



Pendle Hill Witch Project, England

Course ID: TBA (to be posted by December 15, 2017)

June 17 – July 21, 2018

FIELD SCHOOL DIRECTOR:

Prof. Charles E. Orser, Jr., Vanderbilt University, charles.e.orser@vanderbilt.edu



INTRODUCTION

The trial of the Pendle Hill witches in Lancashire, England, in 1612, is the most famous witchcraft case in English history. The hanging of seven women and men accused at Lancaster Castle was one of the largest mass executions of witches in England's history. The trial was the subject of one of the most widely read books about the trial of witches, Thomas Potts' *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancashire*, published in 1613. Editions of the book are still available today.

Sixteenth- and seventeenth- century English authorities perceived witchcraft as a serious matter. The accused were in danger of being arrested, tried, and even executed. In truth, however, many individuals labeled as witches were traditional healers (shamans) who helped their community members with personal sickness, the illness of livestock, the location of lost objects, or offering protection from evil witches. In the days before scientific medicine, community members often looked to people they believed to have supernatural powers as their last resort for health and prosperity.

Despite the great interest in witchcraft by scholars and the public, little sustained archaeological research has concentrated specifically on the practice, its material culture, and its relationship to community structure and stability. Viewed from an anthropological perspective, witchcraft appears integral to the life of a community and, when seen in archaeological terms, has significant material elements. The overall paucity of archaeological research means that new information about the material culture of daily rural life—including objects once perceived as having magical properties—will provide exciting dimensions to understanding witchcraft in seventeenth-century England.

The goals of the 2018 project are threefold: to excavate a portion of the Malkin Tower Farm site, one of the houses possibly inhabited by the family of Elizabeth Sothernes (called "Demdike," Demon Woman) and her family in 1612; to provide information about the material culture of seventeenth-century

Lancashire; and to discern whether archaeological research can provide useful information about the study of English witchcraft. Elizabeth Sothernes was the matriarch of the Device family of alleged witches, and was the first in the family to die, perishing in Lancaster Castle. The house is also the site of the reputed witches' sabbat, or meeting, the event that led to the family's arrest, incarceration, and eventual execution.

The archaeology of witchcraft is an exciting field of inquiry. Students in this project will be immersed in the research in a hands-on manner, with each new find adding substantially to what little we know about the daily practice of traditional healing in seventeenth-century rural England.

ACADEMIC CREDIT UNITS & TRANSCRIPTS

Credit Units: Attending students will be awarded 8 semester credit units (equivalent to 12 quarter credit units) through our academic partner, Connecticut College. Connecticut College is a private, highly ranked liberal arts institution with a deep commitment to undergraduate education. Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school (see grading assessment and matrix). This field school provides a minimum of 160 direct instructional hours. Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and registrars at their home institutions prior to attending this field school.

Transcripts: An official copy of transcripts will be mailed to the permanent address listed by students on their online application. One additional transcript may be sent to the student's home institution at no additional cost. Additional transcripts may be ordered at any time through the National Student Clearinghouse: <http://bit.ly/2hvurkl>.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this field school are to enable students to understand how historical archaeology is practiced in the field, to explore the diverse lifestyles of little-known people from the past, to investigate the relationships between material culture and magical belief, and to gain a basic understanding of seventeenth-century witchcraft and its relationship to community life. To achieve these objectives, this course has two primary goals: (1) to provide students with a practical working knowledge of **archaeological field methods**, including excavation, laboratory analysis, and early modern artifact identification; and (2) to introduce students to the **intellectual challenges presented by archaeological research**, including research design, the interpretation of data, the integration of historical records with archaeological information, and the need to think creatively and flexibly as new information is recovered during excavation.

The course will take place in Blacko, Lancashire, located about 32 miles north of Manchester. The site is situated in the Forest of Bowland, a nationally designed Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Students will divide their time between excavation of the house site at Malkin Tower Farm and the analysis of excavated artifacts.

Students will participate in the following research activities:

Excavation: Students will participate in guided excavation at the Malkin Tower house site in Lancashire.

Recordation: Students will participate in filling out excavation forms, piece-plotting finds, and recording stratigraphic information.

Cataloging: Students will participate in field sorting and cataloging of finds.

Laboratory: Scheduled lab tasks will include washing, sorting, identifying, and cataloging finds.

Students will arrive on June 17. The course begins on June 18 and will meet every weekday until July 20. Students will depart on July 21. An introductory lecture on the morning of the first day of the course will

provide a brief history of the witch trial and explain the significance of the students' seminal role in the archaeological fieldwork. A second lecture will explain the basics and importance of archaeological site recording to provide an initial idea of the kind of knowledge students will acquire. An afternoon lecture will explain and illustrate common seventeenth-century artifacts likely to be found during the fieldwork. Subsequent evening lectures by the project director will explain the history of historical archaeology, the importance of witchcraft to seventeenth-century English daily life, the significance of the trial, and related topics. Local and professional scholars will also give evening lectures during the field school.

DISCLAIMER – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Archaeological field work involves physical work in the outdoors. You should be aware that conditions in the field are different than those you experience in your home, dorms, or college town. This program operates in a northern English environment. During the day, temperatures and rainfall can fluctuate wildly. Under the full sun, it can be hot, possibly as high as 85°. You should plan to dress in layers, including rain gear, and wear sunscreen of at least 50 SPF when the sun is shining.

If you have any medical concerns, please consult your doctor. For all other concerns, please consult the project director as appropriate.

PREREQUISITES

This field school has no prerequisites for participation. This is a hands-on learning experience. Students will study on-site how to conduct archaeological research while they also learn about seventeenth-century witchcraft and traditional healing. This is not a typical university course. Archaeology involves physical work and exposure to the elements; it is true hands-on education. You will work outdoors and get sweaty and tired. You should come equipped with sufficient excitement, enthusiasm, and an adequate understanding that archaeological field research requires hard but exciting work. You will be outside with trowel in hand unearthing artifacts—perhaps those once imbued with magical powers—not uncovered since the early seventeenth century.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of the field school, students will be able to:

- Understand the different elements of an archaeological field project and the relationships between these elements
- Apply standard excavation methods to archaeological contexts
- Use standard recording techniques to document excavation results
- Undertake preliminary processing of archaeological artifacts
- Undertake preliminary analysis of archaeological artifacts
- Appreciate how historical archaeologists use archaeological data and historical information in combination

GRADING MATRIX

- 50%:** Attend and participate each scheduled day, including lectures and laboratory work
- 30%:** A field notebook submitted and evaluated **on a weekly basis and** at the end of the course
- 10%:** An exam taken at the mid-point of the course to assess students' overall understanding of historical archaeology, the goals of the project, and the historical significance of the island
- 10%:** Participate in daily reports of research activities to the group

TRAVEL & MEETING POINT

Traveling to England in the UK is an easy matter and all major airlines fly there. We suggest you go directly to Manchester Airport. If you decide to fly into Heathrow or Gatwick (in London) you can take the train to Preston in Lancashire. Students do not need a special visa for the length of the project.

Staff will meet you at the Preston train station. Students arriving at Manchester airport should take the train from the airport to Preston. Notify the program director as soon as you know your itinerary so that we can arrange timely pickups.

If you missed your connection or your flight is delayed, please call, text, or email project director immediately. A local emergency cell phone number will be provided to all enrolled students.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

All U.S. citizens who do not also hold UK citizenship must present a valid U.S. passport to enter and depart. U.S. and Canadian citizens can stay in the UK for up to 6 months, but check this frequently because regulations change, often with little notice. Citizens of other countries are asked to check the UK visa website page in their home country for specific visa requirements.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students will be housed in a comfortable lodge on the grounds of the Whitehough Centre, an educational center operated by the Burnley Football Club. Lunch and dinner meals will be communal. Special diets can be accommodated within reason, and vegetarians will have no difficulty meeting their dietary needs.

EQUIPMENT LIST

- hiking shoes or boots
- hat with brim (for rain and sun)
- several pairs of work socks
- thin jacket
- pants for excavation
- shorts
- t-shirts
- long-sleeve shirts
- towel and washcloth
- work gloves
- water bottle
- sun protection
- mechanical pencil (for fieldwork)
- backpack (to store your stuff while in the field)
- waterproof bag (for your backpack, if necessary)
- raincoat
- insect repellent
- extra money for incidentals

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1:

- Sun. Meet students at Preston RR station
Settle into housing
Group dinner
- Mon. 7:00: breakfast
8:00: Lecture: Introduction to Historical Archaeology (Project Director)
9:15: Meet bus to Pendle Inn
9:30: Introduction to site; Lecture: The Basics of Archaeological Measurement and Recording (Project Director)
10:30: Establishing site grid
12:00 Lunch
12:30: Lecture: Introduction to 17th-Century artifacts (Project Director)
1:00-4:00: Continue grid set-up; begin excavations

Readings: Clayton 2007, 2012

Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri. (begin weekly schedule)

7:00-8:00	Breakfast
8:00-8:15	Travel to site
8:15-12:00	Research activities on site
12:00-12:30	Lunch break
12:30-4:00	Research activities on site
4:00-4:30	Site clean-up, daily debriefing of discoveries, questions, ideas
4:30-4:45	Travel from site to home base
4:45-6:00	Rest
6:00	Dinner
7:00-8:00	Lab work
8:00	Invited lectures by project leaders and guests (1 or 2 per week as arranged)

Tentative lecture topics:

The Archaeology of Lancashire, Dr. Rick Peterson (University of Central Lancs.)

The Forest of Bowland, Cathy Hopley (Forest of Bowland)

The History of the Pendle Witches, John Clayton (local historian)

Medieval Pendle, Dr. William Shannon (cultural historian)

An Introduction to Geophysical Research, Mike Woods (UCLan intern)

Field trips: We will be visiting Lancaster Castle, the site where the Pendle Hill witches were held before their execution (June 27), as well as Mancknowles Ing, another site associated with witchcraft, and Worsaw Hill, a Bronze Age burial mound (July 11). The exact dates of the field trips may change.

Weeks 2-4:

Continue regular research schedule on site

Week 5:

Mon-Wed	Continue regular research schedule on site
Thursday	Backfilling, continue lab work
Friday	Finalize lab work
Saturday	Leave Pendle area or travel onward on your own

REQUIRED READINGS

Clayton, John. 2007. *The Lancashire Witch Conspiracy: A History of Pendle Forest and the 1612 Witch Trials*. 2nd ed. Barrowford Press, Nelson. Part Two, pp. 138-228, 258-280.

----- 2012. *The Pendle Witch Fourth Centenary Handbook: History and Archaeology, Fact and Fiction, 1612-2012*. Barrowford Press, Nelson. Part One, pp. 8-83, Part Two, pp. 84-146.

RECOMMENDED READINGS (About the 1612 Witchcraft Case)

Almond, Philip C. 2012. *The Lancashire Witches: A Chronicle of Sorcery and Death on Pendle Hill*. I. B. Tauris, London.

Cobban, Jennie Lee. 2011. *The Lure of the Lancashire Witches*. Palatine, Lancaster.

Froome, Joyce. 2010. *Wicked Enchantments: The Pendle Witches and Their Magic*. Palatine, Lancaster.

- Goodier, Christine. 2011. *1612: The Lancashire Witches: A New Guide*. Palatine, Lancaster.
- Lumby, Jonathan. 1995. *The Lancashire Witch Craze: Jennet Preston and the Lancashire Witches, 1612*. Carnegie, Lancaster.
- Peele, Edgar and Pat Southern. 1994. *The Trials of the Lancashire Witches: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Witchcraft*. Hendon, Nelson.
- Poole, Robert (ed.). 2012. *The Lancashire Witches: Histories and Stories*. Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- (ed.). 2015. *The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster: Thomas Potts' Original Text Modernised and Introduced*. Palatine, Lancaster.

RECOMMENDED READINGS (General)

- Almond, Philip C. 2004. *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern England: Contemporary Texts and Their Cultural Contexts*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Ankarloo, Bengt, Stuart Clark, and William Monter. 2002. *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.
- Borman, Tracy. 2014. *Witches: James I and the English Witch Hunts*. Vintage, London.
- Hutton, Ronald (ed.). 2016. *Physical Evidence for Ritual Acts, Sorcery, and Witchcraft in Christian Britain*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Kittredge, George Lyman. 1956. *Witchcraft in Old and New England*. Russell and Russell, New York.
- Macfarlane, Alan. 1999. *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study*. 2nd ed. Routledge, London.
- Merrifield, Ralph. 1987. *The Archaeology of Ritual and Magic*. New Amsterdam, New York.
- Orser, C. E., Jr. 2017. *Historical Archaeology*. 3rd ed. Routledge, London.
- Sharpe, James. 2013. *Witchcraft in Early Modern England*. Routledge, London.
- Thomas, Keith. 1991. *Religion and the Decline of Magic*. Penguin, London.
- Wilson, Stephen. 2004. *The Magical Universe: Everyday Ritual and Magic in Pre-Modern Europe*. Hambledon and London, London.