



4th joint event Levantine Heritage Foundation with the Royal Asiatic Society gathering in London with guest speaker Stephen Boys Smith



Through Consular Eyes: Thomas Sandwith, British Levant Consul 1855-1891

The talk will use Sandwith's reports to the Foreign Office and his successive Ambassadors to illustrate some themes about Britain in the Levant in the second half of the nineteenth century. By way of brief context Stephen will talk about the British Levant Consular Service and Sandwith's career. He will then address the following themes: the (generally unfavourable) view the British then took of "Levantine"; slavery and the slave trade in the Ottoman Empire as viewed by Britain; Anglo-French rivalry; and the impact of technical change (especially the telegraph) on diplomacy. He will end showing Sandwith's part in one of the might-have-beens of archaeological history.



Thomas Sandwith



Stephen Boys Smith, born in 1946, studied history at Cambridge and did a Masters in history at the University of British Columbia. He spent his career in the British Civil Service. He chiefly worked in the Home Office – most frequently on police and national security issues but also on prisons, probation, criminal law policy and finance. He also served in the Central Policy Review Staff in the Cabinet Office ("The Think Tank"), in the Northern Ireland Office and in the Treasury. He was Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary for Northern Ireland in the early 1980s and few years later to the Home Secretary. As a Director General in the Home Office in his three last posts he was head of the Police Department, head of the department responsible for immigration, asylum and nationality, and finally head of the department responsible for policy on counter terrorism, organised crime and drugs. After retirement he undertook several reviews for the British Government, mainly concerned with national security, and was secretary of the Independent Monitoring Commission in Northern Ireland. He was appointed a CB in 2001. He is the author of Thomas Sandwith: A British Consul in the Levant, 1855-1891 (The Isis Press, Istanbul, 2020); co-edited and contributed to Studies on Ottoman Nicosia (The Isis Press, 2019); and has contributed to the ODNB.

28 November 2023, 6.30pm

Royal Asiatic Society, 14 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2HD

Talks are free for LHF & Royal Asiatic Society members but booking essential:

Booking essential: <https://stephen-boys-smith-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk>

For Zoom link Matty Bradley by e-mail: mb@royalasiaticsociety.org

Please support these events by becoming a sponsor. We provide these talks for free to members as part of our mission to preserve and promote the research and public understanding of Levantine heritage. Sponsoring the talks helps cover the LHF's costs in arranging these talks in central London. For sponsorship packages, please contact chairman@levantineheritage.com. All sponsors will be recognised at events and on our website.