

# The Archaeology of Post-Medieval Religion

*The Maids Head Hotel, Tombland, Norwich*

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## ABSTRACTS

**John Mabbitt** (School of Historical Studies, Newcastle University)

**A tale of two churches: Holy Trinity, Berwick upon Tweed and Holy Trinity, Staunton Harold.**

The crisis of the mid-seventeenth century in England was described by G.R. Elton as the 'unexplained revolution'; despite centuries of dissection of the events, the causes and the character of the English Revolution remain uncertain. Any archaeological approach to this period must take into account this confused religious, political and social context, making the study of churches, where ideology and belief were explicitly ritualised and built in stone is of critical importance. Few churches were built in England at this time, and those that were have often been overshadowed by the achievement of the restoration churches, particularly in post-Great Fire London. However, comparative study of these earlier churches, aiming to understand the meanings that were built into them and that were projected back in later periods can provide important insights into the nature of English culture during the revolution. This paper will focus on the churches of Holy Trinity, Berwick upon Tweed, supposedly built under the guidance of Oliver Cromwell himself, and Holy Trinity, Staunton Harold, often considered a defiant statement of political, theological and liturgical conservatism, to explore themes of conformity and resistance and conservatism and revolution demonstrating the importance of archaeological studies of this period.

**Margit Thøfner** (School of World Art Studies and Museology, University of East Anglia)

**Mistress of Ceremonies?: Anne of Denmark and the 'Anglican Counter-Reformation'.**

In his recent book 'Glory, Laud and Honour: The Arts of the Anglican Counter-Reformation' Graham Parry describes an unexpected flowering of art and material culture in the Anglican church in the 1620s and 1630s. Parry rightly links this phenomenon to Lancelot Andrewes, the famous court preacher of James I and VI, and three of his protégées: William Laud, John Cosin and Matthew Wren. However, Parry does not explain satisfactorily why this group of Anglican divines were so keen on rich furnishings and elaborate ritual. This paper will argue that they were influenced by Lutheran practices, that is, by a form of Protestantism which was never truly iconoclastic. A key figure here is Anne of Denmark, wife of James I and VI. Queen Anne was raised in Mecklenburg-Schwerin and then at the Danish court, in the heartlands of Lutheranism. She would have known the great Lutheran court chapels at Schwerin and Kronborg intimately. In effect, in her childhood, she was immersed in a culture where there was no perceived contradiction between Protestant worship, ceremonial opulence and elaborate church furnishings. Later in her life, possibly because of her exposure to Scottish Presbyterianism, Anne converted to Catholicism, thus making her ritual tastes even plainer. Moreover, she was a keen art collector and her London residence, Denmark House (later Somerset House), was famous for its rich furnishings. The importance of Anne's influence at the Jacobean court has only recently been recognised and her impact on the likes of Lancelot Andrewes still remains to be considered. Thus, as my paper will demonstrate, Parry's view of the 'Counter-Reformation' of the 1620s and 1630s is simply too insular to be satisfactory. Instead, we should understand Anglican ritual practices and Anglican material culture of that period as embedded in a complex dialogue with other branches of Protestantism.

**Philippa Woodcock** (School of History, Oxford Brookes University)

**Was original best? Refitting the churches of the diocese of Le Mans, 1562-1598**

The literature of iconoclasm during the French Wars of Religion records both organised and uncontrolled destruction. The diocese of Le Mans was no exception, and its churches suffered repeated attack from 1562-1598. This paper will survey the contemporary search for the stolen or damaged artefacts of the cathedral and parish churches. This process is well documented, and the paper will draw on the inventory of the cathedral chapter after the iconoclasm of 1562, as well as the *comptes des fabrique* of rural parish churches. It will test whether the return of original objects was of paramount importance, or whether the recreation of a fabric of equivalent value or appearance was sufficient.

The first half of the paper will outline the legal and fiscal mechanisms available to the canons of the cathedral in their search for one particular treasure, the rood-screen associated with the cardinal-bishop, Philip of Luxembourg (d.1519). Whilst the paper acknowledges the inroads of civic taxes on the canons' budget, this was nonetheless a rich purse. It will show how the power of canon law could be used to negotiate, and force the return of the screen's parts, and punish the perpetrators of its destruction.

The second half of the paper will contrast the refurbishment of the cathedral's elite space, with the struggle to redecorate the rural church, often impoverished by constant attack. Whilst damage here was more a result of general pillage, the fabric of the church was not necessarily destroyed. Instead, objects and materials might be selected for removal by Huguenot soldiers and then ransomed. This section will ask how parishes were able to afford to buy these artefacts; should an object be purchased, no matter what, and were other objects sold or exchanged for key items? How was a judgement made as to whether the proffered object was worth repurchase or even authentic? In conclusion, the paper will assess whether the church be remade holy, if refitted with counterfeit or damaged objects.

**Matthias Range** (School of History, Oxford Brookes University)

**Characteristics of Lutheran Church Interiors: Schleswig (Germany)**

In the duchy of Schleswig (today Northern Germany and Southern Denmark) the Reformation began in the 1520s and occurred not as a radical break, but rather as a relatively smooth and peaceful transition from the Catholic to the Lutheran confession. This paper will look at the impact of Lutheranism in this region. Even though the majority of existing churches were retained and simply adapted for Lutheran worship, the lavish interiors of these churches date predominantly from after the Reformation and reflect both the growing wealth of the region at the time and the strict adherence to Lutheran orthodoxy.

Some characteristics are especially noteworthy as they contradict the common expectations of what 'Protestant' churches look like and may draw our attention to Luther's original teachings, freed from 'evangelic' (*evangelisch*) or 'reformed' compromises. In this sense, the arrangements for communion and the use of confessionals will be examined in light of Lutheran doctrine. In one particular area, the Peninsula Eiderstedt, communion benches (*Abendmahlsbänke*) were placed distinctly at either side in front of the altar. The paper will explore the role of these benches during the service, and will put them into context with the general choreography of the proceedings during Holy Communion and the resulting symbolic implications in this region.

Another significant aspect of the interiors is found in the confessionals, which were built until the end of the eighteenth century. Since these are more readily associated with Catholicism, the paper will discuss their place in Lutheranism and their use in the region.

In contrast to most other regions in Germany, many of the churches in this region have survived the centuries since the Reformation with only minor changes and are well-preserved. This will allow a detailed study of Lutheranism and its implications for church buildings.

**Paul Belford** (Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust)

**The non-Protestant work ethic: a dynasty of Catholic industrial entrepreneurs in post-Reformation Shropshire**

The industrial revolution has traditionally been seen as a development of the eighteenth century; a consequence of the Enlightenment and the so-called Protestant work-ethic. Once of the standard-bearers of this myth has been the Ironbridge Gorge, with the Coalbrookdale ironworks often cited as an exemplar of Quaker industriousness and innovation. However recent research has shown that the origins of industrialisation in Coalbrookdale are significantly earlier. The “zealous papist” Robert Brooke was a high-ranking official in the administration of Henry VIII, and acquired the Manor of which Coalbrookdale was a part at the dissolution. His son John and grandson Basil developed the Coalbrookdale valley as a substantial ironworking enterprise during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They developed most of the water-power system, introduced the innovative technology of bulk steelmaking, and developed the foundry side of the business. Using Coalbrookdale as a case study, but with reference to other industrial sites in the west midlands, this paper will examine the role of Catholic entrepreneurs in the development of early industrialisation, looking particularly at how their religious outlook informed the creation of an English ‘industrial revolution’ during the Elizabethan period and up to the Civil War.

**Simon Roffey** (Department of Archaeology, University of Winchester)

**A Romantic Anachronism?: ‘Chantry’ chapels of the nineteenth century**

The chantry chapel, an institution dedicated to the celebration of personally endowed masses for the dead, was one of the most important and influential religious institutions of the medieval period. During the Reformation such institutions were abolished and their intercessory masses and prayers for the dead proscribed. To all intents and purposes the pre-Reformation chantry was effectively erased from memory.

However, the nineteenth century witnessed a Catholic revival in England as well as endeavours by the Oxford Movement to promote the reintroduction of a more emotive element to contemporary Anglican religious practice. Thus, many sought to recover the original Catholic heritage of the Church of England. This was a heritage that was exemplified by the highly ritualised practices of the medieval period, and supported by the elaborately decorated interiors of churches often replete with chantry foundations. Consequently the ‘chantry’ chapel was resurrected as a distinct element of church space and liturgical practice. This paper will consider the form and fabric of such institutions in the Victorian period, such as those found at St Augustine’s, Ramsgate, St George’s, Southwark and the Bateman Mausoleum at Morley, Derbyshire, as well as some unique examples that began to emerge in the preceding centuries, such as at Boxted, Suffolk and Rycote, Oxfordshire. Overall it will examine whether such institutions were mere romantic anachronisms or had a relevant role to play in church ritual practice, and related intercession, in the nineteenth century.

**Peter Benes** (Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, Boston University)

**Meetinghouses of Puritan New England: The Transatlantic Passage, 1630–1800**

The migration of 20,000 English Puritans to New England between 1630 and 1640 necessitated that each new community build a Nonconformist house of worship in the

American wilderness. Beginning as early as 1639 in New Haven and 1640 in Boston, towns erected vernacular wood-framed meetinghouses that resembled barns, forts, and even warehouses. These structures featured a gathered roof, multiple doorways and windows, a central pulpit surrounded by benches, one or more tiers of galleries, and a “turret” that served both as a lookout and a belfry.

While most architectural historians have agreed that few if any English prototypes were available for first-period New England builders, considerable disagreement has always characterized where these designs actually came from. Anthony Garvan and Edmond Sinnott argue that early New Englanders practiced “an architecture of negation” drawing on vernacular forms that best differentiated their houses of worship from the Gothic and Baroque forms of Anglicans and Catholics. Marian C. Donnelly and Keith Sprunger, on the other hand, suggest these architectural ideas were drawn from sixteenth-century Calvinist-inspired French Huguenot temples or from churches built by exiled English dissenters living in seventeenth-century Holland.

This paper, based on a twenty-year study of approximately 170 standing survivals and 1,500 buildings known from historical records, uncovers new evidence supporting Donnelly’s and Sprunger’s views. It argues, however, that the church-like modifications to these structures made in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries derived from Anglican and Nonconformist building practices brought over by later English immigrants after the revocation of the Massachusetts Bay charter in 1689. These innovations included elements such as the compass window, the “English” roof, the multi-stage standing bell tower, a dominant main aisle, and eventually domed ceilings and multi-storied entry porticos. Postulating a link between meetinghouse design and Puritan ecclesiology, the study suggests that those New England religious societies most inclined toward reinstating Anglican and Anglican-derived liturgical and devotional practices were also the first to adopt the architectural changes that converted the plain style Puritan “meetinghouse” into a Federal-period Congregational “church.”

**Chris King** (School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester)  
**‘Strangers in a strange land’: immigrant communities and civic culture in early modern Norwich**

The Dutch and Walloon communities of Norwich are well-known to have been a prominent element of the early modern city, comprising over one-third of the urban population in the late sixteenth century. Their important role in stimulating the economic development and cultural life of the city has been the subject of historical investigation, as has the argument that the Reformed religion practiced in the Stranger churches may have provided a model for the further efforts at religious reform demanded by more radical English Protestants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Archaeological excavations in Norwich in the 1970s-80s uncovered possible sites for Stranger households, although the significance of these assemblages for understanding the socio-economic position and ethnic identity of the Strangers remains to be further explored. This paper will present a broad overview of the material legacy of Norwich’s sixteenth- and seventeenth-century immigrant community, with a particular focus on their relationship with the civic authorities and the evidence for both cultural distinctiveness and interaction between the ‘native’ and immigrant populations. It is argued that a landscape-centred perspective can shed new light on the nature of the support given to Stranger communities by the city corporation, with the clustering of ‘Reformed’ protestant institutions creating a ‘radical topography’ at the heart of the civic realm. At the same time, evidence at the more intimate scale of the parish and household reveals the complexities of cultural identity and social interaction on a day-to-day basis.

**Greig Parker** (Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield)

**Expressions of conformity: identifying Huguenot religious beliefs through material culture**

Between the mid-sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries, tens of thousands of French Calvinist refugees settled in London, establishing a non-Conformist church at Threadneedle Street. In 1661 the Huguenot community was split by the establishment of a separate, and Conformist, French church at the Savoy. The new church reflected the desire by English religious authorities to curtail the independence of foreign non-Conformist churches and to standardize Christian worship within the kingdom. French Conformist congregations were required to use a translation of the Anglican liturgy, in addition to other significant changes to their religious practices.

The historical record offers conflicting accounts of the attitudes of members of the community to the Conformist/non-Conformist issue. Some appear to have been relatively unconcerned with the changes, whereas others seem to have been bitterly opposed. It would perhaps be expected that religious refugees would have been extremely resistant to modifications of their religious practices. Yet many members appear to have willingly attended Conformist services on both a regular or intermittent basis (Nishikawa 2001: 360). The reasons for this are unclear, but may reflect the existence of an 'ethnic' rather than a religious Huguenot identity, or perhaps indicate those refugees whose primary motivation for migration had been economic rather than religious. Gwynn (1985: 97) has argued that differences between Conformist and non-Conformist religious practices were reflected in material culture and landscape, such as in disputes concerning the use of hats and surplices in services or in the pattern of the establishment of Conformist churches.

This paper examines the degree to which Conformist/non-Conformist religious practices are visible in the material environment using both archaeological and historical evidence. It discusses how and why items of material culture became so highly contentious for some members of the community. In addition, it explores whether differences between the material culture of the Huguenot community can better be seen as reflecting other aspects of social identity such as occupation or status, rather than religious beliefs.

**KEYNOTE LECTURE**

**Andrew Spicer** (Department of History, Oxford Brookes University)

**Re-drawing the religious landscape in post-Reformation Scotland**

This paper based on new research but also developing a theme from my *Calvinist churches in early modern Europe* (Manchester 2007), will look at the way in which there was an attempt to reorder the religious landscape of early modern Scotland. Whereas in many countries the religious landscape and location of parish churches reflected their Catholic and historic past, in Scotland there was an attempt to redraw parish boundaries and to relocate churches so that they accorded more to the needs of the local communities. This paper will provide several case studies based on archival research and site visits looking at the church-building in the Border that resulted from this attempt to reorder the religious landscape so that it met the demands of the Protestant present rather than the Catholic past.

**Harold Mytum** (Centre for Manx Studies, University of Liverpool)

**Church and chapel: focal points in Welsh and Manx landscapes**

The role of Anglican churches and nonconformist chapels in 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century rural communities has been little studied by archaeologists, yet they were vibrant cultural and

social foci in such contexts. Using examples from Wales and the Isle of Man, the material evidence of churches, chapels, and associated buildings such as schools and halls and exterior spaces such as burial grounds will be explored, as well as their placing in the landscape. Archaeology can contribute to understanding of the lived experience of religion through examining the material elements associated with the exposition of the word, the use of music, and providing the context for social events and commemoration.

The Anglican parochial structure created a distribution of churches across the landscape to which chapels were sometimes added. This pattern was largely inherited from the Middle Ages, and was not always appropriately distributed in relation to later settlement, though supplementary structures such as schools may be located other than near the church. Nonconformist groups were often constrained by resources and patronage in the location of their places of worship, though as their congregations grew these could be moved or rebuilt, even if provision of adjacent burial grounds was not always possible. All these religious physical spaces and their associated artefacts were used by rural people to create, re-create, and change their social relations. They were actively used in the formulation of cultural structures and identities as these communities lived within their theologically defined parameters.

**Jeremy Lake (English Heritage)**  
**Chapels and Landscape in Cornwall**

Chapels as a whole represent an investment in a significant ideological and spiritual movement that made a major contribution to the development of modern Britain, and was exported throughout the world. The transference of domestic conventions to religious buildings, including those of vernacular or polite forms, is a strong characteristic of chapel architecture and one which informs our understanding of distinctive regional architectural traditions. The high rate of rebuilding, refurbishing and reordering is an important theme in chapel-building history, making the correct dating of interiors and even exteriors extremely difficult. This phenomenon marks chapels out from the centralising tendencies of the Anglican church, and calls into question the value of any conventional stylistic interpretation of chapel architecture. This paper will thus assert that the cultural value of nonconformist architecture embraces far more than the built environment, and in particular their relationship to community life, to landscapes and the mix of features that make up definable areas or *pays*. Emphasis will be placed on the need to go beyond purely architectural approaches and present an analysis of chapel buildings as archaeology, both in terms of their landscape and settlement context and what they reveal about the wealth, aspirations and relationships to external influences – liturgical to architectural - of their communities.

These themes will be explored within the context of the relationship between chapel architecture and an exceptionally vigorous and distinctively Cornish form of Methodism. The nonconformist history of Cornwall, especially as seen in the impact and development of Methodism, is highly distinctive and important in a national context. The strongholds of Cornish Methodism, in the centre and west of the county, found no national parallels – with the notable exception of the mining valleys of south Wales – for the dominance that Methodism held, as a popular evangelical movement, over other forms of Christian worship. Their patterning and density in the landscape is closely related to patterns of industrial development in the county, and in particular the tin and copper industry which led the world until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In this context chapels are an essential part of the cultural landscape of the surviving mining buildings, count houses, institutes and housing for miners, in addition to the mineral tramways and ports. In east Cornwall, a different pattern of

chapels with later first foundations and, overall, different architectural characteristics indicates a different pattern of Methodism and social history. Chapels also played a prominent role in the emergence of 'industrial landscapes' populated by émigré Cornish miners in South Australia, South Africa and America.

Finally, the role of 'applied archaeology' in informing approaches to future change, and understanding the relationship of chapels to other places of worship in their broader social and economic context, will be explored.

**Matthew Butler** (Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Bristol)  
**Landscapes of dissent**

Dissenting meeting houses and chapels have for too long been treated as isolated buildings in their landscapes, whether in an urban or a rural setting. Histories have – often mistakenly – been written in terms of charismatic individuals, rather than worshipping communities. This paper, part of a PhD thesis being undertaken at The Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at Bristol University, will analyse and contrast two very different landscapes associated with dissent.

In both Wiltshire and Orkney there were vibrant dissenting communities, operating in a landscape that can only be fully retraced through adding field archaeology to the disciplines of archive research and oral history.

An eighteenth century north Wiltshire Strict Baptist Meeting House is not just a rich source of information in itself, but also forms part of a broader landscape of dissent from which we can learn a great deal about a nonconformist community over two centuries. This north Wiltshire landscape encompasses the origins of the movement locally, the key ritual of open-air baptism, missionary work, and competition from other dissenting groups.

The Antiburghers formed their first congregations in Orkney towards the end of the eighteenth century. The northern Orkney islands of Stronsay and Sanday were among the first to have active groups. On each island there is a striking landscape of dissent – embracing barns, chapels, open air preaching sites and schools.

As nonconformist Christian worship declines, these and other landscapes are under threat and may be lost forever within a generation.

**Claire Strachan** (School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester)  
**'But deliver us from evil': Popular protest in identities of dissent in the South West woollen industry 1760-1860**

Religion was an integral aspect of socialisation during the industrial revolution, contributing significantly to the collective consciousness of the working classes providing comfort, security and belonging in times of distress and social and political instability. In the South West woollen industry a domestic craft industry had existed since the twelfth century, and increased mechanisation was a very real concern for the weavers and shearmen as the traditions of their trade were threatened with extinction. This impending sense of loss, and attachment to old traditions was emotionalised through increased riot and protest activity from the early nineteenth century until the industry's eventual decline in the 1850s.

Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912) stressed the significance of religious practice in community solidarity through its shared history, ritual activity, and ceremony; however I would argue that religious worship and association contributed even more

significantly to the expression of community identities. Chapels were a central location for recreation and social interaction and through the development of Sunday Schools, benefit societies and fundraising events, skills of basic reading and writing, leadership, organisational and motivational skills were developed. Although dissent did not directly encourage protest activity, particularly of a violent nature, the skills and characteristics that members developed appeared to enable more organised and co-ordinated protest to flourish.

Through analysing the architectural elaborations of nonconformist chapels, alongside their spatial location and context, this paper aims to illustrate the increasing significance and impact of dissenting influence in community identities. Furthermore it is argued that these identities which became more overt in the landscape as social and economic distress increased, contributed significantly to the nature of protest activity in the South West woollen industry. This approach aims to not only identify religious observance as a valuable tool in understanding the socialisation and identities of the working classes, but also to more fully contextualise its role in the social archaeology of the period that is both timely and necessary.

**Natasha Powers and Adrian Miles (MoLAS)**

### **Non-conformist identities in nineteenth century London: archaeological and osteological evidence**

Recent years have seen an increased acceptance that, where human remains of an historic date are to be disturbed by construction work, they warrant careful archaeological excavation and subsequent osteological study. The commencement of a number of large development projects sees the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) currently investigating circa 2000 post-medieval burials. The majority of these burials will be re-interred following examination making an extensive and affective research strategy all the more vital, yet many still feel that there is little to be learnt from the physical remains that cannot be found in the documentary sources of the time.

This paper will examine the excavation of two post-medieval cemeteries from London: the Catholic burial ground of Sts Mary and Michael, Commercial Road, Whitechapel and the Baptist burial ground in Bow. Presenting the preliminary results of the excavation of over 1000 burials, the paper will discuss the evidence of differences in symbolism, grave inclusions and burial practices; the influence that religious affiliation had on the supporting documentary sources available and the population differences suggested by initial investigation of the human remains. On-going research directions will also be examined. This paper argues that, by taking an holistic approach to analysis, archaeological data, artefacts and the remains of the dead themselves can present the human experience to us more vividly than the documentary sources alone.

**Annia Kristina Cherryson**

### **Nonconformism and the geography of burial, 1689-1886**

The post-medieval period saw significant changes in the geography of burial, especially in urban centres. The period saw gradual erosion of the Church of England's monopoly over burial as the disposal of the dead increasingly became the subject of secular legislation. While the expectation that the majority of the population would be interred either within or adjacent to an Anglican church, was challenged initially by the development of non-conformist and private burial grounds, and later with the advent of the garden cemetery.

While the changing nature of burial location was the product of a number of factors, non-conformism played a major role in transforming the urban burial landscapes of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The unwillingness of some non-conformist groups to inter their dead

in consecrated Anglican churchyards churchyard in provided the impetus behind the 1689 Act of Toleration, which allowed dissenting groups to inter their dead in their own burial grounds. The legislation resulted in the foundation of small dissenter burial grounds during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and was a significant challenge to the Church of England's monopoly over burial. This loosening of the Church of England's stranglehold over burial also had the indirect result of paving the way for the development of private burial grounds as speculative ventures. By the early 1820s, the non-conformists had also become involved in the move towards the foundation of larger cemeteries on the edge of towns and were involved in the inception and development of many of the early garden cemeteries.

This paper will examine the archaeological evidence for the impact of non-conformism on the geography of burial between the 1689 Act of Toleration and the 1880 Burial Laws Amendment Act, which allowed non-conformists to be interred in Anglican churchyards by their own ministers in accordance with their own rites. In addition, the impact of non-conformism on the Church of England's control over burial will also be considered.

**Anwen Caffell (York Osteoarchaeology Ltd)**  
**The General Baptists of Priory Yard, Norwich**

Excavations undertaken in 2002 by AF Howland Associates and the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (now NAU Archaeology) in advance of the redevelopment of the former Jarrolds Printing Works revealed large parts of the medieval Carmelite friary, including an area later used as a burial ground by the Priory Yard Baptists. The sixty-three skeletons recovered from this cemetery displayed extraordinary levels of pathological conditions and provide a rare opportunity to study a non-conformist population, many of whom appear to come from the poorer levels of Norwich society.

The Priory Yard chapel (1697-1875) was situated in one of the poorer areas of the city although records indicate that membership included some more wealthy adherents. The excavation recorded part of a crowded burial ground. Remains of coffins, including grips, plaques and nails, as well as indications of burial attire (shroud pins) and a possible 'grave good' in the form of a decorative cup were recovered.

Osteological analysis has identified high frequencies of joint disease/trauma, possibly associated with occupation, as well as evidence of scurvy and malnutrition and a number of rare conditions such as erosive arthropathies and a case of probable adult leukaemia. Infectious diseases, particularly respiratory infections, were prevalent; at least one case of tuberculosis was noted. Other aspects of particular interest include numerous congenital anomalies, possible corset wearing, and injuries sustained as a result of interpersonal violence or accidents.

Few post-medieval cemeteries have been published to date, and those that have are usually of the middle or upper classes (e.g. Spitalfields and St Brides, London). Excavated cemeteries belonging to a religious minority are also scarce (of note is the Quaker burial ground, Kingston-upon-Thames) and the Norwich group, when combined with documentary research, provides an invaluable insight into life, work, health and religion in post-medieval Norwich.

**Diana Swales** (Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield) and **Richard O'Neill** (Archaeology Research and Consultancy, University of Sheffield)  
**The iconography of death in the grave: late eighteenth – early nineteenth century Sheffield**

Since 1997 ARCUS (Archaeological Research and Consultancy at the University of Sheffield) have excavated a number of intra-mural graveyards in Sheffield pre-dating the 1855 Burial Act. These sites: Sheffield Cathedral; St Paul's Church, Pinstone Street; and the two non-conformist burial grounds of Chapel Yard and Carver Street, provide an important, if limited, resource of coffins, coffin furnishings and grave goods. This material provides an important transect of the social and religious classes present in Sheffield during the early Victorian period.

The purpose of this paper is to assess the impact of movements such as Enlightenment, Romanticism and Evangelicalism and ideas of social status and 'respectability' upon the paraphernalia of the grave in a rapidly expanding industrial town. Several authors have argued that the emergence of a prosperous middle-class through industrialisation led to more elaborate funerals as a display of affluence and, therefore, respectability, which was subsequently emulated by the lower classes.

By comparison of the evidence for wealth and religious ideology in the iconography, form and materials used in the construction of coffins, coffin furnishings and associated grave goods from the Sheffield burial grounds it is possible to determine whether the major influences upon the interment of the Sheffield dead correspond with those represented in the funeral ritual.

**Rosie Morris** (University of Birmingham)  
**Maidens' Garlands. A funeral custom of post Reformation England: a Catholic survival or Anglican rite of passage?**

Funeral garlanding for Maidens was last featured in the December 2003 edition of Folklore. Up to that point this "innocent and touching custom" had received little attention in terms of academic or folkloristic research. This research examines the chronological history, manufacture and operational practice, distribution and sociological significance of Maidens' Garlands, from 1500 to the most modern recorded usage in 1973.

Garlands took the form of a Bishop's Mitre or an old-fashioned bee hive – measuring approximately one foot in height. They are made of two strips of wood intersecting each other at the top, and secured at the base with a hoop of bent wood, and again at mid-height. They are then covered with paper flowers. Most are extremely robust to have remained intact for over 300 years. Regional distribution is considerable: from the Peak District to Hampshire, from Llandoverly to Lincoln. Widespread adherence to the practice was noted from the late medieval period to First World War and after.

The study records the social, political, economic, geographic and theological tensions surrounding this custom, and includes photographic and hand-drawn illustration. Parallels are drawn with other forms of garlanding, including those celebrating the month of May, wedding crowns, or the floral shrines erected in modern times mourning the unexpected deaths of young people. The Established Church of England did not always welcome the custom, and in many cases took the opportunity of a 19<sup>th</sup> century restoration to dispose of surviving garlands which had been displayed in the church roof. This paper will look at the implications of these attitudes, both denominational and psychological. Yet there are tantalising glimpses of Maidens' Garlands in Catholic France and Bavaria too, suggesting that the custom fulfilled a ritualistic need more widespread than first supposed.

**Barney Sloane** (English Heritage)

**Of Friars, Felons and Funerals: the material culture of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century burial ground in London**

The date and provenance of a group of at least 89 lead funerary crosses found with skeletons near Newgate Street, City of London, in 1905, and now held by the British Museum, the Science Museum and the Museum of London, are radically reappraised. The published interpretations that they were crosses accompanying victims of the Black Death outbreak of 1348–50, and that these victims were probably Franciscans buried in the friary cemetery, are refuted. Instead, the argument is made that the crosses certainly date to after 1550, and were most probably buried with victims of ‘gaol distemper’ who died in nearby Newgate Gaol in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The nature and ownership of the cemetery is explored, and the crosses re-evaluated in terms of post-medieval burial practice. The intriguing story of where the crosses ended up is recounted.