

## Lawrence of Arabia's Plate at Auction

An RAF mess plate, believed to have been owned and used by T. E. Lawrence the famous British archaeologist, army officer, diplomat and writer, is going under the Charterhouse hammer in their online auction on **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February**.

“Thomas Edward Lawrence, more commonly known as T. E. Lawrence, was popularised in the 1962 film Lawrence of Arabia starring Peter O’Toole as Lawrence alongside Alec Guinness, Jack Hawkins, Omar Sharif and others,” commented Richard Bromell. “To find anything connected to Lawrence is incredibly rare as he led a modest life at Cloud’s Hill, his small country retreat near Wareham, Dorset.”

The pottery plate in the Charterhouse auction bears the RAF insignia. T. E. Lawrence served as an officer in the First World War. After the war, he joined the British Foreign Office. In 1922 he retreated from public life and joined the RAF as an enlisted man under the pseudonym of T. E. Shaw.

In 1926 he published The Seven Pillars of Wisdom, an autobiographical account of his time and participation in the Arabian Revolt

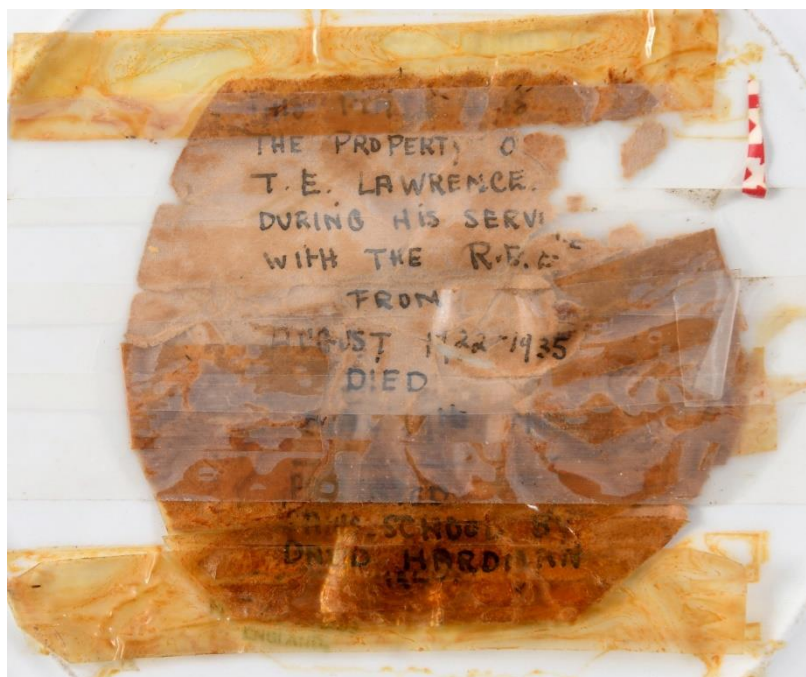
He was fatally injured in 1935 whilst riding his Brough Superior SS100 close to his cottage Cloud’s Hill, in Dorset.

The pottery plate, which measures 24 cm diameter, was discovered in a Dorset cottage by Charterhouse Auctioneers. Having carried out a valuation for probate they were instructed by the executors to clear the property.





**Richard Bromell with the pottery plate believed to have been owned by T. E. Lawrence whilst serving in the RAF.**



On the back of the plate is a sellotaped down old paper label. Although some is indecipherable, it mainly reads "THIS PLATE WAS THE PROPERTY OF T.E. LAWRENCE DURING HIS SERVICE WITH THE R.A.F. FROM AUGUST 1922-1935 DIED MAY 19TH 1935 PRESENTED TO CAIUS SCHOOL BY DAVIS HARDIMAN 1950 (?)"

Cauis School was in Shoreham by Sea. It was privately owned by the Lewis family who lived in the Dorset cottage where this plate was found, along with other mementoes from the school including silver trophies and shields.

“We often come across paper labels stuck onto items. Some of these can be applied to deceive so you always have to tread carefully,” continued Richard Bromell. “But I think in this case the label could be quite possibly a genuine reference to T. E. Lawrence owning the plate as it just looks and feels right. In addition, it appears to have been donated to the private school in the 1950’s. At this time, T. E. Lawrence was held in high esteem by many and in was after 1962 when the film Lawrence of Arabia came out when public interest was greatly increased.”

Estimated at £500 - £1,000 the plate, which is lot 574, is going under the auctioneers hammer at Charterhouse in Sherborne, Dorset on the morning of **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February**. Due to the global pandemic and national lockdown, the auction will be held **online only**. You can watch, listen and follow the auction via **[www.charterhouse-auction.com](http://www.charterhouse-auction.com)**

Charterhouse are now accepting entries for their busy programme of auctions including coins, medals, stamps, clocks and collector’s items in March, classic & vintage cars in April and classic & vintage motorcycles in May.

Items for these auctions can be posted directly to Charterhouse at The Long Street Salerooms, Sherborne **01935 812277** or click and deliver by contacting them on **01935 812277**. Alternatively email photographs of your lots for valuation on **[info@charterhouse-auction.com](mailto:info@charterhouse-auction.com)**