



## LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

### NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO. 33, NOVEMBER 2020

**COPY DATE FOR NEXT EDITION: 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**

Editor: Marianne Howell  
01942 492855 [mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk)

**Honorary President: Morris Garratt**

Chair: Marianne Howell	01942 492855
Secretary: John Wilson	03330 062270
Treasurer: Peter Bamford	01253 796184
Membership Secretary: Zoe Lawson	01772 865347
Website Manager: Peter Houghton	01772 641604

Please see the website [www.lancashirehistory.org](http://www.lancashirehistory.org) for more contact details.

### VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

I hope that you and your families and friends are finding ways to cope with these extraordinary circumstances. The restrictions imposed on us because of Covid-19 have impacted everyone, including our local and family history societies. We would be interested to know how you are adapting to what may well be a prolonged period without being able to meet in person – see the item about social media further below. On a personal note, I will be stepping down at the end of the year. During the time I have had the pleasure of chairing the Federation committee, I am glad to say that we have enjoyed the following successes:

- A continuing programme of annual day conferences, with a variety of interesting topics and speakers – Traditional crafts (2016), Working conditions in the north west (2017), Vernacular architecture (2018), Pageants and processions in the north west (2019), Sounds of Lancashire: music, song and poetry (2020)

- Publishing *Lancashire studies: historical essays in honour of Alan Crosby* (more details below)
- Supporting local societies to host an 'At Home' each year – St Helens (2016), Stockport (2017), Leyland (2018), Lancaster (2019)
- Supporting the annual Fylde History Network day conference for 10 years (it has now sadly come to an end)
- A revised website which has had tens of thousands of visits
- An increased number of member societies
- A quarterly newsletter, which now includes research articles
- A strengthening of the committee membership
- Keeping the membership fee constant - £8 for societies, and £5 for individuals
- A healthy financial situation

I am delighted to say that Dr Alan Crosby has agreed to become Chairman in 2021 (subject to ratification at a future AGM). It hardly needs to be stated that Alan brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role, as a lecturer, author and freelance historian of eminence, well known both locally and nationally. His first link with the Federation was as far back as 1986. If you wish to know more about him, why not purchase a copy of the Federation book published in his honour which, in addition to the nine excellent essays forming the body of the work, contains a brief biography, and a list of his huge body of published works (details below). Alan will be taking over at a very difficult time, but there is no-one better suited to be at the helm as we go into an uncertain 2021. The committee is continuing to discuss future plans, which will be announced over the next few months.

**Marianne Howell**

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

**Just a reminder:** membership is due for renewal on 1 January. Zoe Lawson, the Membership Secretary, will be sending out a notice at the beginning of December with the details for renewing your membership. The fees are unchanged at £5 for an individual, £8 for a society and £8 for joint membership.

## **NEWS FROM ARCHIVES**

### **LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES**

Lancashire Archives welcomed back visitors on 6 October but as we go to press it is likely that we may be closed again for some time. We will however endeavour to keep the enquiry and copying service going. Please see the website for details.

The building has been certified as Covid-19 secure, in line with regulations. Everyone who has visited says that they feel safe. They like having documents on their desks ready for use and we have been full for several sessions.

Searchroom procedures are very different, with only 8 desks for consulting documents, 2 public network computers (and a new printer which works), the listening post for sound recordings and 2 microfilm and microfiche readers.

We hope to welcome back 24 volunteers, who will work in the searchroom in the same way as visitors undertaking research.

Before arranging a visit, you will need to have obtained a new Archives Card which has replaced the old blue CARN ticket. You can find more information and sign up at [www.archivescard.com](http://www.archivescard.com). Registration is free of charge.

You must book a session in advance and also tell us which books and documents you wish to see during your visit. You can do this on the website <https://bit.ly/3mLIJe3>.

You may book up to 4 sessions in a week. We are open from Tuesday to Friday. The morning session lasts from 9.30 to 12.30 and the afternoon from 1.30 to 4.30. Everyone has to leave the building at lunchtime so that we can clean the desks and lockers between sessions.

If you are planning to visit please ensure that you read all the information on the website and **all** the guidance you are sent in advance. [Find out more before you visit.](#)



We are using a different entrance to the building.

It is round the back of the stairwell and has an intercom so that you can tell searchroom staff you have arrived.

As we go to press, the arrangements for Christmas and the New Year are as follows: We will be closed to the public for Christmas from 4.30pm on Wednesday 23 December until 9.30am on Tuesday 29 December. We will be closed for New Year from 4.30 on Wednesday 30 December until 9.30 on Tuesday 5 January.

If you wish to visit the Archives on days we are open between 23 December and 6 January, you must book by midnight on Monday 21 December. Please do not travel until you have received confirmation that your booking has been accepted. Staff do not process booking requests outside normal working hours.

**Jacquie Crosby, Archives Service Manager**

## WIGAN AND LEIGH ARCHIVES

Work is continuing on remodelling Leigh Town Hall to provide improved facilities for the archives. When re-opened the building will include enhanced storage facilities for the archives, a re-configured search room for staff, volunteers and visitors, and displays in former shops which front on to Market Street.



While the archives are closed, current copies of the local history magazine, *Past Forward*, have been made freely available on the website (normally £2 per copy).

The latest edition contains a very interesting article 'Death's dictionary: a guide to 19<sup>th</sup> century symbolism', by Charlie Guy <https://bit.ly/3kvqPtX>.

## NEWS FROM SOCIETIES

### LANCASTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Darren N Webster and Michael Haslam describe a new research group formed by the LAHS**

The Society formed a Research Group in early 2020 with the aim of jointly investigating and publishing research about archaeological and historical matters of interest from Lancaster and the surrounding area. This is in addition to the long tradition of members of the Society working individually to research the local area. Formation of the Society's Research Group has provided researchers at all levels of ability with a collaborative and supportive structure within which they can carry out their own research. The Group's e-newsletter is published quarterly and issued to all Society members by email which is accessible on the website at the following link: [LAHS Research Group](#). Longer research articles will continue to appear in the society's annual journal, *Contrebis*, managed by the editor, Dr Gordon Clark. Details via this weblink: [Contrebis journal](#).

The objectives of the Group are to:

- Undertake research and publish on local and regional historical and archaeological issues that are of interest to Group members and the Society
- Provide support and advice to Group members with their own research throughout the year
- Work with historians at all levels, from amateur enthusiasts to academics and authors, to achieve a common objective of extending and enhancing local knowledge
- Publicise workshops and exhibitions offered by other research groups, archive offices, libraries and museums in the north west

- Arrange site visits on subjects being researched by group members to benefit from local knowledge and expertise

Members of the Research Group are currently undertaking various projects, but progress is limited whilst access to archives and libraries is restricted. One project concerns the village, mill and weir at Lower Halton near Lancaster (Figs. 1 & 2).

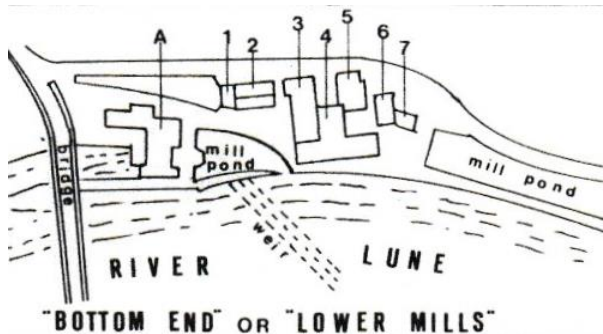


Fig. 1: Plan of Halton Lower Mill (Block A c.1935)  
(Bill Hosfield, *Halton's Industrial Past* pp.58-9)



Fig. 2: Partial collapse of the weir wall  
(©Keith Walton, 2020)

The Group's objective is to publish an article in *Contrebis*, and possibly a monograph, which also will include factors affecting economic, political and religious history, and the impact transport, housing and leisure had on the community. We would welcome contributions from people with expertise in the economic, political and transport history of the area.



Other projects include research into female land ownership in the Lancaster region during the mid-nineteenth century, using tithe records; the medieval bridge built over the Lune at Lancaster in 1215 (Fig. 3); Capernwray Hunting Lodge; the history of a house and its occupants in Queen Street, Lancaster, and the work of Thomas Mawson, landscape architect and town planner.

Fig. 3: Map showing the medieval bridge  
by William Mackreth, 1778  
(Lancaster Maritime Museum)

If you would like to join the Research Group, you will need to be a member of the Society. The good news is that there will be no membership fee to pay for 2020/21 and you will also receive a copy of *Contrebis* as well as access to the Society's online programme of talks beginning in January 2021. Alternatively, you can contribute an article of 500-750 words or a letter to the e-newsletter as a guest author free of charge. Contact details for the Society are listed below.

**Research Group Coordinator:** Michael Haslam [1066mh@gmail.com](mailto:1066mh@gmail.com)  
**Editor:** Dr Gordon Clark [clark4be@btinternet.com](mailto:clark4be@btinternet.com)  
**Membership Secretary:** Don Walker [dwn281@gmail.com](mailto:dwn281@gmail.com)

## MANCHESTER GROUP – VICTORIAN SOCIETY

The Victorian Society has produced a list of buildings at risk. One of them is the Grade II-listed former Prudential Assurance Company office in Oldham (1889).

This fine building is one of a series of offices designed by one of the Victorian period's greatest architects Alfred Waterhouse, whose other buildings include the Natural History Museum and Manchester Town Hall. The Prudential Assurance Company was wildly successful in the second half of the 19th century and commissioned offices for many of Britain's newly-wealthy industrial cities. While varied in style, almost all are built in red brick and terracotta. Many of these prestigious buildings have been sensitively altered and reused, but the example in Oldham remains empty, un-maintained and deteriorating.



Yet this hides a stunning lavishly-tiled interior designed to impress potential customers – and still does today. Union Street was transformed in 2014 when a Metrolink tram stop opened right in front of the Prudential. Yet the deplorable state of this landmark building is extremely uninviting. A sensitive conservation-led regeneration scheme is long overdue.

Griff Rhys Jones said: *'Oldham is a town with a rich heritage and huge potential for regeneration, potential which the Council has really begun to engage with. The 'Pru' is such a prominent building that a scheme to return it to use could kick-start heritage-based regeneration in Oldham Town Centre...'*

The latest newsletter contains an interesting mix of articles, including:

- Robert Owen and Joseph Hansom
- Tales of the river bank - Dakota Avenue, Salford
- William Morris at Sharston
- The Loyds of Manchester – escape to the country
- Ernest Newton and the Cheshire vicarages
- Church fittings: the eagle lectern
- Will Mellor – a Manchester arts and crafts book artist

The Victorian Society is currently organising a series of online lectures available on Crowdcast. Full details can be found on the main Society website under events [www.victoriansociety.org.uk](http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk) as well as on Twitter and Facebook @thevicsoc. In addition, there is an email newsletter issued to all who sign up via the main website.

## REGIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE

The Regional Heritage Centre at Lancaster University are offering a new Post Graduate Certificate in Regional and Local History (Distance Learning) beginning in October 2021. Details about this course are available at <https://bit.ly/34bnpgL>.



**Lancaster Castle and Northern English History: the view from the stronghold** is a free Future Learn course which takes 3 hours a week for 5 weeks.

Future Learn has hundreds of free courses on many subjects. They partner with universities and specialist organisations to provide authoritative and interesting courses.

[www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com)

Topics in this course cover:

- The Roman coastal fort and its relationship to the northern frontier
- The Norman Castle: its role in Anglo-Scottish warfare and the emergence of the Duchy of Lancaster
- The castle's role as a prison for the Lancashire witches, in the context of post-Reformation history
- The role as a debtors' prison in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and changes in prison organisation
- The First and Second World Wars
- The importance of the castle to the region's heritage

## NEWS ROUNDUP

### COMMUNITY ARCHIVES AND HERITAGE GROUP

The latest newsletter has the following useful information

- A profile of a society, Newport History Group, their activities and aims. They wished to set up a digital, accessible online archive, and used various means to raise funds. Amongst others, one was simply to email members – which made up for their shortfall within two weeks.
- Stretton on Dunsmore describe their experience in setting up and running their talks programme via Zoom.
- CAHG is hosting webinars featuring the winners of some of the 2020 awards.

- Managing your Collection, hosted by the National Archives, is a tool available to any archive which would like to widen access to their collections information. The site gives case studies. <https://bit.ly/2TS0iLP>
- CAHG would like to increase the diversity of the committee. There are 4 meetings per year, and a commitment of 1-2 hours per month.

All details of these and other news and activities [www.communityarchives.org.uk](http://www.communityarchives.org.uk). Any group can become a member of CAHG, for which there is no charge.

### JOHN SELF'S WALKS

LLHF members might be interested in John Self's walks, available free on his website <https://www.drakkar.co.uk/aboutme.html> all of which have historical information. The website lists 5 ebooks to date, including:

- [Rainy Day Rambles in the Lake District](#) (2015) with lots of walks and histories, intended (as he writes in the introduction with tongue in cheek) to allow people to enjoy the walks by their fireside and leave the fells to him
- [Saunterings](#) (2018), a set of reflections based upon walks around North-West England
- [The Land of the Lune](#) (1st ed. 2008; 2nd ed. 2010) is a 260-page guide (including over 200 photographs) to the region within the Lune watershed.

### MANCHESTER HISTORIES



**The People's River** is a community-led project delivered by Manchester Histories who are collaborating with people who live and work along the River Irk in North Manchester. The project aims to reveal and share the often hidden histories and stories of people's heritage in a creative way.

The project is inspired by and designed to commemorate the bicentenary of Friedrich Engels' birth and his connection to the industrial river. Engels, a German socialist philosopher, wrote about the River Irk in his 1845 essay 'The Condition of the working class in England', based on his experiences in Manchester.

As part of the project there is a free creative toolkit packed with information about Engels' life, his work and his connection with Manchester. Each chapter has its own creative activity at the end for readers to complete and send back to Manchester Histories. The free copy can be downloaded from <https://manchesterhistories.co.uk/thepeoplesriver>.

**The Manchester Histories Celebration Day** is a chance to celebrate all the work of organisations that are often run by volunteers, but play an important role in telling local stories and help to connect people together through history and cultural activities. This year the celebration day was held online because of Covid-19.



A new **online directory** of brilliant local history archives, societies, museums and charities in the North West of England has been created, which can be accessed here: <https://manchesterhistoriescelebrationday.myportfolio.com>.

If your organisation isn't featured but you would like to be, please email [charlie@manchesterhistories.co.uk](mailto:charlie@manchesterhistories.co.uk) for more information.

### **POST OFFICE DESPATCH from the Blackburn Standard, 3 July 1839**

*The following instance of post-office despatch we apprehend is nearly, if not altogether, without a parallel :-A ship-letter, addressed to a gentleman in this town was posted in Paris on the 13<sup>th</sup> inst. and bore the Paris post-mark of that date ; it was re-stamped at Calais on the same day, and again in London also on the 13<sup>th</sup>, and at noon on the 14<sup>th</sup> it was delivered at the Whitehaven post-office to the gentleman to whom it was addressed !*

### **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE ACTIVITIES**

Many societies are now making (more) use of social media. It is not possible to forecast when meetings in person will be reinstated, so meanwhile other ways of engaging with the wider public are coming into their own. For example, both the Historic Society of Lancashire & Cheshire and the Lancashire & Cheshire Antiquarian Society now have Facebook accounts. Anyone can join the groups – they are not for members only. This means they can have a wider reach than monthly meetings can attain.

Some societies are hosting meetings on Zoom or Microsoft Teams and again this means that there is potential for more people to ‘attend’ than would be possible in person.

There is great scope for sharing research, talks, lectures, exhibitions, etc., online. If your society has used any of the techniques above, do share your experience via this newsletter. What worked or was less successful? What were the obstacles or benefits? Has membership increased as a result?

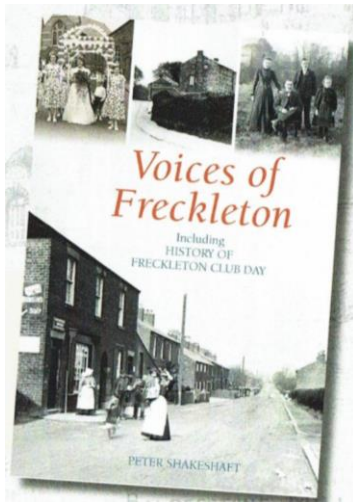
### **PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST**



This new resource brings together academics (including Peter John Fyles, Prof. Paul Salveson and Dr Roger Smalley), volunteers, history undergraduates and local historians, who are interested in aspects of labour history in Lancashire.

The website is building archives of articles, local art, and notes & queries. Support is offered to undergraduates in the form of one-to-one tuition, essays and papers (which can be viewed via the tuition page), and research assistance.

[www.labourhistorylancs.com](http://www.labourhistorylancs.com)



## **VOICES OF FRECKLETON Peter Shakeshaft**

ISBN 978-1-5272-6733-6

300pp Col. ill. £15 plus p&p

Peter Shakeshaft 01252 720852 or 07754 529577

[Peter.shakeshaft@btinternet.com](mailto:Peter.shakeshaft@btinternet.com)

Over the past twenty-five years Peter and Maureen Shakeshaft have interviewed many past and present Freckleton residents, and recorded their interviews. This unique resource, combined with local newspaper reports and private correspondence, has enabled a hitherto unseen picture of Freckleton to emerge from the otherwise rapidly fading shadows.

All communities are unique, and in a fast-changing world this book provides a link to the people of Freckleton who, in their lifetimes, were, and are, responsible for ensuring the continuity of their own community. All those who really know the area will surely echo the sentiment, 'you can take a person out of Freckleton, but you can't take Freckleton out of a person'.

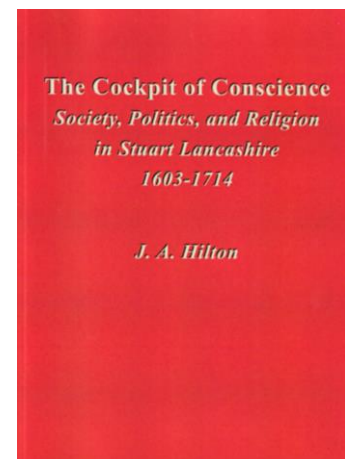
## **THE COCKPIT OF CONSCIENCE: SOCIETY, POLITICS, AND RELIGION IN STUART LANCASHIRE, 1603-1714 J A Hilton**

Obtainable from J A Hilton

282 Whelley, Wigan, WN2 1DA

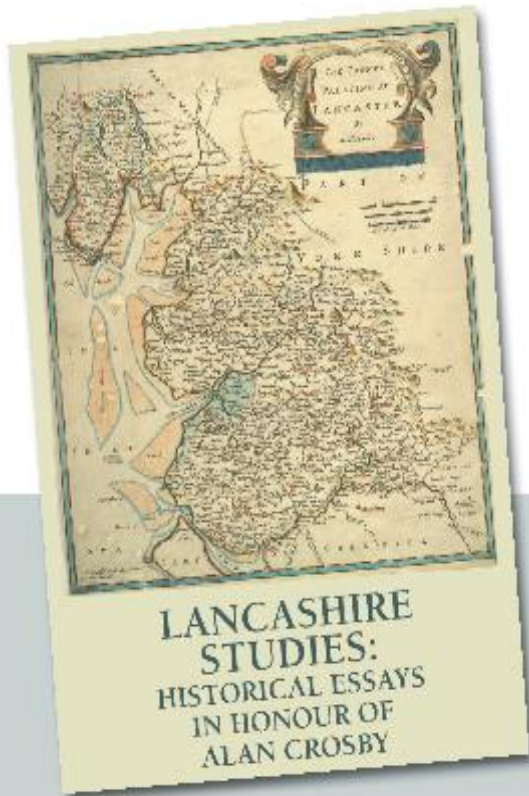
£18 inc. p&p.

The present volume takes up Thomas Fuller's 1662 characterisation of Lancashire as divided between Protestants and Catholics, showing how religious and political division undermined the county's status-conscious society.



At the time the county was obsessed with religion, which created a tension manifested in outbreaks of witchcraft and demon-possession, and culminating in civil war. The author considers how the abolition of the monarchy and Episcopalian Protestantism resulted in the proliferation of radical Protestant sects, followed by the restoration of king and bishops, and then another revolution which led to the eventual rejection of communal religious violence.

**EPOC is a new online history journal**, a non-profit publication produced by members of the history community at Lancaster University. The intention is to produce cutting edge research in a friendly format, aiming to make academic history accessible to everyone. The aim is to give postgraduate students a platform to publish their work and to engage with a wider audience within academia and beyond. See <https://www.epoch-magazine.com/>.



## LANCASHIRE STUDIES: HISTORICAL ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF ALAN CROSBY

Lancashire Local History Federation is delighted to publish a book of original essays written in honour of Dr Alan Crosby. He has made an invaluable contribution to furthering the understanding and enjoyment of local history in Lancashire.

The contributions span many centuries and nine varied aspects of county history.

#### Contents:

1. Red lines, over-sands crossings and King Arthur: a re-appraisal of the depiction of the north west on the Gough Map *William D. Shannon*
2. The Catholic Cliftons and the Church of England at Lund and Lytham *Peter Shakeshaft*
3. Pilkington and its fieldnames *Diana Winterbotham*
4. Cheesemaking in the Goosnargh area in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries *Zoë Lawson*
5. A Peculiar People transformed: the changing face of Quakerism in Victorian Lancashire *Angus J. L. Winchester*
6. Working at home during the nineteenth century: a case study of Winckley Square, Preston *Geoff Timmins*
7. Success to the ladies of Worden: the trials and tribulations of a Lancashire estate *David Hunt*
8. The Seward stained-glass studio of Lancaster *Margaret Edwards*
9. Local history and the Lancaster Historical Pageant of 1913 *Mike Winstanley*

Includes a foreword by Paul Booth; an extensive list of works by Alan Crosby; and a comprehensive index.

Fully illustrated. ISBN 978-1-5272-6533-2.

I wish to order \_\_\_\_ copy(ies) @ £15 each + £4p&p

I enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_ made payable to Lancashire Local History Federation.

Send to: John Wilson, Green Hall, Tatham, Lancaster, LA2 8RB Telephone: 03330 062270 email: j.r.wilson@cantab.net

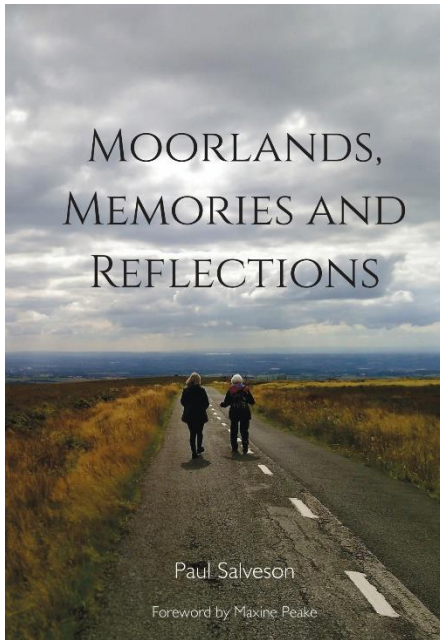
Or BACS payment: Sort Code: 01-05-31 Account number 32603983.

Ensure you quote 'Crosby book' and your surname as reference.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



## **MOORLANDS, MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS Paul Salveson**

The book will be priced at £21 (plus £3 postage) and will be on sale from November 15<sup>th</sup>. There is a special pre-publication offer of £20 with free delivery if ordered before November 15<sup>th</sup>. Ring Lancashire Loominary on 07795 008691, email [info@lancashireloominary.co.uk](mailto:info@lancashireloominary.co.uk) or visit [www.lancashireloominary.co.uk](http://www.lancashireloominary.co.uk)

Maxine Peake, in her foreword to Paul's book, says "Hill walking, cycling, literature, philosophy, protest and The North.... these are a few of my favourite things." She adds, "Paul Salveson's new book on Allen Clarke is irresistible."

A hundred years ago Lancashire writer Allen Clarke published a forgotten masterpiece *Moorlands and Memories*, sub-titled 'Rambles and rides in the fair places of steam-engine land'. Clarke's biographer, Professor Paul Salveson, has published a new book celebrating Clarke's original and bringing the story of Lancashire's moorland heritage up to date.

The present volume covers some of the ground that Allen Clarke wrote about – handloom weavers, dialect writers, the Winter Hill 'mass trespass', links to Walt Whitman and that fearsome Lancashire creature, the boggart. The author discusses Clarke's links with Tolstoy and his attempts to 'get back to the land' at a commune near Blackpool and the great Barrow Bridge picnic in support of the locked-out Bethesda quarrymen in 1901.

Clarke's book includes rides and rambles through Rochdale and Ramsbottom as well as around Rivington, Belmont and Edgworth, with associated tales. The new book adds some stories from the last hundred years including 'summer evenings with old railwaymen' at the moorland station of Entwistle, and Gandhi's visit to Lancashire.

Paul Salveson says, "Our moors remain a precious asset which we neglect at our peril. They are amongst the few places that haven't been 'locked down' during Covid-19 and are there for everyone to enjoy. I hope that my book will add to their appreciation."

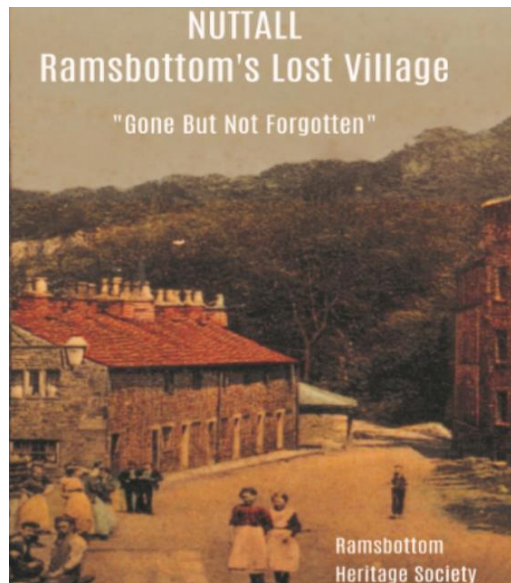
Paul is a visiting professor in 'Work Town Studies' at the University of Bolton and author of several other books on Lancashire history and culture. He published his first novel, *The Works* (set in Horwich Loco Works when it faced closure in the 1980s) earlier this year.

## **NUTTALL: RAMSBOTTOM'S LOST VILLAGE**

**Ramsbottom Heritage Society**

140pp. Illustrated with old black and white photographs from the Heritage Society's archives, as well as recent colour photographs.

£9.99. Available through the website [www.ramsbottomheritage.org.uk](http://www.ramsbottomheritage.org.uk) or the Society's Facebook page. For further details contact John Leyland via the website or phone 01706 827253



Members of the Ramsbottom Heritage Society have used the lockdown to research the history of Nuttall, Ramsbottom's lost village. Today the name Nuttall is steeped in mystery. Where did the name come from? A person? A place? Is it part of Ramsbottom? What is its story? It is a place lying between Nuttall Park and Summerseat. It was once a vibrant village, but it is now hidden beneath undergrowth with walls appearing only when the vegetation dies down in the winter.

The book tells the story of Nuttall village from the 13th century to the present – from the days when it was the site of a stately mansion owned by the Nuttall family, to its new life as a busy mill community in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to the days when a chemical factory there caused much concern, and finally to its dying days in the 1940s and 50s. It tells how the cotton mills were run by water power and how the Ocean Chemical Company operated. It is essentially though a story about people with particular emphasis on the living memories of the last people to live there.

## **REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE**

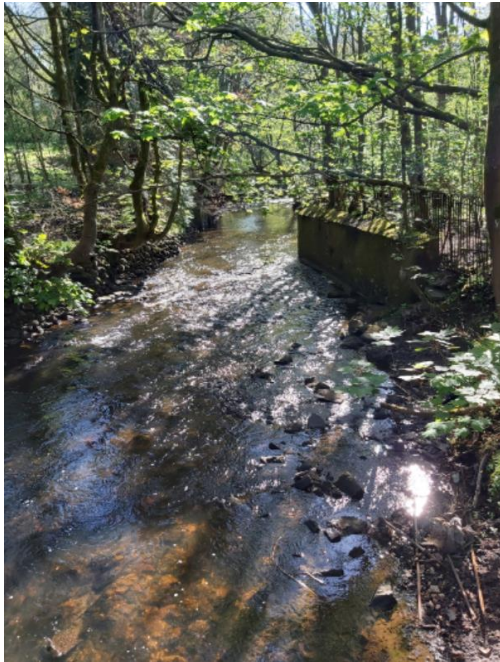
### **Dispensaries-The forgotten health care system**

I am re-visiting some research that I carried out decades ago about Chorley Dispensary. I wish to gain a better understanding of its foundation in 1828. I plan to place this in the context of other Lancashire dispensary foundations. I will also investigate how dispensary services changed and evolved in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and how they related to other health care provision and practice. I am familiar with Dr John Pickstone's research in this area, but would be grateful for any more information about particular dispensaries, and Lancashire dispensaries in general. My email address is [cejeharrison@btinternet.com](mailto:cejeharrison@btinternet.com)

**John E Harrison**

## WIGAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND THE RIVER DOUGLAS

The Society is planning to research and record as many historical and archaeological features as possible on or around the Douglas valley. Initially it will be the course beginning at Winter Hill, and travelling through Horwich, Adlington, Arley and into Wigan. It may be possible in future to continue the research all the way to the Ribble estuary.



The proposed work will draw on previous research, including the section downstream from Wigan which was converted in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century into the Douglas Navigation, enabling boats to travel between Wigan and the Ribble estuary.

Much research can be desk-based initially, followed by visits to archives and actual locations.

The aim is to produce a report and possibly a gazetteer.

*Whilst this project is for members of the Society, they would welcome any contributions, particularly from people who may wish to join [www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk](http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk).*

## RESEARCH ARTICLES

### MONKS, FRIARS AND LEPERS: PRESTON'S PRE-REFORMATION RELIGIOUS HOUSES



The Buck Brothers 'Prospect of Preston' shows the town in 1728. The windmill stands at the top of Friargate, where the University now is. The isolated building numbered 4 is the House of Correction (the former friary).

The building numbered 2 is Tulketh Hall, the site of the Savignac monastery. The houses on the ridge between them stand roughly where the leper hospital was located. (Author's collection)

There has been a church at Preston since Anglo-Saxon times: but the parish church was not the only religious establishment there prior to the Reformation. First, there had been a monastic site in Tulketh, given in 1124 by Stephen, Count of Mortain, to

the monks of Savigny: but it was too near the distractions of Preston, so after only three years the monks moved to Furness [*Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, vol 2, (1908) p.114].

A little later in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, a hospital was established roughly mid-way between the monastic site and the town [VCH vol 2, p. 163-4]. Clues as to its location can be seen in Lang's map of Preston of 1774, where we can see a field called Spittle Brow – while nearby a number of fields with Maudland in their names recall the dedication of the hospital to St Mary Magdalene. Towards the end of the 12th century, Henry II declared that the hospital church was a Free Chapel (the only one in Lancashire). His Letter of Protection spells it out in no uncertain terms:

*Know ye that the hospital of St Mary Magdalene of Preston ... [is] in my hand and custody and protection...* [The National Archives DL 42/1 fol. 80].

From around 1200, people from the local area began making small gifts of land, which would then be leased out to provide income to support the hospital. About 30 such grants are known, including for example one from one John of Ingol, who states he is making the grant to the hospital *...et leprosis ibidem deo servientes* (and to the lepers serving God in that place) – from which we know what sort of a hospital it was [TNA DL 42/1 fol. 81]. Leprosy seems to have become endemic in England – and the rest of Europe – from the 12th century, possibly with a crusader connection. In this region, we had three leper hospitals – Conished, Lancaster and Preston.

There was no treatment as such, so in essence they were hospices: but they were also isolation hospitals; in the case of Preston, set high on a ridge above the town, providing a safe place - safe both for the lepers and the community at large. At St Mary's the lepers seem to have been regarded as members of a religious community, being referred to *fratribus leprosis* (brother lepers) in one document: while another suggests that it was a mixed house with both male and female inmates, who were apparently members of some sort of religious confraternity: *...fratres et sorores hospitalis beatae mariae Magdalene* (the brothers and sisters of the hospital of the Blessed Mary Magdalene) [TNA DL 42/1 fol. 81].

Then in 1349 the Black Death struck and everything changed. We do not know how many inmates died, but it was reported that the hospital closed for eight weeks, and perhaps all, or nearly all, the residents died. Nationally, the Black Death seems to have resulted in the ending of leprosy in this country, as disproportionately more lepers died of the Plague: but the Free Chapel on the hill continued to attract pilgrims, and in 1355 Henry Duke of Lancaster applied to the Pope for a grant of one year and 40 days relaxation of penance for all those who made a pilgrimage there on St Mary Magdalene's day (22 July) [VCH vol. 2, p. 163]. Gradually, though, the Chapel seems to have fallen into disrepair, and although incumbents continued to be appointed by the Crown, it is doubtful that any sort of religious life continued at the site. When the Dissolution came, it was not treated as a monastery or friary, but was dissolved a few years later as if it had been a Chantry. The priest, Thomas Barlow, was given a pension and the land was sold off for £300. The hospital had long gone, and now the chapel disappeared too, although in the 19th century some traces were found during various building works. The area is still called Maudlands today, and the iconic church of St Walburge stands on the site.

While the leper hospital was deliberately placed out of the way of the town, the next religious establishment was located just off one of the three main streets, now called Friargate. It must have been founded a little before 1260, as in that year five oaks from Fulwood Forest were granted to the Franciscans for their building [VCH vol. 2, p. 162]. It was probably founded by the Prestons of Preston, who lived nearby, but later it came under the patronage of the Earl of Lancaster. As with other friaries, benefactors were buried in the Friary chapel, which also seems to have acted as a chantry chapel, saying masses for the dead. Then in 1539 the friary was dissolved as part of the second wave of dissolutions. There were at that date ten friars, and we know some of their names, including the Warden, Thomas Tadgyll, who had been about 18 when he became a friar, and was only 28 when he became Warden [TNA DL 3/34/H5, 1540].

The site became the town prison, and was used as such until the new one was built in 1789. Thereafter it began to deteriorate, but during the 19<sup>th</sup> century some remains were unearthed, and some traces of the buildings were found, although later the site was trashed by the building of railway sidings. Then in 1991 work commenced on building the A59 Ringway extension, and the first archaeological excavation was carried out, followed by further excavation in 2007 in advance of building of the Legacy Preston International Hotel [Jeremy Bradley & Stephen Rowland. *Brothers Minor: Lancashire's Lost Franciscans: Investigations at Preston Friary 1991 and 2007*, Lancaster (2020)].

This excavation found traces of a rectangular masonry building within a ditch, and both within the building, and outside, some 25 graves, oriented east-west, which mainly seem to have been those of members of the families of the benefactors, men, women and children, with radio-carbon dates stretching between c1200-1315, and c1440-1495.

**Bill Shannon** Dr William D Shannon is an independent researcher and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

## **BURIED AT WEASTE CEMETERY**

**Pete Kilvert**, a member of the Salford Local History Forum and Secretary of Friends of Salford Cemeteries Trust, has carried out research into the lives of some of the people buried in Weaste cemetery. This article gives information about two such people.

## **William Boyce Webb Lindley (1801 – 1869)**

William Lindley was a distinguished musician, specialising in the cello, and also a Professor of Music (i.e. private music teacher). He came to Manchester in the late 1830s and lived in Salford in the late 1840s until his death in 1869.

He was born on 10 October 1801 in Marylebone, City of Westminster, the eldest son of Robert Lindley (1772 – 1885), born in Rotherham, who was regarded as the finest cellist in Europe. William's mother was Hannah (née Taylor) Lindley (1780 – 1815), who was born and baptised in London. Robert and Hannah were married in 1800 at



St George the Martyr, Holborn, London. Sadly, Hannah died in 1815 when William was only fourteen.

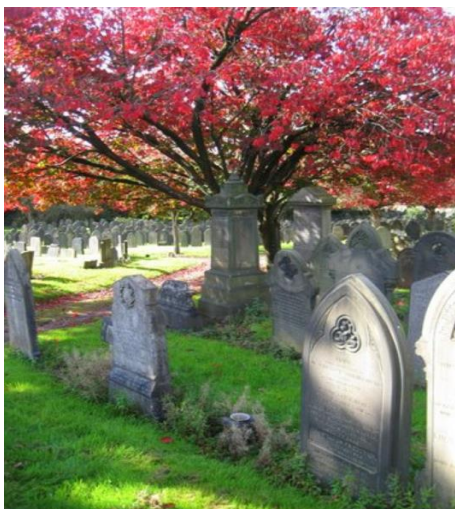
Robert taught William the violin at an early age, followed by the cello. As a young man he performed in most of the major orchestras, and at most of the musical events of that time in London, usually alongside his father. On 26 August 1832, William married Elizabeth Sims at Pamber, near Basingstoke, Hampshire. William was aged 31 and Elizabeth was 18. She was born on 13 February 1814, and baptised in June at Tadley Independent Chapel nearby. Her parents were Jacob and Sarah (nee Stroud) Sims, who had a rake-making business in Pamber.

William and Elizabeth's children were:

- John William (born 1834 in Hampshire, married 1857 to Sarah Ann Grimshaw and died in 1903 aged 69)
- Emma Hannah (born 1836 in Droitwich, Worcestershire, married 1866 to Thomas W Jones and died in 1880 aged 44)
- Robert (born 1837 in Hulme, Manchester and died in 1840 aged 3), Louisa Eliza (born 1838 in Hulme and died in 1839 aged 0)
- Eliza Mary (born 1840 in Hulme and died in 1901 aged 61)
- Alfred (born 1842 in Hulme and died in 1872 aged 30), Jane Louise (born 1848 in Salford, married in 1871 to John Dawson and died in 1875 aged 27)
- William Webb (born 1851 in Salford, married in 1874 to Mary Taylor and died in 1918 aged 67).

The 1841 census shows the family living at Duke Street, Hulme, Manchester. In 1851 they lived at Derwent Street, Salford, and in 1861 and 1871 they were living at 9 Dorset Street, also in Salford.

As an example of William's musical prowess, the *Manchester Courier* of 18 February 1837 reported his playing of a cello concerto and a solo at the Concert Hall, Manchester. It states, "Mr Lindley's concerto was a brilliant and chaste performance. His staccato bowing in the last movement and the beautiful manner in which he played the air in harmonies, filled us with surprise and admiration. He selects pieces of a much higher class than those usually adopted by his father. His taste is of a much higher order, and his expression and intonation are fine beyond conception."



William died on 12 August 1869, aged 67, and was buried at Weaste Cemetery.

Elizabeth died on 12 May 1872, aged 58, and was re-united with her husband in the same grave.

## Joshua Smith JP (1832 – 1906)

Joshua Smith was a cotton mill owner in Todmorden, (Lancashire/Yorkshire border), although he lived in Eccles, and also a Justice of the Peace. He was tragically killed by a steam locomotive near Todmorden station in 1906.

He was born in Barnoldswick (then in Yorkshire) on 1 May 1832 and baptised later that year at St Mary le Ghyll church. His father was John Smith (b.1796 in Manchester) who was a cotton spinner. His mother was Jane Smith (b.1796 in Flockton, Yorkshire). In 1841 the family was living in Kettlewell, Skipton, Yorkshire. By 1851 they were living at Trawden, near Burnley, Lancashire, and 18-year-old Joshua was a bookkeeper. On 8 June 1852, Joshua married Elizabeth Whalley at St Mary the Virgin church, Trawden, Lancashire. He was aged 20, and a cotton manufacturer living at Lodge Holme. Elizabeth was aged 18, the daughter of John Henry Whalley, also a cotton manufacturer. Their children were Jane (b.1854 in Burnley), Cicero (b.1857) and Frederick Henry (b.1859), both in Pendleton. Tragedy struck on in December 1860 when Elizabeth died aged just 27. In 1861 Joshua and his children were living with Elizabeth's family at 7, High Street, Pendleton. Joshua was listed as a cotton warehouseman.

On 16 April 1863 Joshua married again, to Betsy Martha Hoyle at St Nicholas church, Sabden, Lancashire. Betsy was aged 24, the daughter of Thomas Hoyle, 'manufacturer'. The 1871 census lists the family's address as Half Edge Lane, Eccles. Jane is 17 and Cicero fourteen. New additions are Walter (b.1865) and Randolph (b.1868). Ten years later at the same address, Joshua's occupation is given as manufacturer of cotton goods, and he has clearly prospered, as he employs 60 men and 15 women. Cicero and Walter are employed in the family business as warehouse clerks. By 1891 the only child still living at Half Edge Lane is Randolph (aged 23). In 1901 Joshua is aged 68, still a cotton manufacturer, and also a Justice of the Peace. Betsy died in November 1904, aged 66.

Although Joshua had always worked in the cotton industry, he established his own cotton manufacturing business, Joshua Smith and Sons, in 1882, at Frostholve Mill in Cornholme, near Todmorden. It would appear that his son Cicero was the manager, as on 26 July 1884 the *Halifax Courier* reports that Mr C Smith of Oakley House, Cornholme, cotton manufacturer, treated his hands to a trip to Blackpool in celebration of his recent marriage. Later that year the *Todmorden Advertiser* reported that the Frostholve shed belonging to J. Smith and Sons was to be enlarged to take 400 more looms. On 20 January 1886 the paper reported that the company increased wages by 5% - the same amount as the reduction made 12 months previously.

On 17 January 1896 most of the mill was destroyed by fire. Looms were saved and transferred to other premises to keep the business going.

In later years Joshua was in semi-retirement but visited the mill once a week. He was in the habit of walking the short distance along the railway track from the mill to Todmorden station, but on 19 April 1906 he was struck by a train and killed. He was 73 years old.



## **‘A MURDER MOST GROSS, FOUL AND UNNATURAL’**

A grotesque crime was committed on 2 January 1863 at a Wigan mine. It was so abhorrent and unusual that newspapers far and wide – including New South Wales! - carried accounts of it, and the government offered a reward for the capture of the murderers.

A happily married man, James Barton, the 55-year-old father of 12 children, worked as an engine tender at a small mine, known as the Bawk House, or Button Pit, as did two of his sons. The pit was owned by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, whose seat was the nearby Haigh Hall (the hall and its grounds were given to the people of Wigan by a later earl and are the site of a country park).

The mine was in the very small community of Red Rock, four miles from the centre of Wigan. The area was subject to flooding from underground soughs, and it is likely that Button Pit was used more for pumping water from surrounding underground workings than for mining coal. It was therefore important that the furnaces powering the mine should be working steadily.



The illustration shows the mine with three squat chimneys. It is said that, although the mine belonged to the earl, it was built this way rather than with one tall chimney so as not to spoil his view from Haigh Hall.

It was demolished in 1919.

James worked the night shift looking after the furnaces on his own. The last people to see him alive were two friends who arrived at about 7pm to warm themselves and to chat to James.

More people started to arrive at 3 in the morning, but James was not to be found. As the day shift arrived, they found the furnaces cold, and their puzzlement increased. Believing he may have gone down to the coal face, James's son Thomas fired up a furnace to work the winding gear – but still no sign of James.

As light dawned, so did a terrible realisation – there were trails of blood leading to the furnace. When the door was opened it was clear that James had been murdered and his body burnt there. The horror of James's family was shared far and wide – between them the earl and the government offered an enormous reward of £300. Newspapers carried reports of the crime and the investigation, including a description of James's missing watch which he was known to have been wearing. Very strangely, several people came forward to claim responsibility for the crime, but one by one were discounted because they were drunk when confessing or because there was no substantive evidence against them.

The trail went cold but more than three years later, on the word of one man, the Leeds-Liverpool canal was dredged between two nearby bridges to search for the watch. The task involved 150 navvies and 35 boatmen, with police representatives

and a huge crowd of onlookers. 760,00 cubic feet of water was drawn off, and a vast quantity of mud was dredged. Nothing was found.

In that same year, 1866, a man from Chorley read a fresh description of James's watch – and his blood ran cold. He had seen that watch in the hands of his brother Thomas Grimes, who was at that time in prison in Dartmoor for stealing a horse blanket. The watch had been pawned; when the police were alerted the watch was redeemed and Thomas arrested.

After his trial, when Thomas realised that he was to be hanged (by the infamous William Calcraft) he made a statement exonerating any accomplices:

*'I wish it to be know publeckly that wat I said different times about William Tompson and Josephe Seden and Walton being present at murder of barton mester is not true they were not present and they had nothin to do with it'*

In fact, Seddon (who had since died) and Thompson (who had earlier been acquitted) had shared the pawn money with Grime, so they were certainly accomplices in some part of the crime, and the judge said at the trial that the murder could not have been carried out by one person acting alone.



The watch was given to James's widow Mary, and passed through several generations of the family, and is now owned by a collector. It is without any doubt the watch belonging to James, as the description from more than 150 years ago gave its unique number engraved inside.



The author has been filmed for an episode of 'Murder, mystery and my family', based on this crime, for future broadcast in the morning schedules on BBC 1. The programme shows two eminent barristers re-examining a cold case, and laying the fresh evidence before a judge for him to give his view – to accept or overturn the original verdict.

In a pleasing recent development, the present earl, whose ancestors benefitted greatly from the labour of miners on their land, made a donation towards the Wigan mining monument, now standing proudly in the town centre.



**Marianne Howell**

**COPY DATE FOR NEXT EDITION: 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY**