



FACTSHEET– MAKING HISTORY TUESDAY 29th March 2011

Tom Holland with the latest historical research and stories which reflect listener's passion for the past.

Iron Age Hillforts

Erin Robinson a PhD student at the University of Bangor recently led a community experiment on the Cheshire/North Wales border to work out just how people might have communicated from hillfort to hillfort. She was joined by Professor John Collis from the University of Sheffield to talk about communications in the Iron Age.

Useful Links

Hillfort Glow <http://www.heatherandhillforts.co.uk/index.php/en/about/hillfort-glow>

University of Bangor <http://www.bangor.ac.uk/history/>

University of Sheffield <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/archaeology/index.html>

Channel 4's Time Team

<http://www.channel4.com/history/microsites/T/timeteam/ironage.html>

The Great Michael

In 1511, on the banks of the Forth in Edinburgh, the largest naval vessel then known was launched. The Michael was the product of the international tensions between England and France. James IV wanted to retain the support of Scotland's auld ally, the French, to help defend the country from Henry. The ship transformed the way that naval battles were fought but it was never used in anger by the Scottish navy and was such a drain on the Scottish exchequer that it had to be sold off on the cheap to France.

Fiona Watson joined the maritime historian Dr Eric Graham to hear this remarkable story of technological and political change.

BBC Radio Scotland has produced two programmes on the ship.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00w67wr>

Dr Eric Graham's personal website <http://www.ericgraham.co.uk/home>

Louis Le Prince

What happened to the pioneer of early cinema Louis Le Prince who disappeared in France in 1890?

Tom Holland spoke to the film technician and historian Stephen Herbert.

Stephen wrote this for the "Who's Who of Victorian Cinema" (<http://www.victorian-cinema.net>)

Le Prince's father was a major of artillery in the French Army. Young Louis was given lessons in photography by family friend L.J.M. Daguerre, and after college at Bourges and Paris did post-graduate work in chemistry at Leipzig. He studied art, and specialized in the painting and firing of art pottery. Invited to Leeds by John R. Whitley, he stayed and joined the firm of Whitley Partners, brass founders, and in 1869 married Miss Lizzie Whitley, who had trained at the Sevres pottery. During the Franco-Prussian War he went through the siege of Paris as an officer of volunteers, and on his return to England the Le Princes set up a school of applied art in Park Square, Leeds. Le Prince carried out photography on metal and pottery; his portraits of Queen Victoria and Gladstone were placed in the foundation stone of Cleopatra's Needle in London. In 1881 he went to the USA and became manager of a group of artists who made large circular panoramas in New York, Washington and Chicago. Soon afterwards he started experimental work on moving picture machines in the workshops of the New York Institute for the Deaf, where his wife taught, and in 1886 he applied for an American patent for a machine using one or more lenses - illustrating the most difficult proposition, with sixteen lenses. The patent was granted in January 1888, but deleted claims for machines with one or two lenses, as having been already covered by others. His patents in Britain, France and elsewhere allowed a one-lens version. In Paris, sometime in 1887, he made a sixteen lens

machine, which used two picture bands moving alternately, to demonstrate 'proof of working', and several sets of pictures were taken.

Back in Leeds he rented a workshop at 160 Woodhouse Lane and engaged woodworker Frederick Mason and J.W. Longley, inventor of an automatic ticket machine, and by the summer of 1888 had constructed two 'receivers' (cameras), each with a single lens and intermittently moving take-up spool. Paper negatives were exposed in his father-in-law's garden apparently as early as the summer of 1888, and of traffic on Leeds Bridge at about the same time, at between twelve and twenty pictures per second. Projection was more difficult, due to the unsuitability of the paper base, and the registration difficulties with unperforated bands. Undeterred, Le Prince (who according to Frederick Mason was 'most generous and considerate and, although an inventor, of an extremely placid disposition which nothing seemed to ruffle'), built a 'deliverer', or projector, having three lenses and three picture belts and apparently using the Maltese cross intermittent movement. This probably used belts of glass slides, the fibre belts moving alternately to ensure that an image was always on the screen, thereby reducing flicker. A single-lens projector featured a rather impractical spiral arrangement for delivering the slides to the lens in succession. These machines did not succeed to Le Prince's satisfaction, and he probably experimented with celluloid, as a more suitable image base, in 1889. While Le Prince was experimenting in Leeds, his wife and family were in New York, having rented and renovated a mansion in preparation for showing his apparatus and motion pictures. Apparently troubled by financial problems, in the summer of 1890 he packed up his equipment ready for the move to New York, and in August went to France with his friends, Mr and Mrs Wilson. He left them at Bourges to visit his brother at Dijon, where he was last seen boarding the train for Paris on 16 September. He subsequently disappeared, victim of the most famous personal tragedy of the Victorian moving image world. In 2003, an 1890 photograph of a drowned man resembling Le Prince was discovered in the Paris police archives.

It's possible to see Louis Le Prince's films here - <http://www.louisleprince.co.uk/>

Towton – Britain's bloodiest battle.

Joanne Pinnock travelled to Yorkshire to find out how the local community have not only added to our understanding of this epic battle in the War of the Roses but also helping to protect the site.

The battle was on the 29th March 1461, then Palm Sunday, and on Palm Sunday this year (April 17th) Towton Battlefield Society's traditional memorial event will be based at Towton Hall near Towton and will include: Longbow & Falconry demonstrations, Battlefield Tours and a Commemorative Service with symbolic laying of palms.

Website Address for Towton Battlefield Society: <http://www.towton.org.uk>

More information on the battle can be found from The Battlefield Trust
<http://www.battlefieldstrust.com/resource-centre/warsoftheroses/battleview.asp?BattleFieldId=46>

George Goodwin has just written a book to coincide with the 550th anniversary of the battle. His book is called "Fatal Colours: Towton, 1461 - England's Most Brutal Battle" published by Orion

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Contact Making History

Write to Making History

PO Box 3096

Brighton

BN1 1PL

Email: making.history@bbc.co.uk