



LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

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'AT HOME' WITH RIBCHESTER LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

There's still time to book for this event on Saturday 10 June, which promises to be an interesting mix of talks and a visit to Ribchester Roman Museum and a walk round the area.

We have already sent out application forms, but if you still require one, please email ribchesterlhs@gmail.com. Completed forms need to be received by 25 May.

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Lancashire people crop up in the most unexpected places during historical research. John Jackson was the mayor of Southampton in 1578-1579 and, like most of the Elizabethan mayors of the town, he kept a 'Remembrance Book'. These were rough notebooks recording all manner of memoranda about council and administrative business, including the text of depositions and statements made by suspects and

witnesses during examinations relating to possible crime, vagrancy and social offences. Many of the rough notes were duly copied into the formal records, but others remained as they were, so the books are valuable evidence of behind the scenes functioning of the Corporation in a busy and cosmopolitan seaport.

I say 'cosmopolitan', because Southampton in the 1570s saw people from all sorts of far-flung places. There was an important trade link with Venice, for example and, despite the interruptions of political crises and warfare, the Iberian Peninsula. There were north Europeans, from the Low Countries, Germany and Denmark. And there were people from Lancashire ... and how strangely foreign they must have seemed, with their incomprehensible speech and curious customs. John Jackson encountered one of them, and jotted down the details in his Remembrance Book. It's an odd little tale, a tiny glimpse into a trivial episode almost 450 years ago, but like all the best pieces of historical evidence it provokes many questions and prompts speculation.

Richard Bullyne or Bulling was the man in question (the modern spelling of his surname being Bullen). He was described as being '**of warrington in lancon shere yoman**', and to me the fact that 'Lancashire' was clearly such an unfamiliar name speaks volumes about the general ignorance about the other parts of the queen's realm. In his testimony Richard said that a week previous to the examination, he had lodged for the night at the house of John Symonds, called 'the whit horsse'. He had evidently forgotten the Tudor equivalent of a Kindle, and had nothing to read, because the 'boye of the howsse lent unto this examinant a small bybell to read in'. Later on, Richard took the bible to the house of Roger Halliday, and 'drinking a pot of bere having not money a bouthe him to paye for the bere', he left the book there until he could fetch a penny to pay for his bar bill. So, Richard in effect paid for his pint with a 'borrowed' (purloined?) bible. Clever man!

But although this is an intriguing little story in its own right, all sorts of questions come to my mind (as they doubtless come to yours). Apart from the obvious one of who was Richard Bullen and what was his family history, there's the key puzzle which might possibly be answerable by further documentary research: what was he doing in Southampton, and what was his business there? There was an important north-south trade route from Lancashire, via the West Midlands, to the south coast (roughly the line of the present A34) and we know that it was used by cloth merchants taking their wares to Southampton for export. However, Richard was apparently from Warrington, which was not a textile area, so that doesn't seem quite right. He was obviously literate, with the bible as his bedtime reading (albeit not necessarily what he would have chosen), but what was his religious outlook, I wonder? And why did he not have even a penny to buy his beer? Did he simply forget that he had the bible, or did he consciously take it away with him? Did alehouse keepers usually accept such items as surety, and did Richard eventually find a penny and repay his debt?

I'll probably never know the answers but, as happens so very often in my researching and exploring the past, something completely unexpected catches my imagination, and I want – in this case – to find more about Richard and his circumstances. Maybe somebody has got there before me?

*I'd like to thank Heather Falvey, Reviews Editor of The Local Historian, for drawing my attention to the entry about the man from **lancon shere**.*

Alan Crosby

NEWS FROM ARCHIVES

LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES

LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY PUBLICATION – ARCHIVES



Our new Lancashire local history magazine, *Archives*, is available to purchase in all Lancashire County Council libraries and at Lancashire Archives, priced at £3. If you'd like to receive a copy by post, please contact the Archives at archives@lancashire.gov.uk

If you have an idea for a contribution, please email and we'd be pleased to discuss your suggestion.



The second edition of *Archives* will be on sale from 1 June 2023. Please contact Lancashire Archives if you would like to order a copy by post.

The deadline for submissions of articles for the third edition is 1 September 2023.

You can find out more about how to submit an article by visiting our website at: [Ordering copies and publications - Lancashire County Council](#)



1921 CENSUS – FREE ACCESS AT LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES AND LANCASHIRE LIBRARIES

Visitors can now research parts of their family history for **FREE** online with Find My Past at the county council's Lancashire Archives and Lancashire libraries. Offering a unique snapshot into the past, the 1921 census provides incredible detail on location, age, marital status and occupation as well as information on other residents at the same place.

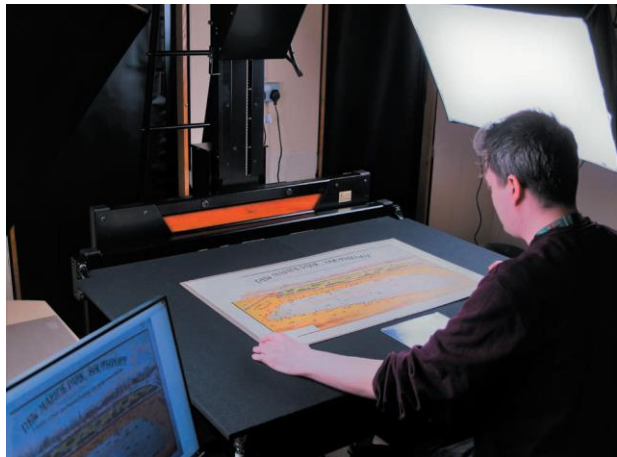
Ballroom Dancers, Nelson, c. 1925, Red Rose Collections 227712

To search the census and thousands of other records on Find My Past, visit [Libraries and Archives - Lancashire County Council](#) to find your nearest venue.

PICTURE PERFECT!

Lancashire Archives are delighted to announce a substantial upgrade to our digitisation programme. With much appreciated funding from the Friends of Lancashire Archives we recently purchased the state-of-the-art Guardian digitisation system from ICAM Archive Systems Ltd.

Left: Mark O'Neill, Archive Conservator, operating the new digitisation equipment to capture images of drawings of the New Marine Park, Southport



This equipment allows us to specialise in the capture of high volume and high quality images from a wide variety of document formats. The handling and use of digitisation equipment is monitored by the conservation team at Lancashire Archives and all records are stored and copied in a secure environment, while a specialist book cradle, book rests, cushions and weights help to prevent damage whilst digitising.

And what can we digitise now? Bound volumes, manuscripts, parchment documents, rolls, newspapers, maps, plans and technical drawings, photographs, large material up to A0, negatives, glass plates and transparencies can all be copied or quoted for by our imaging service.

The form to request a copy or quote from our imaging service can be found on our website at: www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office/order-a-copy/

CAN YOU HELP KEEP LANCASHIRE IN THE PICTURE?



Lancashire County Council's archives, museums and libraries take care of hundreds of thousands of historic photographs of our county, and you can look at many of them online at

<https://redrosecollections.lancashire.gov.uk/>.

However, many more are not available online and the collections need to be brought up to date. Gone are the days when some people printed their photographs and handed a copy in at their local library. Digital cameras and smart phones are capturing images of Lancashire every minute of the day, but very few are being added to the council's collections.

Lancashire Archives DDSP/56/1/145

A project is in development ahead of an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to have more photographs in the existing collections digitised and catalogued so everyone can enjoy them. People will also be asked to donate more recent images and help further by taking photographs which show what Lancashire is like now. It will be important to ensure that the images in the collections reflect the diversity of Lancashire's communities.

If you are interested in lending a hand - by helping with digitisation, donating images or taking photographs – just drop a line to archives@lancashire.gov.uk and we will keep you updated as the project takes shape.

FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 28 MARCH 2023

The AGM was held over Zoom, and attracted nearly 40 attendees. The short business meeting re-elected the present office-holders and committee members, and the various reports showed that membership is robust, the website and newsletter have a good reach, and the financial position is sound. There was a much-appreciated At Home in May, hosted by Westhoughton History Group, and a well-attended and very interesting day conference in November on the topic of roads. This year's At Home is to be hosted by Ribchester Local History Society on 10 June – to which everyone is invited. There are also plans to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Federation later in the year – more details to follow.

The business meeting was followed by a fascinating talk by the chairman of the Federation, Dr Alan Crosby.

He chose a few of his favourite items from Lancashire Archives, for a variety of reasons: some illustrated 'firsts' for Lancashire or the North West; some gave glimpses into the lives of ordinary people; others have come to be of great personal significance to him.

CNP2/1/11 Preston Guild roll. The cartouche from the Guild volume of 1662, the first after the Civil War, showing a complex and mysterious gilded illustration. This fronts a large bound volume giving the names of Guild members. [*The names of all guild members can be searched on the Archives website.*] (1)

DDHo 742 Deed relating to Ravensmeols. A tiny document written between 1230 and 1240. In only 8 lines, five recognizable place names are mentioned.

DDPt 30 Box 5 Billington Bundle. Concerning the 'Halfe Rentall' of Billington in 1648. Whilst the document is interesting in itself, the fascination lies in what has been used as binding. After detailed research, it seems to be scrap of a commentary in Latin on the gospel of John. It may have come from the dissolution of Whalley Abbey, exemplifying the wholesale destruction wrought by Henry VIII, and the disregard of priceless history.

CNP2/1/1 Guild roll 1397 – 4 Jun 1397. The guild began in the 12th century, but this is the oldest surviving record from a guild and was rescued after it had been thrown away. It contains many locative surnames. This has led Alan to carry out more research on the subject, as it shows patterns of migration towards Preston. (2)

DDHK9/1/1-23. Letters of the Parker family of Chorley and the Isle of Man.

They were not high-ranking gentry, which makes the collection even more special. Hugh Parker was associated with the Earls of Derby, and the correspondence from 1485 to 1532 is the earliest known surviving private correspondence from the North West and from the Isle of Man.

DDHo 1514 De Hoghton of Hoghton collection. An order from Elizabeth I to the sheriff to send 200 men to help subdue rebels in Ireland. It is personally signed by the Queen.

QSB/1/57/33 POULTON Quarter sessions examination 1629-- accusation of theft against Elizabeth wife of John Johnson, and Jane wife of Thomas Clarke, travelling stocking sellers. Contains a detailed account of the questioning of the two women, whose journey began in Standish and travelled through Preston, Garstang and the Fylde. When asked why they had stolen washing left to dry on bushes, the despairing reply was, 'To get something, for God's sake' - an authentic voice across four centuries.

WRW(A) William Blackledge 1685. The probate entry of 1685 for William Blackledge of Preston. The list includes items such as quinces and exotic spices, showing that the north west was far from being an insular backwater.

DDX 1554/1 Benjamin Shaw's family records. One of the most important discoveries in working-class autobiography. Benjamin Shaw was self-taught, and made the book and pen himself. (3)

Some of Alan's publications are relevant to items above:

- 1) *The history of Preston Guild: England's greatest carnival* (Carnegie Publishing, 2nd ed., 2012)
- 2) 'Migration to Preston in the fourteenth century: the evidence of surnames'. *The Local Historian*, no.8 (1993), pp.6-17.
- 3) *The family records of Benjamin Shaw, mechanic of Dent, Dolphinholme and Preston, 1772-1841.* (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, vol.130, 1991)

Not only is the Archives a treasure-house of 900 years of Lancashire history, but it is free to use. The website <https://bit.ly/2P6KNMH> gives full details of how to obtain a reader's ticket, opening hours, etc.

SPEAKERS' CORNER

We invite speakers who wish to publicise their talks to send details to the newsletter, to reach a wide audience.

If you would like to do so, please send:

- Name
- Contact details
- Subject(s) covered
- Areas where you are willing to give talks
- Whether you would deliver over Zoom, if asked
- Any other relevant information

Please do not include details of fees, as this can be discussed with the organisation when you make contact.

Any agreement will be made between the speaker and the group, so the Lancashire Local History Federation cannot accept responsibility for any aspect of the arrangement.

Email mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk Marianne Howell, Newsletter editor.

LAVINIA TOD Lavinia has had a variety of jobs, including being an Education Team leader for Lancashire Museums Service.

CONTACT DETAILS 01706 822474 / 077746038421

Email arevintgarden@gmail.com

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS Willing to travel (from Ramsbottom) rather than Zoom.

SUBJECTS

Rags to riches: The story of the Grant brothers, farmers from Scotland, who helped to develop Ramsbottom and were the inspiration behind the Cheeryble brothers in Charles Dickens' novel *Nicholas Nickleby*.

Sex and scandal in the Victorian era: The story of Edith Nesbit, author of *The railway children*, whose life was stranger than fiction.

Seven Robert Peels - Rise and fall: farmer, millionaire, prime minister, gambler, thief, car salesman, and the last one - sailor.

A Tudor family's rise and the origin of words and traditions: for example, the reason we throw wedding bouquets, and the origin of full board and half board.

A Plantagenet wedding: many unknown facts about Plantagenet kings and their lives.

NEWS FROM MEMBER SOCIETIES

LANCASHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

From 1975 to 1990, up to six times a year, Margaret and Ben Edwards wrote and published the *Lancashire Archaeological Bulletin* (LAB), intended to keep people in Lancashire up-to-date with what was going on in archaeology in the county, in a typed and duplicated subscription journal, profusely illustrated, mainly with Ben's drawings. It provides a treasure trove of information, dating long before the Portable Antiquities Scheme made small finds more accessible. Previously inaccessible, the full run has now been digitised by Peter Iles and Joanne Smith from the set held by Lancashire County Council's Historic Environment team and is now freely available on the LAS website <https://bit.ly/3KcljJw>. There are two searchable indexes – Subject and Volume number. Or just browse to make interesting discoveries.

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

Tuesday 9 May 2.00 pm in person (plus an online link). The President, Mike Nevell, will talk about Park Bridge. Park Bridge, an industrial hamlet near Ashton, was well known for its ironworks which supplied rivets for the Eiffel Tower (among other things!). Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre, Cotton St East, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 7BY.

Tuesday 6 June 2.00pm Zoom talk. Edwin Butterworth, Lancashire's forgotten historian (1812 - 1848). By Mike Winstanley, "retired" senior lecturer in History at Lancaster University. Well-known in the Oldham area, Edwin and his father James are largely forgotten elsewhere. Edwin was also a reporter for the Manchester press and worked for Edward Baines on his History of Lancashire (1836).

Saturday 29 July. Proposed visit to the Experimental Archaeology Research and Teaching Hub, led by Dr Peter Hommel. This is based at Ness Botanic Gardens, Neston Rd, Ness, Cheshire. Details to follow.

Email secretary@landcas.org.uk for details, booking and links to talks.

SKELMERSDALE HERITAGE SOCIETY Meetings are held at Upholland Labour Club, Skelmersdale, WN8 9AR, starting at 7.00pm. Guests pay £2 per session.



Monday 5 June: The work of Lancashire Archives – Alex Miller, Archives Manager

Monday 3 July: Blame it on the Beatles and Bill Shankly – John Winter

CHORLEY HERITAGE GROUP

Chorley Heritage Group and Chorley Library are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush

2023 marks the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the first members of the Windrush generation. In 1948, the HMT Empire Windrush brought workers and their families, invited by the UK government, from the West Indies to Britain. More than 1000 people from the Caribbean, including children, made their homes in Britain between 1948 and 1971. Some of these families came to Chorley. Our planned exhibition and events will celebrate their experiences and the contributions they have made to the town of Chorley. The Chorley Heritage Windrush exhibition and some other events will be held at Chorley Library, Union Street, Chorley, PR7 1EB.



The Heritage Group is recording the memories of people who came to Chorley from the West Indies during the Windrush years, and of their descendants, and would like to hear from even more people. Please leave names and telephone numbers with Chorley Library staff, or contact the Heritage Group via our website www.chorleyheritagecentre.co.uk

One person already contacted recalls arriving in Southampton, aged 20 in February 1952. *It was a very cold, windy day. My first impression, when I came off the boat, was that I could see men in coats! I didn't usually see men with coats on, and I looked at them, and I thought it was very strange. And the buildings – they were huge!* She continued her journey by train to be with her husband at Chorley's Woodlands Hostel. She was the first West Indian woman to settle here.

We are having a **Chorley Windrush party on Friday 23rd June at St. Joseph's Parish Centre, Harper's Lane, Chorley, PR6 0HR**. Tickets are not available yet, but will be essential. There will be no charge, but we hope everyone will be prepared to donate to cover the food and music costs. If you discover anyone who would like to join us, contact can be made via my mobile 07922116987.

Jenny Cree

FRIENDS OF PENDLE HERITAGE

Tuesday 9 May 2.00pm: The Sixties, Decade or Decadence? Frank Vigon

Following an age of austerity after the second world war, young people seize the day and make the world their own. The sixties mark a social, political, and cultural change that was seismic in its impact. Things were never going to be quite the same again. Were you there or did you miss it?

Higherford Methodist Church, Barrowford. Car parking on Bankhouse Mews at the rear of the church. Members £3 Non-members £5. Refreshments included.

For further information visit the website www.foph.co.uk; email info@foph.co.uk; or phone 07787 631078.

FRIENDS OF WINCKLEY SQUARE

Sunday 21 May 2.00pm-3.15pm. Extraordinary women of Winckley Square – guided walk with Pat Harrison

Monday 22 May 7.00pm-8.30pm. More scandalous stories from Winckley Square – talk by Steve Harrison



A house through time: 5 Winckley Square – a series of talks by Susan Douglass about the residents, from the builder Thomas Miller through to the present. All 7.00pm-8.30pm

1. **Thursday 7 June**
2. **Thursday 20 June**
3. **Friday 18 July**

*Red Rose Collections – Lancashire County Council
213858*

All walks and talks cost £5 on the day, or to be sure of a place book through www.eventbrite.co.uk (£4 plus Eventbrite fee).

For further details contact patricia@winckley.org.uk

GARSTANG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The society is looking to the future, as well as the past. At the annual meeting in April vice chairman Anthony Coppin reported that the society had made progress in terms of its activities and numbers at the monthly meetings after resuming activities following a two year break because of the Covid pandemic.

Well known Garstang resident, Maureen Spiers, a long-standing member of the committee (together with her late husband Bob) has taken over as chairman from Peter Burrell, who was thanked for his 20 years in the role.

Following the annual meeting the guest speaker Professor Paul Salveson gave a presentation to the 70 people present on the life and times of Lancashire journalist and author Allen Clarke (aka Teddy Ashton) whose writings include the classic *Windmill Land*.

During the summer a coach trip is planned to Barrow Dock Museum and to Roa and Piel islands. A guided walk around Garstang's historic town centre is also planned.

The Garstang society will resume its regular series of meetings in September at a new venue, St Thomas's parish hall and community centre, Garstang. Details of the 2023/24 programme will be publicised later, but topics already planned include the early history of the former Lancaster County Lunatic Asylum, the maritime heritage of Arnside and "Richard III and his Northern connections."



The re-organised committee: Front row: Beverley Hoyle (joint treasurer), Maureen Spiers (chairman), Jean Mavin. Back row: Anthony Coppin (vice chairman), Peter

Burrell, Bob Denmark, Julian Hoyle (joint treasurer), Ian Budgen (technical adviser).

Photo courtesy Andy Moreland

PRESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

75th Anniversary Celebrations

Monday 26 June 7.00pm- 8.15pm (approx.): The Stephen Sartin Memorial Walk: The people and places of historic Preston. The walk is in honour of the late Stephen Sartin, one of Preston's celebrated historians.

Meet at the Church Street entrance of the Miller Arcade PR1 1DA.

Tuesday 27 June 1.00pm-4.00pm: The Preston Memorabilia Show and Tell: Antiques & memorabilia show with antiques expert, Brian Beck and Preston Guild expert, Mike Hopkins. Bring along a family heirloom or a car boot purchase, to find out more about it and have it assessed by the experts.

Central Methodist Church, Lune Street, Preston PR1 2NL.

Wednesday 23 June 7.00pm: "INN-Sight and sound of the old Town Hall". A guided walk with Steve Halliwell. Steve, author of *Preston Pubs* (2014) will lead a journey to conjure up a Preston made up of small beer-houses, concert halls and singing rooms, along with coaching inns. Come along and create personalised images - and take the opportunity to quench your thirst should you desire.

Meet at the Cenotaph in the Flag Market, PR1 2AP.

Thursday 29 June 10.30am: The good old days of Victorian Preston ? A guided walk with David Hindle. The Society's President, David Hindle, is an author of three books on Preston's music halls. This city centre walk will focus on the first pub music halls, theatres and cinemas.

Meet at the centre of the Miller Arcade PR1 2QY

Monday 3 July 7.00pm: The diaries of Preston journalist Anthony Hewitson: an illustrated talk by Dr Andrew Hobbs.

The diaries of Victorian provincial journalist, Anthony Hewitson (1836-1912) of Preston, were recently published, edited by Andrew Hobbs, a historian of journalism. The diaries tell us about Victorian society and culture in Preston.

Mitchell & Kenyon Cinema, Foster Building, UCLan, PR1 2HE

Tuesday 4 July: From Canal Basin to Loxham's Garage (1799 – 1993) :An Illustrated talk (7pm) and walk (limited no.) 8.15 pm – 9.00 pm (approx.)

by Stewart Turner. The area around Preston's canal basin (where Corporation Street crosses the Inner Ring Road) encapsulates the last 200 years of Preston's history. Stewart Turner in this 'Talk and Walk' intends to demonstrate how this area changed between the building of the canal basin in 1799, to the creation of the Inner Ring Road in 1991.

Meet at Central Methodist Church, Lune Street, Preston PR1 2NL

Wednesday 5 July 7.00-8.30pm: A night with Charles Dickens - a one-man show by Gerald Dickens. Preston always had a special place in Dickens' memory. He visited three times, and Coketown in his novel *Hard Times* is believed to be based on Preston. He even performed '*Doctor Marigold*' in 1867. It is only fitting therefore that Gerald Dickens, a great-great grandson of the author will be performing *Doctor Marigold*' in his one-man Charles Dickens show.

Central Methodist Church, Lune Street, Preston PR12NL

The following pricing and contact information refers to all above events: Members FOC; visitors £5. Please book on www.eventbrite.co.uk

For further information about events and joining the Society, contact patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk or see www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk or www.facebook.com/prestonhistoricalsociety

TAMESIDE LOCAL HISTORY FORUM

Tuesday 9 May 2.00 pm at Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre, Ashton

Mike Nevell will talk about Park Bridge, the industrial hamlet between Ashton and Oldham. This will be at the Local Studies and Archives Centre, Cotton St East, Ashton, OL6 7BY and by Zoom. Tel. 0161 342 4242 to book a place.

Tuesday 23 May 2.00 pm at St Mary's Church, Newton

Brian Hartley will talk about the stained glass of Tameside churches, followed by a tour of the church. St Mary's is off Bower Ct, Talbot Rd, Hyde, SK14 4HL

Tuesday 13 June 2.00 pm

A visit to the Moravian Settlement and Museum in Droylsden with a tour by **Janet Warr**. Meet at the Museum, Fairfield Square, Droylsden, M43 6AE

ALL WELCOME Anybody interested in the work of the Forum (open to individuals and representatives of groups) is welcome at the next meeting - Tuesday 20 June 2.00 pm at Christ Church Community Centre (4C), Oldham Rd, Ashton, OL7 9DR

Please contact the Secretary, Chris Clough (chrismclough@yahoo.co.uk) for details of events or see the website (<http://www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk>)

NEWS ROUNDUP

ARCHAEOLOGY

Research framework for north west England These frameworks are useful in helping to identify what is significantly important archaeologically. They provide research questions and objectives to help co-ordinate and focus research. The resources bring together input across various sectors, including local authorities, contractors, academics and voluntary groups. The frameworks can be found at <https://bit.ly/41G8q2Q>. The assessments are categorised according to periods in history, from early prehistory to the historic built environment. The last category may be useful to local history societies which are researching textile mills, historic houses, or other buildings and areas which have disappeared under later developments.

The site allows for groups and individuals to contribute their research.

MANCHESTER HISTORIES

May is Local and Community History Month

Manchester Central Library will be hosting a number of events during May, for people to find out more about their rich local heritage.

Manchester Histories is also providing a number of activities in Manchester Histories Hub in the library.



The Historical Association has details of related events, activities and talks taking place across the UK www.history.org.uk.

PRESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We have embraced Facebook – would your society benefit from doing the same? A number of Lancashire local history societies are already on the platform, as are other related county groups such as the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Lancashire Genealogy, and the Lancashire Archaeological Society.

Since joining the Preston Historical Society recently and becoming involved with its Facebook page I've been impressed by how useful a tool it is for both engaging with existing members and reaching out to potential recruits. Membership of the society had been declining and, with the impact of Covid restrictions on public meetings, had fallen to well below a hundred. In this, it was no different from most other local history societies. Yet its Facebook page had nearly three thousand followers, and hundreds more people have signed on in recent months.

Having been a very reluctant user of social media, I have now become convinced that it offers the best way for societies to survive, and flourish. A Facebook presence provides an open and interactive forum for both members and non-members, and a platform on which to share news of events and activities of interest to members more frequently than is provided by newsletters or meetings.

Another benefit is the ease with which a Facebook page can be set up and administered. I know of one Lancashire Facebook group with more than 50,000 followers and dozens of daily posts that has been run for several years by one individual. And that individual is in full-time employment.



It is a sad truth that most local history societies have ageing and declining memberships. Facebook appeals to a much wider demographic, and can throw a lifeline to those societies. The figure *left* shows the age and gender breakdown of our Society's followers. A different demographic, I think, to that usually found attending local society meetings.

Some local history societies can be slow to adapt and face up to the problem of declining memberships: dare I say that such positions may sadly lead to the closure of more societies.

Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/228587940924375>

Lancashire Genealogy: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/113369512152128>

Lancashire Archaeological Society:

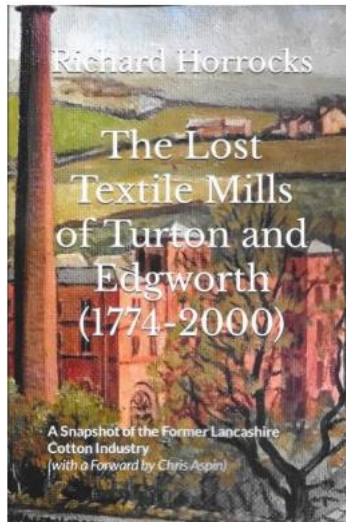
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2051771608212383>

Preston Historical Society: <https://www.facebook.com/PrestonHistoricalSociety>

Peter Smith

[The Federation committee is actively considering setting up a Facebook account. We would be interested in hearing the views of societies which have already done so. Ed.]

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



The lost textile mills of Turton and Edgworth (1774-2000): a snapshot of the former Lancashire cotton industry

By Richard Horrocks

200pp, col. And b&w ill.

Available from Amazon: £12.99; Kindle £5.99, and from the Turton Tower gift shop www.turtontower.com

The two villages between them had a total of 14 textile mills, involved in every stage of cotton production.

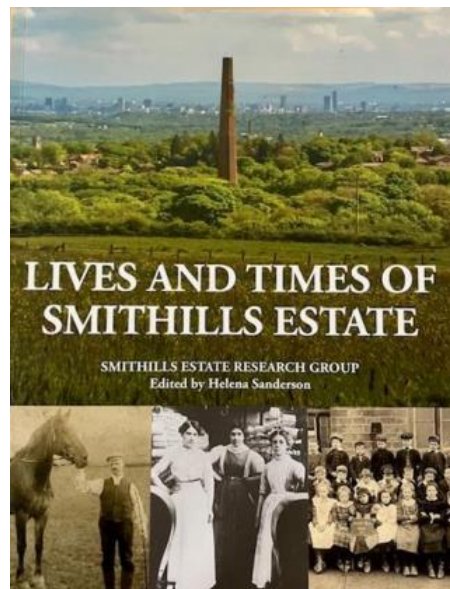
Lives and times of Smithills Estate

Smithills Research Group
Ed. Helena Sanderson

268pp, 300 ills.

£25. Available from Horwich Heritage Centre www.horwichheritage.co.uk

The Hall and estate are three miles north west of Bolton town centre. The book contains stories and events concerning local people, and is richly illustrated with diagrams, etchings, paintings and photographs.



In addition there is a gazetteer of buildings which were on the estate in the 19th century, and records from the 16th century onwards, listing tenants and owners.

Amongst many other features, the book includes details of the owners; the Quarlton Vale flood of three mills in 1872; the 1898 fire in Wellington mill; and the site of four mills now covered by the Wayoh and Jumbles reservoirs. There are also personal accounts of people who worked at the mills between the 1950s and 1990s.

There is an 8-mile circular walk to enable readers to discover the sites of the mills, and to see their effect on today's geography of the area.

Dr Horrocks is a professor and SME and STEM champion at the University of Bolton. He has a specialised interest in chemistry and textiles, and has been awarded honorary life membership of the Textile Institute.

REQUESTS

BLACKPOOL NHS

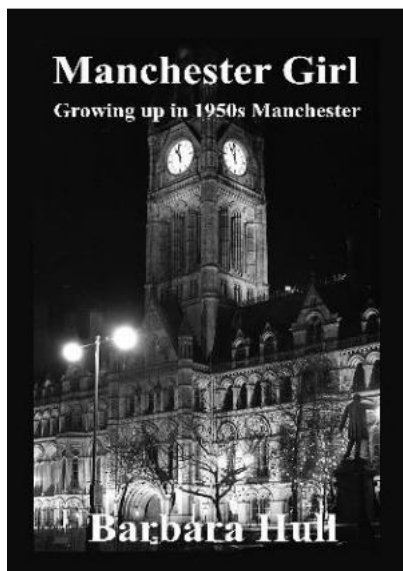
It's the 75th birthday of the NHS on 5 July. To mark the anniversary, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust would like to hear people's stories and memories of what the NHS means to them, for example:

- How has the NHS changed you or your family's life for the better?
- Do you have pictures of times past at hospitals in Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre you'd like to share?
- Did you have family or friends who were with the NHS at its start in 1948?
- Do you come from a long line of NHS staff?
- What's your favourite memory of the NHS and why?

It's easy to get involved. Simply go to our website and fill in this form. You can also write directly to tonyellis@nhs.net in the Trust communications team if you prefer and we'll share the best stories on our online digital archive.

Tony Ellis, Communications Manager, Special Projects

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO A FOLLOW-UP PUBLICATION



The May 2022 edition (no.39) of the newsletter contained information about **Barbara Hull's** book *Manchester Girl: Growing up in 1950s Manchester* (ISBN 979-8594802032).

It has received a favourable review in *Local History news* (July 2022), and has been compared to the work of Robert Roberts, the author of *The classic slum*. Copies are available on Amazon and in Manchester public libraries.

Some readers have suggested that Barbara should continue her narrative into the 1960s. She says, "This would not be the generally portrayed glamorous Manchester of the swinging sixties but rather an alternative daily reality lived by the majority. The sixties

were indeed a period of great social upheaval but the social change did not happen overnight. In addition to drawing on my own vivid memories of living in North Manchester as a young married woman with three children, I would be interested in hearing from anyone willing to share their own 1960s memories of living and/or working in the area".

I now live in North Yorkshire but could easily connect to others in the Manchester diaspora via Zoom. My email is barbarahullwriter@btinternet.com.

THE RIVINGTON CHAPEL TRUST

CALL FOR MORE TRUSTEES

The Chapel was built in 1703 and is a Grade II* listed building. It was established for the use of *'such a congregation and assembly of Protestants only as shall be dissenting from the Church of England'*. The congregation has been Unitarian since the mid-1800s. Further details of the Chapel and its congregation can be found at

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk.



Rivington Unitarian Chapel (Credit: Jim Barton)

The Rivington Chapel Trust is responsible for maintaining the building, and is completely separate from the congregation. Inevitably, many of the current trustees are also members of the congregation, but a trustee does not need to be.

Following hard work by the current trustees, the Chapel building and grounds are in a decent state of repair. As is the case with many chapels, the average age of the trustees is increasing, so more trustees are sought to ensure that the work can continue.

Becoming a trustee of the Chapel may appeal to anyone with an interest in local history and historic buildings. Trust meetings are normally held twice a year, in March and September. The trust is a registered charity. More detailed information about the trust, and what being a trustee entails, can be obtained by contacting the secretary Peter Bearon - email trustsec@rivingtonchapel.org.uk or phone 01942 816569.

RESEARCH ARTICLES

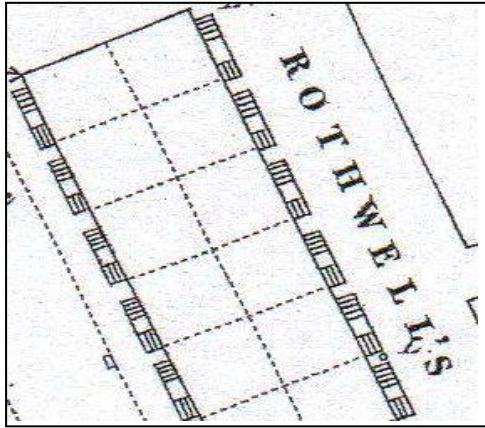
ORDNANCE SURVEY TOWN PLANS AND LANCASHIRE'S URBAN HISTORY

Geoff Timmins

The Ordnance Survey town plans, which were mostly surveyed during the late 1840s and the early 1890s, have been made available online by the National Library of Scotland. They make a welcome addition to the resources available in studying Victorian history, in Lancashire as elsewhere.¹ High-quality images prevail, some in colour. Coverage is as yet incomplete, but gaps can probably be filled from collections of the maps held at Lancashire Archives and in local libraries. The earlier set, published on a scale of 5 feet to one mile, were prepared for towns with a

population of 4,000 or above. In Lancashire, there were 26 of them. The later set, produced on a scale of ten feet to one mile, gives greater geographical coverage, since places that were too small to feature in the 1840s series had increased substantially in size by the 1890s, thereby meriting inclusion.ⁱⁱ Great Harwood and Eccles are examples.

The detailed investigations the town plans allow into various aspects of urban development can be illustrated in relation to housing. Consider, for example, the houses shown left.



They were situated at Rothwell's Court, Bolton, and are recorded on sheet 12 of the town's 5' to the mile maps, which were published in 1849. On the six-inch scale map, the houses appear as just a single, shaded block, so little can be deduced about them. Yet several key features are evident when the five-foot scale map is used.

1. The number and type of the houses in the row can be determined. They totalled 20 and were built as back-to-back dwellings rather than as through houses.
2. The approximate size of the floor-plan for each house can be estimated using the scale at the foot of the sheet.
3. Two flights of steps were provided at the front of each house. Those with steps at right angles to the front wall led to and from a separate cellar dwelling. Since all the houses in the row were fitted with steps of this type, each of the cellar dwellings comprised a single room. The cellars rose somewhat above ground level to enable greater advantage to be taken of natural light. Accordingly, each house above them also required a flight of steps to its external door. Depending on the slope of the land and on the height to which the cellars rose, the flight might be quite steep, bringing inconvenience and danger to the occupiers. The space created for the steps to the cellars acted as a light well.

Other similar rows of back-to-back cottages often display only one flight of steps running parallel to the front door. Accordingly, the cellar was accessed from inside the house and was therefore used by the occupants. In all probability, cellars in such houses would have been used for handloom weaving. In these cases, accompanying cellar light wells are also shown on the maps.

Using the details gleaned from the maps, it is often possible to undertake a *house repopulation* exercise. The objective is to reconstruct the households as they were recorded by census enumerators. For example, the following were amongst the residents in 14 cellars at Weston Street, Bolton, in 1851:

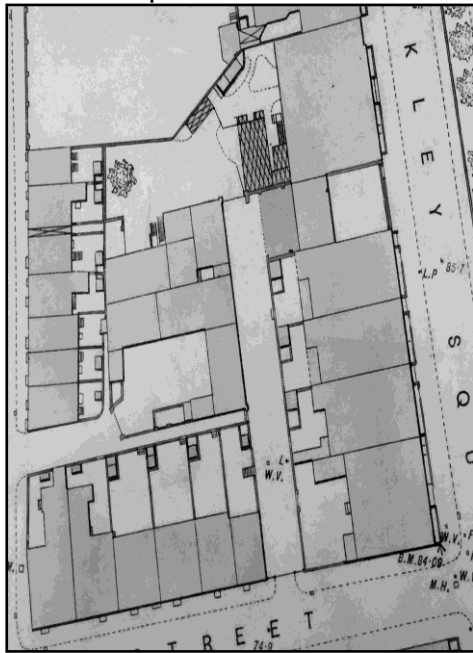
- *Single occupants*: two households - female (unmarried) aged 62 and female (widow) aged 77.
- *Two occupants*: four households - married couples alone, two in their 20s and the others in their 70s and 80s.
- *Three occupants*: three households - married couple with a daughter aged 14; married couple with a visitor; married female, aged 47, her daughter, aged 10 (piecer in a cotton mill) and a female lodger.

- *Five occupants*: one household - married couple with three children aged 5, 7 and 2.

Married couples predominated. Perhaps, in time, the younger ones became prosperous enough to move to more spacious accommodation if they so wished; much may have depended on their expenditure preferences and the importance they attached to their neighbourhood links. Yet the older inhabitants and the female heads of household were less well placed in this respect, unless they were able to move in with their kinsfolk, as occurred more generally.ⁱⁱⁱ

Studies of this type can link well with investigations into the theme of overcrowding. As the above examples show, by no means all cellars housed as many individuals as contemporary writers often suggested. The tricky question of how overcrowding can be defined arises, however, with the national census authorities setting more than two people per room as the threshold. Another tricky question was what constituted a room.^{iv}

The town plans also facilitate investigations into urban housing for the better-off, as



this extract *shown left* demonstrates. Taken from the 1890s 10-foot town sheets for Preston, it shows part of the west side of Winckley Square.^v Houses of various sizes are depicted, with ashpit privies still in situ, though sewers that could be linked to domestic water closets were laid in the square during the first half of the 1860s. Most of the households shown had their own privies, in contrast to the residents at Rothwell Court. As a moment's reflection will show, the positioning of the privies had advantages and disadvantages, both in terms of usage and maintenance. Cellar provision with light wells and front door steps can also be seen. The function of the outbuildings is unclear, but stabling and gig housing are possibilities.

The 1840s town plans often extend beyond the built-up areas to take in nearby developments. These include industrial premises and associated housing, as well as early residential suburbs that feature large detached or semi-detached houses set in sizeable gardens. And how the suburbs grew further can be examined on the later town plans. Again, house repopulation exercises relating to them can be undertaken, with a view to assessing the accommodation standards to which they gave rise, and drawing comparisons with those experienced by better-off families, like those in Winckley Square, who chose to reside within urban settings.

Other aspects of urban development on which town plans shed light include the rise of new industrial districts within them, extending the built-up area, along with the housing and social facilities they provided; the layout of industrial premises; the expansion and redevelopment of urban centres (central business districts) as towns expanded and notions of 'civic pride' strengthened; and, with regard to transport

history, the forms that canal wharves and railway facilities took, both for goods and passengers, along with the impact they had on the built environment, favourable or otherwise.

References

ⁱ The maps can be viewed at [Ordnance Survey Town Plans of England and Wales, Surveyed: 1840s-1890s - National Library of Scotland \(nls.uk\)](https://www.nls.uk/collections/ordnance-survey-town-plans-of-england-and-wales)

ⁱⁱ Further details of the maps are given in B. P. Hindle, *Maps for Local History*, London: Batsford, 1988, ch. 6.

ⁱⁱⁱ For discussion of widows' kinship links, see M. Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971, pp. 144-7.

^{iv} An official definition was not introduced until 1911. Details can be found at [HISTPOP.ORG - Search > Results > General report, England and Wales, 1911](https://www.histpop.org/) Page Page 169

^v Sheet 16.14.1.

THE RING FINGER

Have you ever wondered how old is the tradition of wearing a wedding ring on the third finger of the left hand? It may be older than you think. I have long wished for, and failed to find, a book which gave full details of early English law codes, but at last I have found one: *The Laws of the earliest English kings*, by F. L. Attenborough¹. It is a parallel edition, with the Anglo-Saxon printed opposite the modern translation. The earliest law code printed there is that of King Aethelberht I of Kent, who reigned AD 560-616. Many of his laws deal with the compensation due for injuries, and one of these lists the fingers of the hand:

If a thumb is struck off, 20 shillings [compensation]
If a thumb nail...3 shillings
If a ... forefinger ... 9 shillings
If a ... middle finger ... 4 shillings
If a man strikes off a 'ring finger', he shall pay 6 shillings compensation
If a ... little finger ... 11 shillings

And the Anglo-Saxon given for 'ring finger?' – 'goldfinger'.²

Diana Winterbotham

References

1. Attenborough, F. L. *The laws of the earliest English kings*. *Alpha Editions*, 2019. ISBN 9789389525809. Originally published 1922.
2. *Op cit.*, cap.54, on p.11.