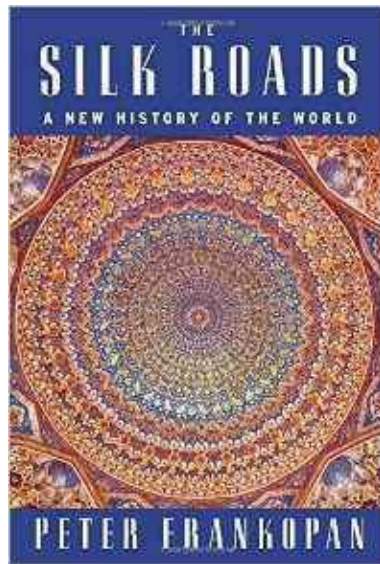
Dr. Tony Pollard is the Director of the Centre for Battlefield Archaeology and a Senior Lecturer in the History Subject at the University of Glasgow. Tony is convener of the MLitt in Battlefield and Conflict Archaeology run through the Centre for Battlefield Archaeology, the first MLitt course of its type. He has carried out battlefield and conflict related archaeological projects in the UK, mainland Europe, Africa and South America. Follow his adventures and excavations on Twitter @ProfTonyPollard.

This article first appeared on The Conversation.

Oxford Researcher's new publication inspires new character on 'Vikings'



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A new character in the popular TV series *Vikings* has been inspired by an Oxford University historian's research. Michael Hirst, creator of *Vikings*, read

The Silk Roads by Dr Peter Frankopan, Director of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research at the University of Oxford. He was inspired by the book to create a new character called Astrid, who will appear in the fifth series of the drama which is watched by

millions in the USA and Canada.

'Talk about academic impact!', says Dr Frankopan. 'There is nothing more exciting as a historian to know that things you've written are being read far and wide – and completely thrilling when they have are brought in to mainstream media.'

In *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World*, Dr Frankopan showed the importance of the east and the role it had in shaping modern Europe. It was a bestselling book, praised for shifting the centre of world history to the east.

He says: 'It is rather wonderful that Astrid, the new character who has been introduced in part thanks to *Silk Roads*, is going to show off some of the main themes of my book: the way the world is connected; the extent of cultural and commercial exchange across the spine of Asia; the sophistication of the east – and the role it had in shaping Europe.

'What used to be called 'The Dark Ages' in the west were nothing of the sort elsewhere. I'm so excited Michael Hirst is going to incorporate this.'

'I think it's terrific that TV series like *Vikings* work so hard to be accurate,' he says. 'I've been contacted in the past by those involved in the series to ensure that lines in Arabic and Berber are correct, so I am not surprised that those behind the show are on top of the latest scholarship in the field.'

Mr Hirst, who created the TV series, said in an interview with *Entertainment Weekly*: 'I've read this great book, called "The Silk Road," which was showing that in the Dark Ages, it might have been the Dark Ages to the western culture, but to the east, there was trade, cultural exchange. The Vikings were on Silk Road. So a character like Astrid, who appears to be slightly more modern? She is more modern.' -by Matt Pickles of Oxford News & Events
Vikings is screened by the HISTORY channel and it was renewed for a fifth series in March. Its season premiere will air in the United States on November 30, 2016.

The Silk Roads is published by Bloomsbury Publishing.



We know *Vikings* isn't perfect from a historian's point of view, but we commend Michael Hirst and the show runners for looking east this season! Get a glimpse of Astrid in this trailer for the next season, starting November 30 on the History Channel.

How did 4th Century Roman Coins End up in Japan?

by Kevin Butcher



Roman coins were discovered in Katsuren castle in Uruma, Okinawa, southwestern Japan. Image EPA/Uruma City Education Board

The recent discovery of Roman coins in controlled excavations of a castle in Japan prompted the inevitable question: how did they get there? Could Rome's fabled trading links have stretched as far as Okinawa? It's very unlikely.

Katsuren Castle in Okinawa Prefecture is said to have been occupied between the 12th to 15th centuries so the coins cannot represent commercial links between the castle's contemporaries and the Roman empire, which had fallen centuries before.

Other finds from the castle indicate trade links with China – so perhaps the coins arrived there as curios, indirectly through trade with China or South-East Asia.

So far the only published images of the finds show the obverse (the "heads" side) of the four Roman coins and of an Ottoman copper mangir coin with a clear Hijra date 1099, which corresponds to 1687 to 1688 in the common era.

Like the Roman coins, the Ottoman coin poses problems, because it was issued after the presumed abandonment of the castle in the 15th century.

The Roman coins are not so easy to identify from the obverses alone. The coin that features most frequently in the news reports appears to be a copper alloy coin of Constantius II (337-361AD), the son of Constantine the Great. The images of the other Roman coins are less clear, but all appear to be of roughly the same date, from about 320-370AD. If images of the reverses (the “tails” sides) of the coins were available it would be possible to date them more closely.

However, it is important to note that coins like the one of Constantius II remained in circulation for long after they were issued. In the eastern Roman empire there is evidence that such coins

may have continued in use up to the 6th century, some two centuries after they were made. So while it would be useful to be able to date the coins from Katsuren Castle more precisely, they do not necessarily indicate even indirect links between east Asia and Rome in the mid-4th century (although such indirect links are not altogether impossible).

Links with Asia

There are plenty of Roman coins in southern India and Sri Lanka that are evidence of direct links with the Roman world, and direct trade with these areas is not in doubt. Some recent research indicates the possibility that merchants from the Roman world could have been present in South-East Asia from at least the 2nd century of our era,



The coins found at Katsuren Castle in Okinawa, Japan. Image EPA/Uruma City Education Board



Roman gold coins excavated in Pudukottai, India dating from the era of Caligula and Nero. Image British Museum CC-BY.

,although the evidence is suggestive rather than concrete – an apparent increase in Roman knowledge of the geography of the region from the 2nd century; and the well-known story of a 2nd-century embassy (perhaps a group of merchants) travelling to China from Vietnam.

So could the coins have been transmitted to Japan via South-East Asia?

Archaeological evidence from the Isthmus of Kra on the Thai peninsula includes imported materials from Han China and the Roman empire, though these could have arrived indirectly through India. Gold pendants copying Roman gold coins were used in ancient Thailand and Vietnam, and a stone mould for casting such objects has been found in southern Thailand.

These may have been inspired by genuine Roman coins and Indian imitations of Roman coins. However, they imitate Roman gold coins of the first and second centuries – and none resembles any of the coins from Katsuren Castle. The only genuine Roman coin known so far from the peninsula is a 3rd-century coin of the Gallo-Roman usurper Victorinus (268-270AD) minted in Cologne in Germany, although another 3rd-century coin was reportedly found in Thailand in the 19th century. Roman coins from the 3rd and 4th centuries have been reported from a site in Cambodia, yet there is an apparent absence of such coins in southern China, suggesting that such coins rarely made it beyond the Gulf of Thailand.

Silk Road

A few Roman coins, and imitations of them, have been found in China, where they were probably used as ornaments and as burial goods. Yet these too are usually made of gold – and most are later in date (5th to 7th centuries). The majority are concentrated in northern China, and likely entered along the overland route known as the Silk Road. The fact that the Roman coins found at Katsuren Castle are small, 4th-century copper-alloy coins that were of low value in the Roman world, rather than high value silver or gold, is all the more puzzling. Such coins (and imitations of them) are found in India and Sri Lanka, and at some sites in central Asia, but it is hard to see how they would have travelled on directly from such places to Japan, though indirectly via South-East Asia – and perhaps at a much later date –

remains possible.

In the end, more detailed study of the other finds from the archaeological contexts in which these coins were found will be necessary to understand how they ended up on the site of a medieval Japanese castle. For the moment it is probably wisest to resist notions of any direct links between Japan and Rome, and to regard them as objects that arrived at a later date.

Perhaps the coins are connected in some way to the influence of European traders in Japan in the 16th and 17th centuries – although the Ottoman coin dates to a period after European trade was restricted in Japan. However they arrived there, these coins appear to constitute the furthest-travelled Roman coins before the age of collectors and mass transport.

Professor Kevin Butcher graduated from the University of Bristol in 1983, and subsequently went on to study for a Ph.D at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, in the field of Roman numismatics. His first book, *Roman Provincial Coins*, was published in 1988; in the same year he joined the staff of the Department of Coins and Medals at the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge. In 2002 he became a full Professor, and joined Warwick in 2007, after a term as a Getty Villa Visiting Scholar in Los Angeles, California.

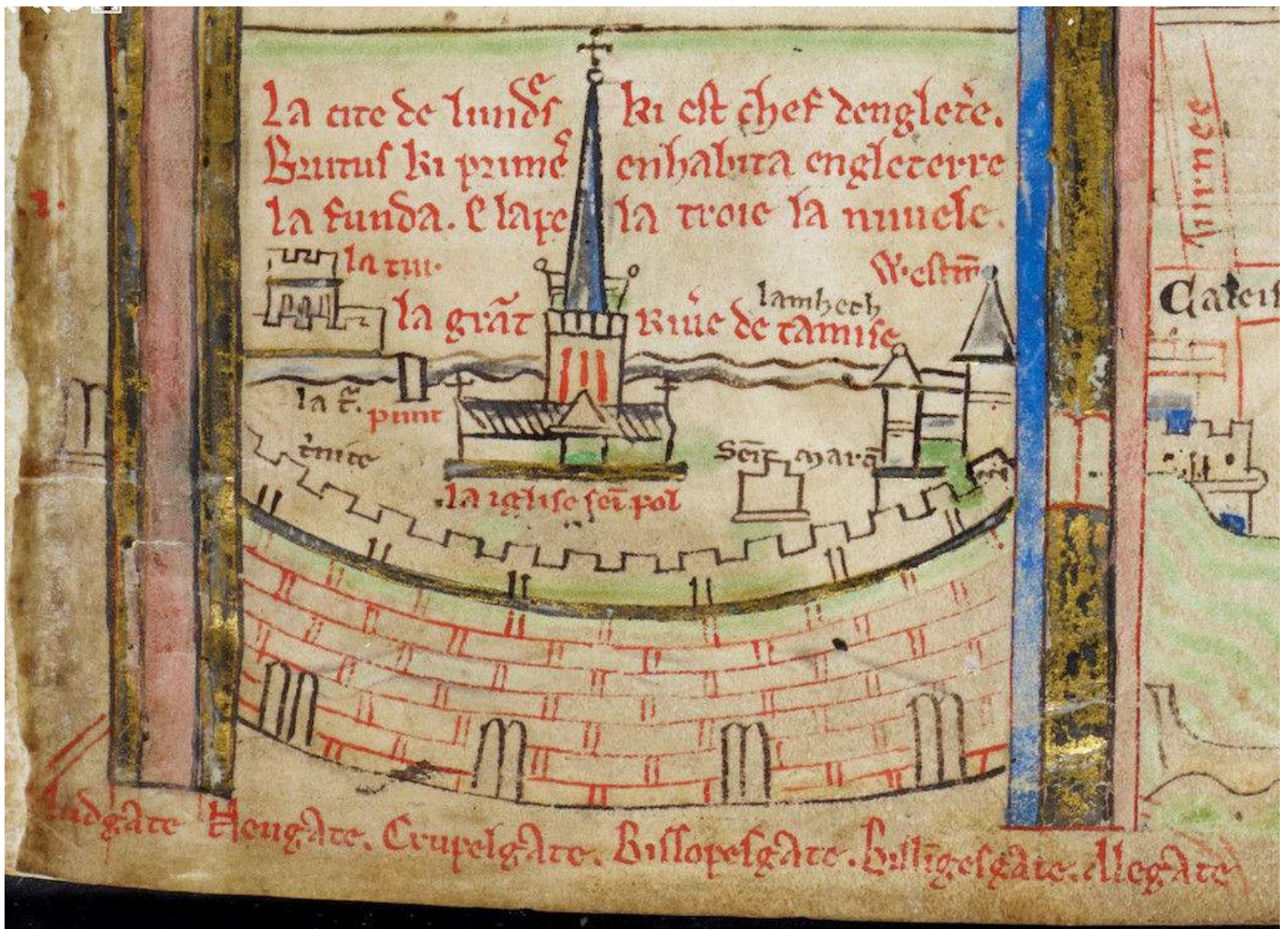
Professor Butcher has numerous video tutorials on Greek and Roman coins available online!

1390 AD:

London in the Late Middle Ages

By Sandra Alvarez

Last week, *we spoke with Dr. Matthew Green* about his new *History of London Course*. In this week's issue of Londinium, we take a peek into the first lecture of the series, a 'teaser' on Medieval London in 1390.



One of the earliest maps of London, by monk and cartographer, Matthew Paris, c.1252.

Sadly, little remains of Medieval London, just a few pieces such as bits of the medieval wall that linger near the **Museum of London**, or portions of the guildhall and several of the city's churches, but there is enough of the Middle Ages imprinted on the city to give you idea of what little was like in the late fourteenth century. Without giving too much away, here are a few interesting tidbits about the Medieval city that I took away from the course:

Population

London had a population of around 40,000 people. It would've been larger, and in fact, was smaller than Roman Londinium because it had been recently **ravaged by plague**. The city as we know it, was starting to grow out of its bounds but beyond Holborn, there wasn't much to be found.

Curfew

Medieval London was dangerous after dark. The city imposed a strict curfew: 8pm in summer, and 9pm in winter. People would come inside, put out their fires and stay off the streets. Anyone out after curfew was up assumed to be up to no good, and could be arrested...or worse.

The Smell

No surprise, London also stank. Horribly. There was a putrid stench emanating from the city, a nice mix of human excrement, offal festering in unswept alleyways, the stink from tallow candles, and an assortment of animal smells.



The tailors of London and their guild, c.1300-1500



Illustration of a cucking stool, mentioned in Piers Plowman in 1378. This is an 18th century chapbook reproduced in Chap-books of the eighteenth century by John Ashton (1834) (Wikipedia)

St. Paul's

In 1390, Gothic St. Paul's was the second tallest building in Christendom. It looked over London and you wouldn't get a building that tall in London again until the BT tower was built in the 1960s. This was the fourth iteration of the cathedral to have been built there and was supposedly built on the site of a temple of Diana from Roman times. At this time, as Covent Garden wouldn't exist for another two-hundred and sixty years so the area around St. Paul's was the place of commercial activity and socialization.

Poetic Justice

Cheapside was the 'High Street' of the Middle Ages, and busy thoroughfare. Not only was a shopping hub, it was also a favourite site for public shaming rituals. According to Green, 'Medieval people had a very sharp eye for poetic justice'. At this time, public shaming was effective because the city was smaller, more neighbourly, making it harder to melt into the background. Such notoriety would negatively affect your reputation and make life exceedingly difficult.

Commerce &

Wine was the most important commodity in Europe during this time and was primarily imported from Gascony. There were over 350 taverns in 14th century London, and many sold wine, but they didn't have effective means of storing it in airtight ways; it had to be drunk fairly quickly. Wine was enjoyed by lawyers, nobility, and the clergy. People were not really concerned where the grape had come from, and there were more than two colours of wine. There was it red, white, and black.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. The course is packed with information on the hustle and bustle of Medieval London. Next week, we will feature a teaser on Shakespearean London, when we look at bear baiting, tobacco 'smoking', and the rise of playhouses.

New classes have been announced starting every Tuesday, from **January 17th, 2017. REGISTER HERE**

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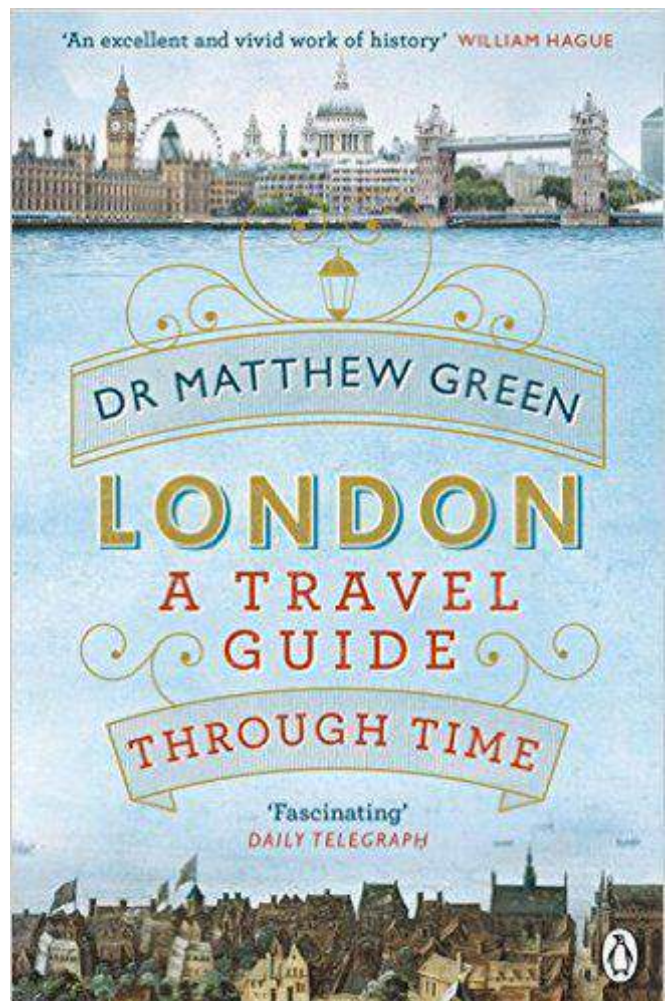
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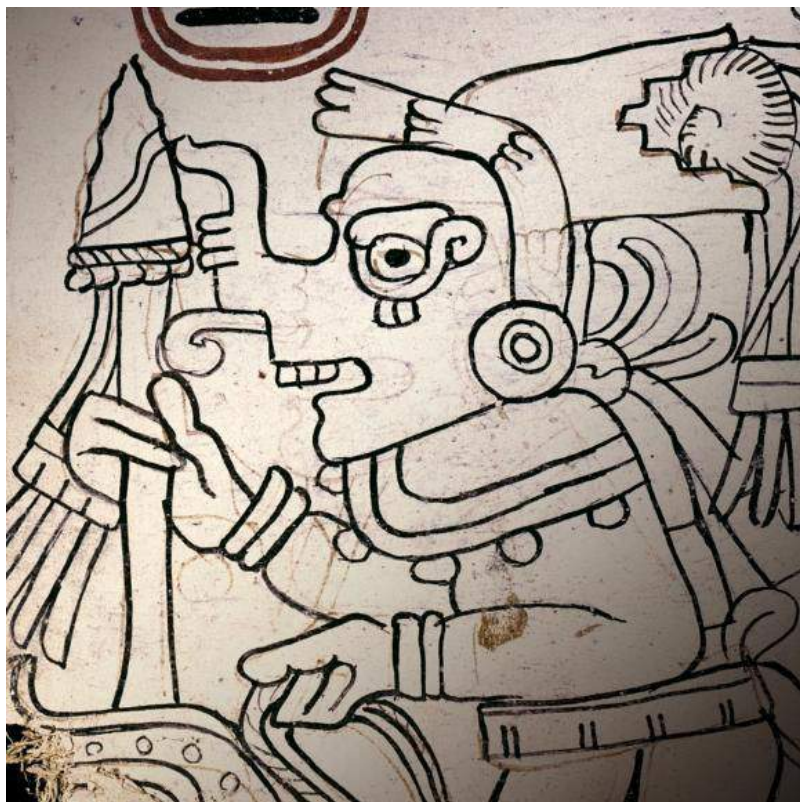
Dr. Matthew Green runs several fantastic historical tours, such as the **Medieval Wine Tour, Coffee House Tour, London in 7 Drinks**, and Chocolate House Tour.

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Real or Not Real?

13th Century Mayan Codex gets a close exam for authenticity



*A detail of an
image from page
4 of the Grolier
Codex with red
underpainting
visible.
Photo: Justin Kerr*

The Grolier Codex, an ancient document that is among the rarest books in the world, has been regarded with skepticism since it was reportedly unearthed by looters from a cave in Chiapas, Mexico, in the 1960s.

But a meticulous new study of the codex has yielded a startling conclusion: The codex is both genuine and likely the most ancient of all surviving manuscripts from ancient America. Stephen Houston, the Dupee Family Professor of Social Science and co-director of the Program in Early Cultures at Brown University, worked with Michael Coe, professor emeritus of archeology and anthropology at Yale and leader of the research team, along with Mary Miller of Yale and Karl Taube of the University of California-Riverside. They reviewed “all known research on the manuscript,” analyzing it “without regard to the politics, academic and otherwise, that have enveloped the Grolier,” the team wrote in its study “The Fourth Maya Codex.”

The paper, published in the journal *Maya Archaeology*, fills a special section of the publication and includes a lavish facsimile of the codex.

The study, Houston said, “is a confirmation that the manuscript, counter to some claims, is quite real. The manuscript was sitting unremarked in a basement of the

National Museum in Mexico City, and its history is cloaked in great drama. It was found in a cave in Mexico, and a wealthy Mexican collector, Josué Sáenz, had sent it abroad before its eventual return to the Mexican authorities.”

Controversial from the outset

For years, academics and specialists have argued about the legitimacy of the Grolier Codex, a legacy the authors trace in the paper. Some asserted that it must have been a forgery, speculating that modern forgers had enough knowledge of Maya writing and materials to create a fake codex at the time the Grolier came to light. The codex was reportedly found in the cave with a cache of six other items, including a small wooden mask and a sacrificial knife with a handle shaped like a clenched fist, the authors write. They add that although all the objects found with the codex have been proven authentic, the fact that looters, rather than archeologists, found the artifacts made specialists in the field reluctant to accept that the document was genuine.

Some ridiculed as fantastical Sáenz’s account of being contacted about the codex by two looters who took him—in an airplane whose compass was hidden

from view by a cloth—to a remote airstrip near Tortuguero, Mexico, to show him their discovery.

And there were questions, the authors note, about Sáenz's actions once he possessed the codex. Why did he ship it to the United States, where it was displayed in the spring of 1971 at New York City's Grolier Club, the private club and society of bibliophiles that gives the codex its name, rather than keep it in Mexico? As for the manuscript itself, it differed from authenticated codices in several marked ways, including its relative lack of hieroglyphic text and the prominence of its illustrations. "It became a kind of dogma that this was a fake," Houston continued. "We decided to return and look at it very carefully, to check criticisms one at a time. Now we are issuing a definitive facsimile of the book. There can't be the slightest doubt that the Grolier is genuine."

Digging In

Houston and his co-authors analyzed the origins of the manuscript, the nature of its style and iconography, the nature and meaning of its Venus tables, scientific data — including carbon dating — of the manuscript, and the craftsmanship of the codex, from the way the paper was made to the known practices of Maya painters.

Over the course of a 50-page

analysis, the authors take up the questions and criticisms leveled by scholars over the last 45 years and describe how the Grolier Codex differs from the three other known ancient Maya manuscripts but nonetheless joins their ranks.

Those codices, the Dresden, Madrid and Paris, all named for the cities in which they are now housed, were regarded from the start as genuine, the authors note. All of the codices have calendrical and astronomical elements that track the passage of time via heavenly bodies, assist priests with divination and inform ritualistic practice as well as decisions about such things as when to wage war.

Variations among the codices, as well as the assumption that because manuscripts such as the Dresden were authenticated first made them canonical, fed scholars' doubts about the Grolier, according to the study. The Grolier, however, was dated by radiocarbon and predates those codices, according to the authors.

The Grolier's composition, from its 13th-century amatl paper, to the thin red sketch lines underlying the paintings and the Maya blue pigments used in them, are fully persuasive, the authors assert. Houston and his

coauthors outline what a 20th century forger would have had to know or guess to create the Grolier, and the list is prohibitive: he or she would have to intuit the existence of and then perfectly render deities that had not been discovered in 1964, when any modern forgery would have to have been completed; correctly guess how to create Maya blue, which was not synthesized in a laboratory until Mexican conservation scientists did so in the 1980s; and have a wealth and range of resources at their fingertips that would, in some cases, require knowledge unavailable until recently.

Use and appearance of the Grolier Codex

The Grolier Codex is a fragment, consisting of 10 painted pages decorated with ritual Maya iconography and a calendar that charts the movement of the planet Venus. Mesoamerican peoples, Houston said, linked the perceived cycles of Venus to particular gods and believed that time was associated with deities.

The Venus calendars counted the number of days that lapsed between one heliacal rising of Venus and the next, or days when Venus, the morning star, appeared in the sky before the sun rose. This was important, the authors note, because measuring the planet's cycles could help Maya people

create ritual cycles based on astronomical phenomena. The gods depicted in the codex are described by Houston and his colleagues as "workaday gods, deities who must be invoked for the simplest of life's needs: sun, death, K'awiil — a lordly patron and personified lightning — even as they carry out the demands of the 'star' we call Venus. Dresden and Madrid both elucidate a wide range of Maya gods, but in Grolier, all is stripped down to fundamentals." The codex is also, according to the paper's authors, not a markedly beautiful book. "In my view, it isn't a high-end production," Houston said, "not one that would be used in the most literate royal court. The book is more closely focused on images and the meanings they convey."

The Grolier Codex, the team argues, is also a "predetermined rather than observational" guide, meaning it declares what "should occur rather than what could be seen through the variable cloud cover of eastern Mesoamerica. With its span of 104 years, the Grolier would have been usable for at least three generations of calendar priest or day-keeper," the authors write. That places the Grolier in a different tradition than the Dresden Codex,

which is known for its elaborate notations and calculations, and makes the Grolier suitable for a particular kind of readership, one of moderately high literacy. It may also have served an ethnically and linguistically mixed group, in part Maya, in part linked to the Toltec civilization centered on the ancient city of Tula in Central Mexico.

Beyond its useful life as a calendar, the Grolier Codex "retained its value as a sacred work, a desirable target for Spanish inquisitors intent on destroying such manuscripts," the authors wrote in the paper.

Created around the time when both Chichen Itza in Yucatán and Tula fell into decline, the codex

was created by a scribe working in "difficult times," wrote Houston and his co-authors. Despite his circumstances, the scribe "expressed aspects of weaponry with roots in the pre-classic era, simplified and captured Toltec elements that would be deployed by later artists of Oaxaca and Central Mexico" and did so in such a manner that "not a single detail fails to ring true."

"A reasoned weighing of evidence leaves only one possible conclusion: four intact Mayan codices survive from the Precolumbian period, and one of them," Houston and his colleagues wrote, "is the Grolier." ~*Provided by Brown University News*

Feature

Talk the Talk

Brann

"to burn, be on fire"

Old Norse

Verb



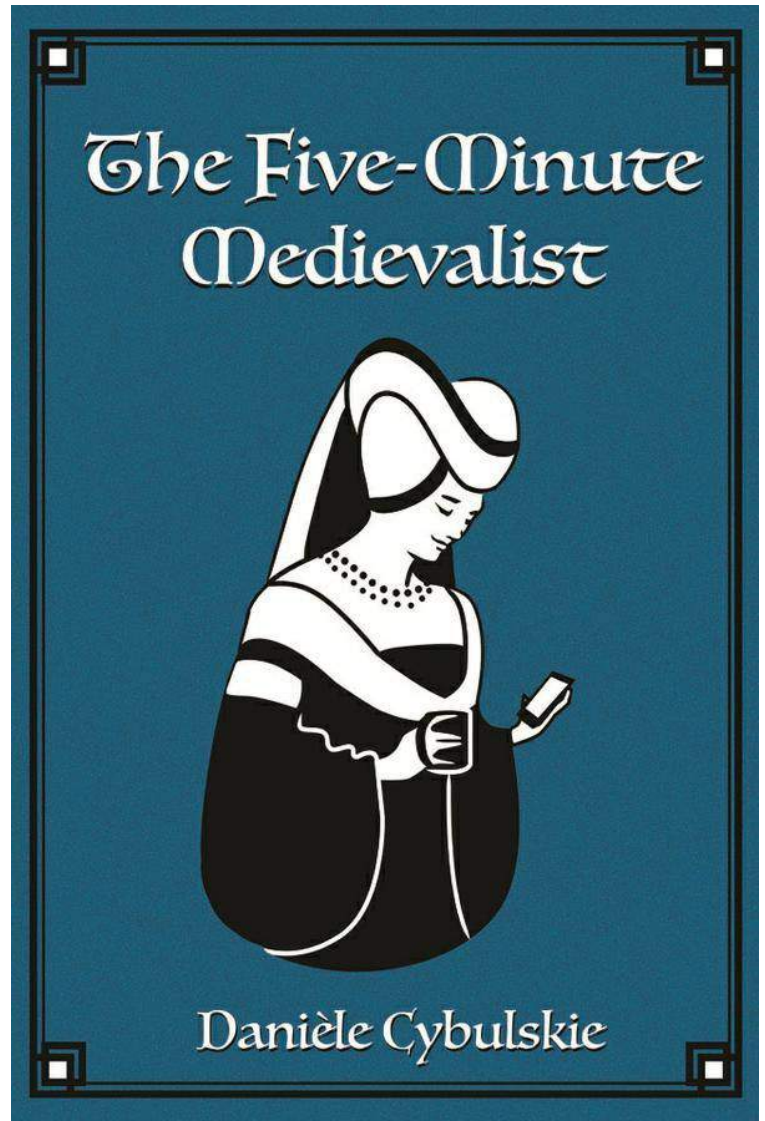
Burning at the stake.

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