



Number 74

May 2020

CANCELLATIONS

Owing to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the Society's Annual General Meeting on the 18th March was cancelled and the lecture series has been suspended until further notice. Further updates will be provided by email and future newsletters.

Message from the President

As you will know, the AGM and the lecture programme have been postponed for the foreseeable future. Hopefully things will be able to resume in the autumn although making predictions is fraught with difficulty.

However, on a positive note, our editor Dr Dockerill and reviews editor Dr Hobbs have been working extremely hard to ensure that the 2020 edition of *Transactions* will be with you later in the year. Many thanks to both of them.

We are all currently living through extraordinary times and having to cope with stringent restrictions on our day-to-day lives. On behalf of Council, stay safe and keep well.

– Dr Arline Wilson

Back issues of *Transactions*

At present the Society has two sets of back volumes of *Transactions*. Each set is available for purchase, subject to negotiation with the sellers. In both cases collection has to be arranged – either from Liverpool or from near

Northwich in Cheshire. Please contact membership@hslc.org.uk if you are interested in hearing more.

Set A: Volumes 111, 114-120, 122-131, 133-160 + Index (1959-2011). 49 volumes in total.

Set B: Volumes 98-102, 104, 106-110, 112, 115, 118-119, 127, 129-131, 133-167 + Index (1946-2018). 54 volumes in total.

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I welcome your suggestions and submissions (however small). My email address is: newsletter@hslc.org.uk

– James Evans



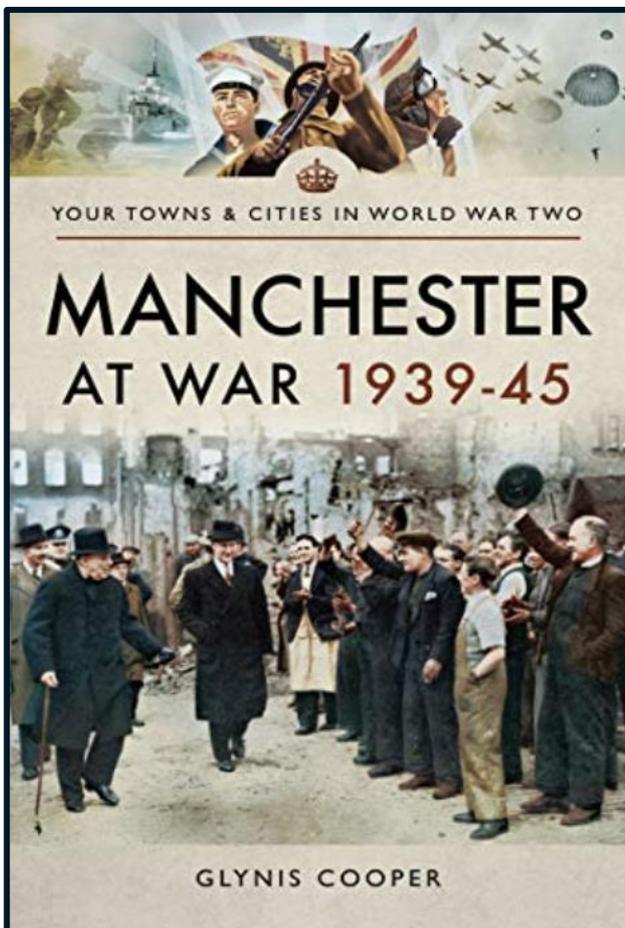
Book review: Cooper, G., *Manchester at War 1939-1945* (Barnsley, 2018)

ISBN: 9781473875753, £12.99 paperback

This book is part of a series entitled ‘Your Towns & Cities in World War Two’ and is written by a local author who incorporates memories of her own family into the text. The book is well researched and places Manchester in a national and international context, explaining how it was affected by the major events of this total war.

The baleful influence of World War One (only just over twenty years beforehand) is noted in the panic over gas masks given out to all in the early days of the war, although this threat never materialised. Rationing was introduced almost straight away, as was conscription.

It was late in 1940 when Manchester received its baptism of fire, tragically, over the Christmas period, when 10,000 incendiary bombs were dropped and ‘the city was like a nightmare recreation of Dante’s inferno’. Graphic images taken from Manchester Central Library show the damage inflicted.



The book covers all aspects of the war, such as the role of women and immigrant communities – including the internment of the city’s Italian population. It is a very good read.

– Roger Hull

Peterloo at 200: a look back on a Society-funded project

The Peterloo social media project, supported by a grant from the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, has been a big ‘history hit’.

Over the course of the year, news from 1819 was ‘live tweeted’ to mark the 200th anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre. More than 4,000 tweets were sent from @Live1819 account – bringing the events from that fateful year back to life as if they were occurring in the present.

Alongside coverage of political unrest, the account provided updates on other important stories regarding the birth of Queen Victoria, executions, transportation and the slave trade, a pioneering naval expedition to the Arctic, and even Regency dandies being taught how to ride early bicycles. Even if you don’t have a Twitter account, you can look at the tweet by clicking ‘@Live1819’ in the paragraph above.

Drawings from the graphic novelist Polyp (which can be found at Peterloo: Witnesses to a Massacre online) helped illustrate tweets of imagined news flashes on a breaking and bloody news story on the 16th August 1819.

I was stunned, and delighted, by the response to the project. The tweets were read more than 5.7 million times, with peaks in August, and in December as the government cracked down on dissent. So many people told me they thought it was an original way to reflect what was happening 200 years ago, and saw surprising echoes from the past in current events.

This live tweeting was never designed to make money, but the financial backing I got from the Society was critical in meeting research costs of the project, especially travel to archives and ensuring I could make extensive use of online resources like newspaper archives. I couldn’t have done it without the HSLC.

I am now exploring ways to use social media storytelling in history in an educational context and in print; potentially using crowd-funding, and completing the story of 1819 by tweeting key events in 1820, including the trial of Henry Hunt, and the Cato Street conspiracy.

– John Evans

Membership matters

Join the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire for an annual subscription of £20.00 (£26.00 for those resident outside the UK). Subscriptions run from the 1st January to the 31st December each year.

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 Yes, I would like to become a member of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire (which includes a subscription to *Transactions*)

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Membership: membership@hslc.org.uk

Book review: Holmes, N., *Echoes of the Merseyside Blitz* (Barnsley, 2017)

ISBN: 9781526702586, £14.99 paperback

This is the third book on this subject by this author and he gives the reason for this in the discovery of a new technique he found of 'merging the wartime photograph with a modern one taken on the same spot'.

In reality, this means a modern colour photograph of the street in question being superimposed on a black and white one of Second World War bomb damage.

The book is arranged chronologically and, as the title implies, covers Liverpool, South Sefton, and the Wirral with images taken from the respective libraries. There is a useful glossary of terms and, most importantly, an index. The images are really clear and the text concise and informative and this will be as much a reference work as one for reading from cover to cover.

– Roger Hull

Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire: Report of Council for the Year 2019

Registered charity 224825

The Society is one of the oldest in Lancashire, being founded in 1848. Its objective is to promote and celebrate the history of the Palatine counties of Lancashire and Cheshire. This is done through public lectures and meetings, a grant scheme for research, schools and publications, prizes for dissertations in higher education establishments, and the publication of an annual volume of *Transactions* which reflects current research on the two counties. The Society's business is handled by Council, which met three times in 2019.

Although there were some problems with the Liverpool University Press and membership subscriptions during the year the Editor, Dr Dockerill and his helpers managed to bring out the Society volume for 2019 in September.

The Society's website was transferred to Kualo as its new host, and though the Web Editor decided to step back from her position Dr Liz Stewart kindly agreed to take over. The Society owes a great debt of gratitude to the outgoing Web Editor Dr Pat Cox for her work

in maintaining the website and the Facebook page which has greatly increased the Society's standing. During the year Mr Brian Higgins agreed to take on the long vacant roll of Programme Secretary. Finding new officers is becoming increasingly difficult and we again are grateful to the President, Dr Arline Wilson, for agreeing to stay on another year in this role.

The total number of members as of January 2019 is 281. The current composition is made up of 210 individuals, and 71 institutions. In addition, the Society exchanges publications with 22 other societies. Dr Hollinshead, the Membership Secretary, noted that the total membership is the lowest for over five years but there is now the option for members to renew their subscriptions online.

The Society's library is housed in the search room of the Liverpool Record Office in the Central Library and is open for research to anyone, though it is for reference use only. The catalogue has been integrated with the online catalogue of the Record Office. The site also includes a searchable index to Transactions. During the year a decision was made to dispose

of the long back-runs of exchange volumes (some going back to the 1840s) which were stored in the archive store at Liverpool Central Library. Owing to the endeavours of Dr Cox and Roger Hull they were eventually sold to a bookseller for a good price.

Programme of events, 2019:

Dr Z. Kingdon, 'Cultural flows between Liverpool and West Africa in the early colonial period'

Dr N. Foggo, 'The perils of press proprietorship in 18th century Liverpool'

Conference at Whalley Abbey, 'Lancashire 500-1500: re-envisioning our medieval history and heritage'

R. Mulhearn, "'Don't think of emigrating'", Liverpool and overseas migration during World War One'

Dr C. Downham, 'Vikings in the North West'

A. Brabin, 'Poison is a woman's weapon'

Prof. J. Belchem, "'Orator" Hunt, radical mobilisation and the Peterloo massacre'

R. Hull, 'Princes Park: Liverpool's first park'

– **Roger Hull, Secretary to Council**

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Bryan Biggs has worked at Bluecoat over four decades, overseeing many aspects of the arts centre's work. He has been involved in other cultural organisations on Merseyside including the boards of FACT and Liverpool Biennial.

John Belchem, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Liverpool, is acknowledged as Liverpool's leading historian, whose many publications include editing *Liverpool 800*, published on the city's 800th anniversary.


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