

October 2025 Meeting

At the Historians meeting of 31 October, Allan Howard started the meeting by drawing the attention of Members to the forthcoming series on BBC with David Olusoga called “Empire”. Allan had been contacted by the research team for the series to ask about the role of the Newton and Lane families in the history of slavery in Barbados. He was able to pass on a great deal of information and was thanked for his contribution. Allan also recommended the book “Heiresses” by Miranda Kaufman; he had been contacted to provide information about Sarah Newton and was credited for this in “Unpublished sources” for the book.

Allan then welcomed the speaker, Ann Hughes, who had come to talk about “The Civil War in Lichfield”. Ann had done a great deal of research on the effect of the Civil War 1642-1651 on this area; she had looked at individuals such as Lord Brooke, a radical Parliamentarian, who was shot on St Chad’s Day by a Royalist called Dyott, and a foot soldier from Burntwood who had put in a maintenance claim after losing his arm during the war. It was interesting to hear about the context for the civil war, with social changes, more political participation, increasing literacy and religious disputes. The Cathedral Close in Lichfield had been garrisoned and fortified but was occupied at different times by the Royalists and the Parliamentarians. In the Lichfield area, there were a number of small battles, culminating in the last siege of Lichfield April-July 1646. Mavesyn Ridware retained a large number of records from the civil war period, showing the imposition of local taxes by both sides involving money and labour. Lichfield Cathedral, having been damaged and looted, was nearly knocked down but was reprieved and renovated in the 1660s.

Ann was thanked for her very interesting talk.