



LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

NEWSLETTER
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Please see the website www.lancashirehistory.org for more contact details.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: THE FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ONLINE AT 7pm ON TUESDAY 2 MARCH

There will be a very short AGM business meeting, followed by an illustrated talk on “Handloom weavers’ cottages” by Geoff Timmins. We will send the AGM papers to all members in advance.

IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2021!

Zoë Lawson, our membership secretary, will be very pleased to hear from you. The subscription rate remains unchanged - £8 for societies, and £5 for individuals (£8 for joint membership). The Federation membership is growing and becoming more reflective not only of the ancient county, but also of the wider north west. If you or your society are not yet members – come and join!

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Alan Crosby reflects on his Lancashire heritage and what it means to him

At the beginning of the year I took over as acting chair of the Lancashire Local History Federation. The position is to be confirmed by the forthcoming Annual General Meeting but at the time of writing (mid-January) I am not aware of any great competition to stand against me, so I anticipate that my destiny is guaranteed! For me it's a return to familiar territory – I first joined the Federation when we moved to Lancashire in 1985, and over the following twenty years I was variously the chair[man], the president, the newsletter editor, and the editor of our erstwhile journal, *The Lancashire Local Historian*. Now, 35 years on, I'm once again the chair, and it is an opportunity to think about what Lancashire means to me.

In 1986 the local government restructure of 1974, which dismembered the ancient county palatine, was fresh in our memories. Now those changes are almost half a century old, other 'reforms' happened in the interim, and yet more changes are anticipated (following that time-honoured principle of government - if you can't think of anything more constructive to do, reorganise something). But it is interesting, if not exactly surprising, that loyalty to the traditional county remains very strong, and that our membership is drawn from its full geographical spread.

I still find it completely absurd that when I'm driving between Blackburn and Haslingden a sign high on the moors informs me that I'm entering Lancashire, or that TV news items refer to the *Cheshire* town of Warrington. The flourishing of the LLHF across the county palatine is therefore very heartening. We reflect the extraordinary diversity of our county, a variety which goes back centuries.

My grandparents lived in Openshaw, on the east side of Manchester, which was then a dirty, sooty, densely built-up inner-city district. They were as much Lancashire people as the happy residents of Coniston, the Irish-descended people of Scotland Road, the farmers of Lunesdale and the weavers of Colne. My grandparents scarcely knew those 'other' Lancashires – I don't think they ever went to Liverpool or Preston, let alone Colne or Cartmel and, indeed, why should they have done so, for Lancashire was for them almost a concept, a focus of pride and loyalty but not a practical fact of life. They were wary of anything that wasn't Mancunian: literally so for, as grandma once said, "Nowt good ever came out of Salford".

But they were *Lancashire* people and confident in their Lancashire lineage. In fact, once I sorted out the family tree, I could demonstrate that their eight grandparents came respectively from Rochdale, Hazel Grove (at the time known more prosaically as Bullock's Smithy), Salford (!), Dublin, Selby, Manchester, Frodsham and Flintshire. In other words their daughter, my mother, was only three-eighths Lancastrian and, like many – perhaps most – people of this county, was a geographical mongrel. My proudly Lancastrian grandmother was actually a quarter Yorkshire!

I grew up in Surrey, where my father's work took my parents immediately after they married in 1949 (he was a civil servant and hated almost every minute of it – and he particularly disliked living in the London area). My sister and I spoke with somewhat diluted Lancashire accents, much to the amusement of some and to the fury of certain teachers who demanded that we should speak 'proper' English ("It's not grass, it's graaaaas"). Lancashire commanded my mother's devotion. She died in

2019 having lived in Surrey for 70 years, and still had not only a broad Manchester accent but a wealth of dialect terminology (“Yer daft gobbin”). To her, Manchester, Lancashire and the North, in that order, were always “home”, and she was steeped in the stories and experiences of growing up in a working-class Manchester family during the 1930s and the War. I still find her eye-witness description of the city centre of Manchester ablaze at Christmas 1940 to be both thrilling and spine-chilling.

For me, therefore, Lancashire was a promised land. In the 1960s other children in my class went to Majorca on holiday, but we went to Manchester and did the round of mum’s relatives scattered across Greater Manchester – cousins in Audenshaw, Tottington and Oldham, and Auntie Sarah in Harpurhey (who was later rehoused on the 18th floor of a tower block in Heywood, on an overspill estate which was an unmitigated disaster for her personally and for all the other dispossessed inhabitants). I was proud of the Lancashire connection, and loved those holidays in grimy, gritty ‘old’ Manchester before my grandparents’ house was pulled down in a slum clearance scheme; they were amazingly lucky to be rehoused on a Manchester Corporation overspill estate in, of all the unlikely places, Knutsford ... grandma took to describing themselves as “the Cheshire gentry”.

So when in 1985 we moved to Preston, it was a real pleasure. We’d been living in Norwich, and some people presumed that the culture shock would be traumatic. But it wasn’t – in fact, quite the opposite. For me, it was an opportunity to explore the landscape, places, heritage and history of the county where so many generations of my forebears lived – my father’s ancestors were in Manchester when it was a country market town in the reign of Elizabeth. I became familiar with the parts of the county where Mancunians rarely ventured, and discovered the extraordinary richness of Lancashire’s history and its unique and vital historical different-ness. I continue to learn more every day and the subject never tires. Lancashire has never let me down!

Alan Crosby

NEWS FROM ARCHIVES



Accessing the Archives Although there is no public access during the lockdown, staff members are continuing to answer enquiries received by phone, email or letter, and to post out copies ordered. There will still be regular issues of News from the Archives (email the Archives to be added to the mailing list).

Online talks 2021 – Fridays 12:30-13:30 All talks will take place thanks to The Friends of Lancashire Archives.

19 February Going underground: our Lancashire coal mining ancestors – David Tilsley

19 March Memories public and private: scrapbooks and commonplace books – Kathryn Newman

9 April Last orders please!: researching pubs and publican ancestors – Keri Nicholson

Talks will take place via Zoom. Booking is essential via email archives@lancashire.gov.uk

Memories of Covid-19 The Archives are continuing to collect memories of the extraordinary effect Covid-19 has had. They have already received many contributions but will be happy to be sent more (and, indeed, items related to any aspect of Lancashire's history and individual people). The website <https://bit.ly/3brHpJs> has more details.

Lancashire Archives has been awarded Accredited Status for the second time. The Accreditation panel 'welcomed this application by a strong, well-managed service which clearly identifies its issues and actively works to address them. They did not underestimate the challenges faced by Lancashire Archives in recent years, and congratulated the team on their success in mitigating the impact on collections and communities'.

LANCASHIRE PLACE NAME SURVEY ANNUAL LECTURE AND AGM

The changing landscape of Lancashire's coastal plain. Social and economic development and the evidence of minor place-names, 1150-1550

Tuesday 16 February 19:00 (via Zoom)

After a short business meeting Jon Masters, a doctoral student at Lancaster University, will talk about his research and how the place-names in mediaeval documents held at Lancashire Archives have provided evidence for his thesis.

Link to Zoom: <https://bit.ly/3r3btzS>

Meeting ID: 822 0621 7747 Passcode: 917827

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82206217747>

LPNS meeting hosted courtesy of the Friends of Lancashire Archives

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES

FRIENDS OF BANK HALL, BRETHERTON

Those readers who have been following the Bank Hall story will be pleased to know that, after protracted works, the external restoration is now complete. With the help of funding from the National Heritage Lottery Fund and a builder who was prepared to take on the financial risk of the contract, the contractors are now finishing off the inside of the Hall. Work started in July 2017 and was initially scheduled to take 18 months, but the structural works internally have been more complicated than expected and work was further delayed because of Covid-19. It is now expected to be completed early in 2021, when we hope to be open.

Internally there will be 12 residential apartments and a central, publicly-accessible area, most of which will be given over to interpretation. There will also be access to the first floor above the entrance hall and to the four floors of the tower.

Unfortunately, the oak Jacobean tower staircase could not be replicated at this stage because of the cost and time which would be involved. A modern staircase has been installed, but it follows the route of the Jacobean original, so that at some stage in future it could be taken out and replaced with a replica of the original one.

The journey which The Friends of Bank Hall (formerly Bank Hall Action Group) have been involved in has been a lengthy one and throughout they have been supported substantially by The Heritage Trust for the North West who are now the principal leaseholders of the site. This journey started in August 1995; it had been intended to have an anniversary event in August 2020 but that could not be held because of the pandemic.



Hall south side



Restored tower top

It is with thanks to the public for their support, both by visiting on open days and by supporting the National Heritage Lottery Fund which gave funds to the project, that the huge and complicated restoration of Bank Hall has been achieved. Thanks must also go to the Trustees and staff of The Heritage Trust for the North West, as the project would not have been possible without their guidance, professionalism and financial input over the 25 years.

In the background, work continues in relation to funding, research, artefacts etc. It was of interest that a gentleman in the Netherlands found a button when out metal

detecting. When he searched for information it pointed him in the direction of the Friends of Bank Hall and contact was made.



As can be seen from the picture, the button contains a ram's head and a motto. Both these are part of the Bank Hall crest. Research has established that it is in fact a livery button and it is likely that it was from a Legh family servant. However, it is dated to between 1860 and 1880 when the Legh family were not owners of the Hall. Other items have been found in the same area in the Netherlands including more livery buttons, and the writer is involved with assisting in identification.

The Legh livery button has been donated to The Friends of Bank Hall, but research continues to establish how it found its way to the Netherlands.

This is just one interesting element of the work being carried out behind the scenes.

This is not the end of the journey, since there is much to do at Bank Hall to complete the site, which will take many more years. The Friends group will be managing the public areas on behalf of Heritage Trust for the North West and will be working with them on the potting sheds project, the walled garden and the wider grounds.

To find out more, visit the website www.bankhall.org or Facebook at www.facebook.com/bankhall

Bank Hall quarterly News Sheet appears on the website but if you wish to receive this direct by email, you can sign up for it by contacting the writer on: l.taylor@bankhall.org

Lionel Taylor

LANCASHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Friday meetings on Zoom start at 19:30. The website <https://bit.ly/3bFpoaO> has joining details

19 February Furness Abbey & Daughter houses: Irish Sea relations in the 12th Century
Fiona Edmonds, Lancaster University

19 March From Stone Age to Iron: Medieval monastic magic and the Holcombe Valley
Neil Coldrick, Holcombe Moor Heritage group

16 April Rameses the Great and the North of England
Ian Trumble, Bolton Museum

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

The Society offers offprints from previous publications on a wide range of topics. They cost £2 each (inc. p&p). Details on the website at [Offprints \(landcas.org.uk\)](http://landcas.org.uk)

LIVERPOOL & SOUTH WEST LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

The society website [Liverpool & South West Lancashire FHS \(lswlfhs.org.uk\)](http://lswlfhs.org.uk) offers a free download of a booklet for those new to researching family history

REGIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE



Saturday 20 February Online Day Conference: The history of premarital sex and illegitimacy in the North West - Dr Alan Crosby. Alan has found fascinating archival records to cast light on a subject usually confined to the shadows. The format will include pre-recorded video presentations that you can watch at a time of your own choosing in the days leading up to 20 February - and then a live Question and Answer session on the day itself. Prior registration is essential.

Saturday 6 March 48th Annual Archaeology Forum (online). Amongst other items, there will be news of major new finds, from Mesolithic to Bronze Age, and from Roman to the Early Medieval, as well as a look at cutting-edge technology transforming the way archaeologists conduct digs.

New Post Graduate Certificate in Regional and Local History

The RHC has announced the return of this programme. It offers an exciting opportunity for those interested in regional and local history to gain an award from a top UK university renowned for its expertise in this field and experienced in delivering high-quality distance learning programmes.

There are three modules focused on the history of the North of England, ranging from the Viking Age to the Victorian industrial era. However, the skills and contextual knowledge developed through this course are applicable more widely to regional and local studies. The final module is a substantial independent research project with individual support and supervision from a tutor.

A wide range of learning and technical support and materials will be made available. "The flexibility of this programme is ideal for people who want to pursue their historical interests around family or work commitments and is suitable for learners accessing the programme from different parts of the world."

More details from Lancaster University <https://bit.ly/2LR25A8>

RECORD SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE
Wednesday 7 April 14:00-14:15 Annual General Meeting via Zoom.

14:15pm The Colin Phillips Memorial Lecture: The Oldest Lancashire ghost story – Dr Paul Booth, formerly Senior Lecturer in Medieval History at the University of Liverpool and currently president of four local history societies.

All are welcome to attend. To register, please email Diana Dunn d.dunn@chester.ac.uk who will then send a Zoom link for the meeting a few days beforehand.

New Facebook account <http://bit.ly/39nioOh> The site will be used to publicise the Society's activities and publications (and those of kindred societies) and to share interesting stories found within previously published volumes.

The 157 published volumes shed light on every aspect of life in north-west England, from the eleventh to the twentieth centuries. "Perhaps inevitably in present circumstances, we have decided to start with tales of past pandemics. RSLC editions provide insights into the experiences and sufferings of our forebears during the Black Death, the multiple early modern outbreaks of plague, the cholera epidemic of the 1830s, and the spread of Spanish Flu in 1918-20. These stories are often poignant, and reveal some striking parallels with the Covid-19 pandemic. If you're interested in finding out more, please check out our Facebook page and join in the conversation. We aim to post a new tale from our archive every couple of weeks or so."

Many of the past editions are available, free to users, on the society's website: <http://rslc.org.uk/publications/>

Latest volume *The first minute book of the Liverpool Athenaeum*, edited by David Brazendale and Mark Towsey, has been published – number 157 in the series.



The volume details the original proposals and the committee meetings from 1797 to 1809, and provides insights into the motivations of the founders and the role of books, news, coffee, and social space in their daily lives.

The Athenaeum has over 60,000 items in a library described as 'one of the greatest proprietary libraries in the world'.

To purchase this volume for the non-members' price of £30 (+ £4 p&p), please send a cheque for £34 – payable to 'Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire' – to Dr Fiona Pogson, Department of History and Politics, Liverpool Hope University, Hope Park, Liverpool, L16 9JD. Alternatively, contact Dr Pogson by email at pogsonf@hope.ac.uk for details of how to pay by direct bank transfer.

Members (including those joining during the first half of 2021) receive this volume as part of their annual £20 subscription. For details of how to join the society, see <http://rslc.org.uk/membership/>

NEWS ROUNDUP

MANCHESTER HISTORIES

Manchester Histories Salons invite academics, experts and enthusiasts to share their unique knowledge on a range of topics relating to Manchester's rich histories and heritage through online lunchtime talks. Learn about the ordinary, the exceptional and, in some cases, the bizarre histories that have helped shape Greater Manchester and its connection to the rest of the world. The first in the series is:

Monday 8 February 13:00-14:00 - Environment & Access to Green Spaces.
Tickets need to be booked via Eventbrite <https://bit.ly/3o0pTid>

HISTORIC ENGLAND produces a blog, **Heritage Calling**, which contains many interesting items with links back to Historic England sites. This link <https://bit.ly/3cdKbCH> takes readers to six stories about Lancashire, including Wakes Weeks, the Dick, Kerr's ladies football team and Liverpool's experience of the Blitz.

GREATER MANCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGY FORUM

The latest newsletter is copiously illustrated, showcasing a wide range of projects carried out by their member societies from across the area.

One example is the investigation of Manchester's glass industry at two sites: Dantzic Street, near Victoria station; and the former site of Molineaux & Webb, Manchester's largest glassworks, in Ancoats. Together with previous excavations of glassworks, this provides material for a significant research publication about what had been a nationally important industry.



Dantzic Street glass kiln (l)



Glass waste at Molineaux & Webb, with pieces of the distinctive Pomona Green (r)

The newsletter (available to member societies of GMAF) includes a review by Norman Redhead of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS). The service has been given a new six-year contract for its work, to be based at the University of Salford. This demonstrates that the relevant authorities – the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority – recognise the importance of archaeological projects and the recording of Greater Manchester's past.

The GMAAS report for the year ended March 2020 itemises:

- The Historic Environment Record (HER) database contains 19,111 entries
- There are 54,000 records for the Historic Landscape Characterisation project which was completed in 2012
- They now hold over 95,000 images in their archive.
- The HER archive also contains 3,231 reports on archaeological investigations carried out in Greater Manchester since 1989
- GMAAS were consulted on 342 planning applications by the ten local planning authorities of Greater Manchester, with 147 having an archaeological interest which resulted in conditions being applied to planning consents to secure programmes of archaeological work.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES TNA are hosting a series of online events.

Saturday 13 February 10:00: Top level tips: Records of railway workers.

A short, expert-led seminar followed by a live Q&A session.

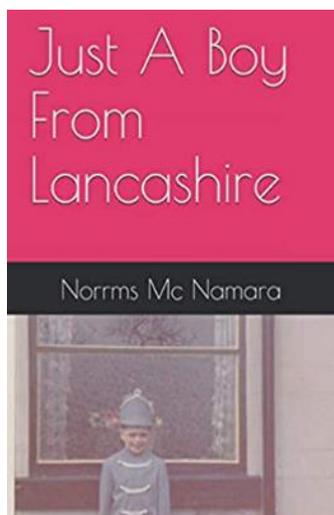
Friday 12 March 14:00: Agents for change: women and protest in the National Archives. A pre-recorded online talk, followed by a 15-minute live Q&A session.

The events are free of charge, but booking is essential <https://bit.ly/3hWNWwn>.

MANCHESTER REGION HISTORY REVIEW

Dr Craig Horner, the general editor, announces that the MRHR is being relaunched this year as an online journal. Please email him with any queries or prospective copy c.horner@mmu.ac.uk. The website will be kept up to date with further details. Articles from previous MRHRs (1987 to 2006) can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/3sEngGt>

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



JUST A BOY FROM LANCASHIRE

Norman Mc Namara

ISBN: 9798563247840

£6.99 pbk; £4.99 Kindle (Amazon)

Norman recounts his upbringing, including both sad and happy events, in Bolton, in a sequel to his first book *Just a boy from Bolton*.

All proceeds will be used to buy MP3 players with individually tailored music to give free to people with dementia – details from <https://purpleangel-global.com>

WALKING THE BRIDGEWATER

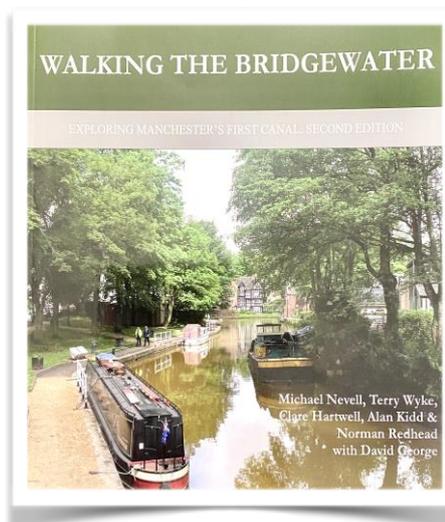
2nd ed (2020). Michael Nevell, Terry Wyke, Clare Hartwell, Alan Kidd, Norman Redhead, with David George. Ed. Michael Nevell and David George.

100pp. Fully illustrated (col and b&w).

ISBN 9780993304163

£9.50 (inc. UK p&p) (previously £10 plus p&p).

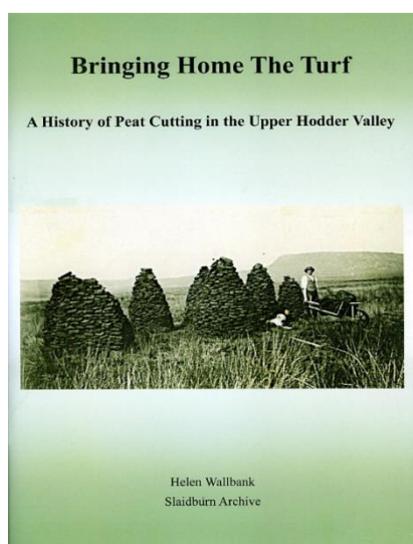
Send a cheque to Mrs L. Wright, 9 Perth Close, Holmes Chapel Cheshire CW4 7JH (include your name, postal and email address).



The Bridgewater Canal is one of the most iconic industrial monuments in the world. Its opening in 1761 ushered in a boom in industrial canal building in Britain and around the world. The canal would not have been built, though, without the growing industrial market represented by nearby Manchester. The relationship of the canal to this city is thus of crucial importance in understanding Manchester's place as the world's first industrial city. The current, revised volume, which includes the recent archaeological research at Worsley, captures contemporary responses to the canal and the emergence of Manchester as an international city based around commerce, manufacturing and transport. This is represented by the Bridgewater successors; the Ashton and Rochdale canals, and the world-famous Liverpool and Manchester Railway which are also explored in this work.

The Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society (MRIAS) contributed funding for the book, so receipts from the sale of the remaining copies will be sent to MRIAS.

The society also has a limited number of previous publications for sale – contact the Society www.mrias.co.uk.



BRINGING HOME THE TURF: A HISTORY OF PEAT CUTTING IN THE UPPER HODDER VALLEY

Helen Wallbank

This new book from Slaidburn Archive details the history of peat cutting in that area. It has many first-hand accounts, historical references and is full of old and new photographs.

Available for £9 (plus £2 p&p) from Slaidburn Archive, 25 Church Street, Slaidburn BB7 3ER.

Tel 01200 446161 www.slaidburnarchive.org

THE PLACE & STREET NAMES OF BURNLEY

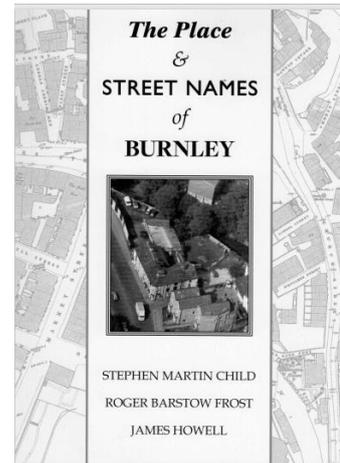
Stephen Martin Child, Roger Barstow Frost and James Howell

Published by the Burnley & District Historical Society

Pbk. 145pp £7 plus £1.85 postage

Available from the society: Stephen Child, 66 Langdale Rd, Blackburn BB2 5DW Tel 01254 491295

martinchild66@yahoo.co.uk



Review by Bob Dobson

The book is in two parts, the first covering names of the districts or areas within the present-day town, followed by the names of some streets. The focus is town centre districts, plus some out-of-town ones where they are known. The text mainly explains the names, often derived from Old English or Scandinavian. Some place names are found amongst the street names, presented in alphabetical order.

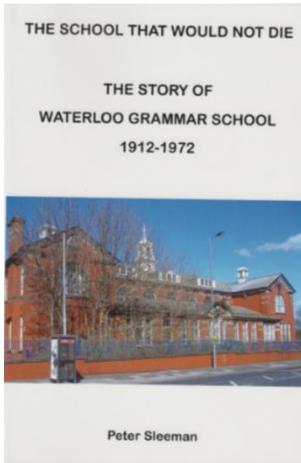
I was interested to learn that present-day Burnley town is made up of two townships – Burnley and Habergham Eaves. Having read the book, I feel I have learned much about the history of the town and its industrial past, which indicates how much can be learned from the names of the streets. It is clear that much use has been made by the compilers of the town council's minute books, particularly so for the many name changes, some in living memory.

Some examples follow. Standish Street was named after a local vicar, (rather than a placename) whilst another vicar, Robert Mosley Master, has three streets named after him – there cannot be many who can say that. Not many sportsmen have had streets named in their honour, but Marlon Beresford, who played for Burnley FC in 1992-98 and 2002-03 is one, and is remembered by having both his names on the town's map within the postcode BB11. How long before there's a Jimmy McIlroy thoroughfare to join the estimated 1500 streets in Burnley?

I would have welcomed more information in some cases, in particular to have been told when the street was built, or when it first appeared in the national censuses. It would be good also to know in more cases who had owned the land on which the streets were built. In many instances it would be those owners or their families who chose the street names.

The reader needs to appreciate that the reasons given for many street names are sometimes 'educated guesses' made well over a century since the streets were first laid out and named, but I think we can have confidence in the suggestions made, as the compilers have researched various records available in the town's library.

The local history society is to be applauded for publishing this book. It has assisted me in my own research into the street names of Accrington. I hope it might encourage others to compile and publish a similar book on their town, or at least the establishment of a central index of their town's streets and any changes to those names, which more often than not fail to be recorded.



THE SCHOOL THAT WOULD NOT DIE: The story of Waterloo Grammar School 1912-1972

Peter Sleeman

Over 50 illustrations and photographs. All profits go to the Old Boys Association. Discounted price £10 + UK p&p. Payment can be made online – contact the author, Peter Sleeman, for details petersleeman2011@btinternet.com. Or post a cheque for £12 made out to WGSOBA and send to Peter Sleeman, 43 Rockland Rd, Wallasey, CH45 0LF.

The story is about a grammar school in working class Liverpool, set against the background of 19th and 20th century national and international events, and the history of UK education. The school was under the control of the local authority and Lancashire County Council, and offered the pupils exactly the type of education grammar schools were set up to provide. It gave working-class boys the opportunity to reach their full potential, including places at university. Their thorough education allowed them entry to careers in various professions, such as the law, banking, insurance and the armed forces. One of the chapters mentions a number of former pupils who have made significant contributions to their professions or communities.

The building now has a Grade II listing. Whilst it cannot revert to the grammar school system it is still used as an educational facility, for adults.

344 VICTIMS OF PRETORIA PIT: SOME FACTS

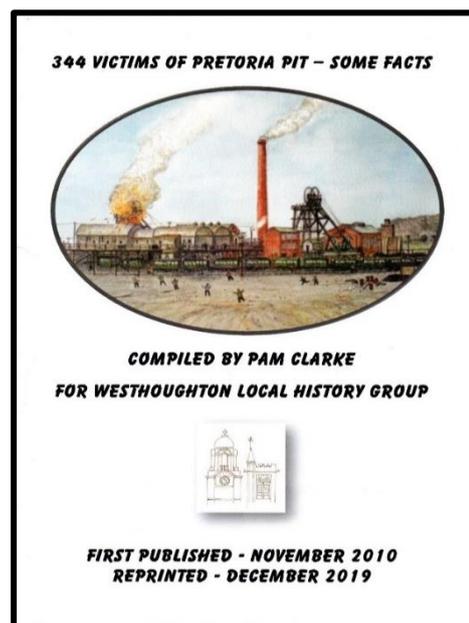
Compiled by Pam Clarke

2010 (reprinted 2019)

Payment can be made to Westhoughton Local History Group via PayPal. Details from howfenhistory@gmail.com.

£6 including postage (or £4.50 if delivered in the Westhoughton area only)

The Pretoria Pit disaster happened on 21 December 1910, when an underground explosion occurred at the Hulton Colliery Bank Pit No. 3, known as the Pretoria Pit, in Over Hulton, Westhoughton, then in the historic county of Lancashire.



A total of 344 men and boys lost their lives. It was the third worst mining accident in Britain, and one of the worst in the world.

This account of the victims was published in 2010 to mark the centenary of the disaster and was reprinted in 2019. It was compiled by the late Pam Clarke, a member of Westhoughton Local History Group.

On that morning approximately 900 workers arrived for the day shift. They were working five coal seams of the Manchester coalfield. 349 of the men and boys descended the No 3 bank pit shaft to work in different seams.

At 7:50am there was an explosion in the Plodder mine, which is thought to have been caused by an accumulation of gas from a roof collapse the previous day.

A total of 344 men and boys died in the disaster. Five hundred and fifty men who were working the other seams were rescued unharmed, apart from those suffering from smoke inhalation.

Some facts are heart-rending: Miriam Tyldesley lost her husband, four sons and two brothers. Annie Houghton's husband and three sons died. One father died of shock three days after learning that his 16 year old son had been killed. Thirty six boys aged 13, 14 and 15 were amongst the casualties.

In the 50 pages of the book there is an amazing amount of detail about those who died, including a great many photographs, and as much biographical detail as could be found. All the victims are named, together with their ages, occupation and place of birth.

There is a comprehensive list of rescuers and their medals, with many photos of the medals themselves. The Howe Bridge Mines Rescue Station – one of the earliest in the country, and set up before the 1911 Act which made them compulsory - had started in 1908. In the very same year it co-ordinated the response to a disaster at the Maypole colliery, where 76 lives were lost. The rescue effort made use of breathing apparatus – for the first time in Lancashire and one of the earliest in the country. The Maypole disaster provided a grim and unwanted template for the Pretoria rescue, where hundreds of men risked their lives to rescue fellow miners.



Those who read this book will be well aware of the huge amount of time and patience it will have taken to provide so much vivid detail about the tragedy.

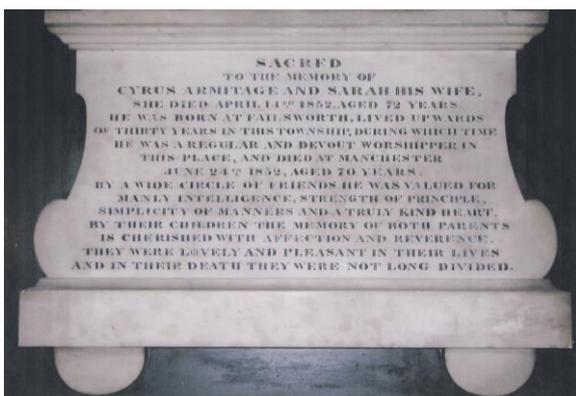
RESEARCH ARTICLES

THE ARMITAGE FAMILY OF DUKINFIELD

Gay Oliver of Tameside Local History Forum

In this strange time, when libraries and record offices are closed, local and family historians have been grateful for the huge range of resources available online. While consulting www.archive.org I was reminded of how I discovered this treasure trove of out-of-print books. Many years ago, a student from São Paulo University in Brazil wrote to me asking for information about John Armitage and the Armitage family from Dukinfield. Apart from remembering the existence of a couple of plaques inside the Unitarian Dukinfield Old Chapel, commemorating John and his father Cyrus, I knew nothing, but I was soon able to direct him to photographs of these plaques on a CD produced by the Cheshire Family History Society, to John's grave, and to his baptismal details from Dob Lane Chapel at Failsworth.

The student's interest in John Armitage arose from the fact that in 1831 John had written a history of Brazil in two volumes: *A History of Brazil from the Arrival of the Braganzas in 1808 until the abdication of Don Pedro 1st*. This was apparently a continuation from Southey's previous work; it was compiled from original archived sources and is quite substantial. John had spent some time as a merchant in Brazil in the 1830s, before going to Ceylon in 1836, where he became an important merchant, a magistrate and a member of the legislative council. Ill health forced him to retire back to England in 1855, where he died shortly afterwards, aged 48. Copies of the book can be obtained from various online booksellers, but out of copyright versions can be downloaded in various formats from archive.org.



More interesting to me as a family historian was another book, written by John's father Cyrus (b. 1781 Failsworth, d. 1852) - also downloaded from archive.org - *Some Account of the Family of Armitages from 1662 to the Present Time*. This is a charming little book published in 1850 by Reed & Pardon in London.

*Memorial to Cyrus and his wife Sarah
in Dukinfield Old Chapel*

Cyrus was in partnership with Samuel Robinson (another leading light in education in Dukinfield) at Dukinfield Old Mill on Park Lane in the Tame Valley. Towards the end of his life, he was motivated to research his family history: an early genealogist.

Family legend had it that, after the Reformation, the Armitages had purchased Kirklees Abbey for a very small sum of money and were devoted Church of England adherents. By 1662, however, a descendant, Godfrey Armitage (bap. 1603, Kirkburton, Huddersfield), was instrumental, together with Oliver Heywood, in forming Lydgate Chapel in Kirkburton, near Huddersfield. From Godfrey descended a very strong line of Presbyterians and Nonconformists.

A lot of the book is compiled from a series of letters sent back to England from Godfrey's great-grandson, Enoch (b. 1677). Enoch suffered a set of reverses in England and, shortly after his wife Mary's death, emigrated in 1719 with three of his four children, sailing from Liverpool and arriving in New York on 30 May. Enoch eventually settled in New Jersey and I have a copy of a history of the Pennington Area Presbyterians, giving quite a few details of his contribution to the early churches there. Cyrus's book is an extremely good read for those interested in early American settlers, Nonconformism, and a family's journey in general.

Enoch's son John (b. 1703 Lydgate) was an apprentice in England and his master tricked Enoch into thinking he would be released from his service to go with them. John watched with sadness as his family departed. The letters continued, pleading with John to join them, until Enoch's death.



Memorial to John in Dukinfield Old Chapel

They include details of ships' passages he had bought for his son and recommendations of where to buy good barrels of brandy and cheese from merchants in Liverpool. These were the most valued commodities onboard ship both for the passenger's sustenance and for keeping the sailors sweet on the voyage. John never followed his father because he had married his cousin.

After Enoch died in 1739, his other son Reuben took over the family plantation and continued to write home. Reuben was blind in his old age but maintained the plantation with his old faithful black slave, Cato. Another relative wrote, sometime after the War of Independence in 1776, to tell of Reuben's suffering at the hands of American soldiers, who had broken in, smashed his belongings, set fire to the homestead, tortured Reuben and left him in the woods.

Cyrus also writes about his father, another Enoch (b. 1743 Failsworth), the son of John who had stayed in England. John moved out of Lydgate in Yorkshire, attracted by linen weaving in Lancashire, first coming to live in Droylsden before settling in Failsworth. Still fervently Nonconformist, the family worshipped at Dob Lane Chapel. Cyrus continues with a vivid description of the trials of Nonconformists in 1794, when stones were thrown and windows broken, terrifying the occupants. It ends on a more optimistic note: that his father lived long enough to see an era of relative tolerance.

If you find the price of out-of-print books expensive from online sites, try archive.org which has downloadable copies of out of copyright books, mostly from American libraries, although Cyrus's book was digitised from a copy in the Bodleian Library. They are in various formats, but those in pdfs are fairly small files. I have found Glover's *History of Ashton-under-Lyne*, Samuel Hill's *Bygone Stalybridge* and works by Edwin Butterworth and Thomas Middleton, amongst others. (An earlier version of this article appeared in Tameside Local History Forum's *History Alive Tameside Magazine* Vol 5 2010; all issues are available online at <http://www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk/hat.htm>)

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO STANDISH HALL?

Jim Meehan (Jim has submitted this article on behalf of Wigan Local History and Heritage Society)



Henry Standish died in 1920 without heirs. He was the last Lord of the Manor. The estate was sold and Standish Hall was partly demolished. The once beautiful Manor House on the slopes of the Douglas Valley had the Tudor wing and chapel pulled down and the remains made into two smaller homes. They were demolished in the 1980s when the Coal Board bought the land.

Authentic map directory of South Lancashire, ed. James Bain (c.1930)

For a hundred years people have been trying to solve the mystery of what happened to the parts that were removed in the 1920s. Stories grew that the chapel and Tudor wing had been rebuilt in America. Were these true or was it only the valuable interiors that had been shipped across the Atlantic to be reassembled? Now four ancient rooms from the Hall have been tracked down: three in America and one in England.



The Hall in the 1920s – Tudor wing and Chapel on the right

The Standish name plays a prominent part in American history. Myles Standish was the military adviser onboard the *Mayflower*. He became an important member of the Plymouth Colony, one of the foundations of modern America. Although his origins remain unclear – his birthplace has never been established - there was great interest in anything with a Standish connection when the estate went up for sale.

The Daily Mail reported in 1922 that fireplaces and oak panelling from the Hall had been sold to Robersons of Knightsbridge. They were dealers specialising in selling manor house interiors to wealthy clients. But where did the rooms go from there? Robersons' sale brochures reveal the most ornate and valuable rooms from Standish were sold as the "James I Room" and the "State Bedroom". They were described as the finest examples of Jacobean and Elizabethan carved oak rooms ever seen. In the Hall they had been known as the Old Drawing Room and the Study. The other two rooms for sale were the "Oak Library" and the "Dining Room".



The Elizabethan State Bedroom in situ (left) and in Robersons' showroom

The Drawing Room and Study were originally from Borwick Hall near Carnforth. William Standish married Cecilia Bindloss, the Borwick heiress. The rooms were probably moved to Standish when William inherited the manor in 1682.

So, who would have the wealth to buy these rooms with a unique place in history? The Old Drawing Room (“James I Room”) and the Study (“State Bedroom”) were bought by one of the wealthiest and best-known men in America, the media magnate William Randolph Hearst. He was one of the most powerful men in America, and a prolific collector. Many acquisitions were stored away; others were used to furnish the castle he was building in California known as *San Simeon*. His life was controversially depicted by Orson Wells in the Oscar-winning movie, *Citizen Kane*.

The rooms were shipped to his five-storey warehouse in the Bronx, New York. A few years later the great depression of the 1930s meant that Hearst faced bankruptcy. He was forced to sell many of his treasures, whilst others were placed in the hands of the Hearst Foundation.

The two rooms next appear in the catalogue for the “Hearst Sale” of 1940/41. To his humiliation his close rival in the art world, Armand Hammer, took ownership of much of his collection and organised a huge sale using the two-acre fifth floor of Gimbels Department store in New York. Hammer was the Chairman of Occidental Oil and, like Hearst, used his wealth to acquire art. World War 2 was escalating so there was low interest in the sale. The Study (“State Bedroom”) did not sell and became the property of the Hearst Foundation. It next appeared when it was donated by the Foundation to the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) in 1958. It remains there in storage to this day. It was valued at \$27,500 in 1958 which could equate to around a quarter of a million dollars in today. The Old Drawing Room however was bought in 1941.

Anton (Tony) Hulman was from a wealthy family in Terre Haute, Indiana. He was building a lakeside lodge, and bought the room as the main feature. He was famous in the USA for restoring the Indianapolis racing circuit after WW2 and reviving the

famous Indianapolis 500. He installed the room in “Lingen Lodge”, named after the town in Germany where his grandfather was born.

The family were benefactors of the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in the city. The lodge and surrounding parkland remained in the family until sold to the Institute in 2017. The lodge is now used by the college. The Old Drawing Room is still intact and well cared for, and known as the “Myles Standish Room”. The college president has taken a keen interest in its history and has kindly supplied photographs which provide stunning detail of the 400-year-old carved woodwork.

Jacobean chimneypiece from the Old Drawing Room in The Hulman Lodge, Terre Haute, Indiana, USA

Courtesy of the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology



The Oak Library was sold by Robersons in 1922 to Ralph Harman Booth of Detroit, Michigan, who was building a house at Grosse Pointe. Like Hearst he was a publisher and also had banking interests. The house has changed hands over the years. When offered for sale in 2019 the description of the interior included the following: “Amongst many of the superb architectural details is the library fireplace, and walnut panelling from Standish Hall”. The photograph shows Ralph’s widow, Mary, standing in a room in the 1940s which appears to match the Standish Hall Library.

Ralph Booth was a patron of the arts and helped found the DIA. He donated much of his personal collection to the DIA and the National Gallery in Washington. He died in Europe in 1931 while serving as the US envoy to Denmark. Mary continued to live at Grosse Pointe until her death in 1951.

So, by an incredible coincidence, two rooms from Standish ended up in Detroit less than ten miles apart. One donated to the DIA by the Hearst Foundation and the other in a house built by one of the DIA’s major benefactors.

The Dining Room was bought in 1924 by Tryphena Gunn Mitchell, an American living in England. She had met and married William Nelson Mitchell following a family visit to Bristol. They bought Halsway Manor in Somerset in the early 1920s and Tryphena sympathetically refitted the interior.



Halsway remained the family home until William died in 1936. The manor changed hands a number of times before it was sold to become the National Centre for Folk Arts. It provides a residential setting for practicing and promoting folk arts. The Dining Room from Standish remains intact and is often filled with people of all ages practicing and performing.

www.halswaymanor.org.uk

So, we have found four rooms from Standish Hall. Does this solve the mystery? Was it the dismantling and removal of the rooms and their reassembly in America that created the belief that the Hall had been rebuilt in the States? I have found no contemporary reports of the Tudor wing and Chapel being taken to America, and no trace of any of the Hall's exterior has been found since it was demolished. Perhaps the story helped soften the blow of the precious parts of the Hall being lost, or perhaps like most myths the story grew and evolved in the retelling.

For a fuller account of what happened to Standish Hall watch the video on YouTube:
<https://bit.ly/35FyPDi>

Acknowledgements: Anne Hurst, Andy Lomax, Dave Thomas, Bill Aldridge and David Yendley. Images in the public domain except where indicated.

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LANCASHIRE SCHOOL LIFE IN THE PAST

A learning and teaching resource from Geoff Timmins

Issue: Why might children have been absent from school in the past?

The obvious answer is because they were unwell. Maybe they had a bad cold or needed to see a doctor or dentist. Another answer is that an outbreak of disease might have occurred and they risked catching it from other children. This can happen today with coronavirus and, though its effect on children is mild, they still have to isolate for a time if they become infected.

But coronavirus is a new disease. What impact did outbreaks of other types of disease have on children's health and their school attendance in the past? School log book entries written by head teachers can give help in answering the questions, as the following examples from Lancashire and elsewhere demonstrate.

These logbook extracts could be used as a basis for exercises for children: to assist with numeracy skills; the interrogation of data; the differences between the impact of illnesses then and now; and comparison of school life in the past with the children's own experiences.

1. Disease outbreaks

Extract 1

Several cases of smallpox have broken out in Bacup this week, and the scare seems to be having an effect on our attendance.

(St Saviour's School, Bacup, 22 January 1903)

Extract 2

The school is closed today for two weeks on account of "measles".

(Rawtenstall Newchurch CE Primary School, 11 January 1904)

Extract 3

Several cases of Mumps are known among the children and make sad work in attendance and progress. Average for the week is only 49.1 the number present at all being 59 out of a possible 66 on the books.

(Hornby CE Primary School, 14 December 1900)

School logbooks in other parts of the country report similar outbreaks, as the following examples show.

Extract 4

Received an order this morning from the Medical Officer of Health to close the school until further notice owing to the continued spread of measles.
(Denton School, Northamptonshire, 30 January 1896)

Extract 5

School closed after afternoon session owing to outbreak of influenza. (Re-opened 17th March)
(New Seaham, Council School, County Durham, 13 February 1917)

Extract 6

The attendance has been poor the whole week. There are now 13 cases of Whooping cough. Several children at work who ought to be at school; others are kept at home, for fear of catching the Whooping cough.
(Clareborough Board School, Nottingham, 2 October 1890)

Points arising

Outbreaks of several diseases could reduce school attendance considerably and lead to schools being closed for some weeks. On the evidence presented, they tended to occur more in the winter than at other times of year. But this is a hypothesis that needs testing. There is scope for numeracy inputs in extract 3. The nature of these diseases can be discussed, as well as how medical advances have lessened their impact through vaccination, with smallpox being eradicated for example. The extracts from outside Lancashire help to make the point that disease outbreaks occurred widely, affecting children in all parts of the country.

2. Other reasons for absence

School log books give other reasons for children being absent from schools. Here is a selection drawn from Lancashire schools.

Extract 7

Wednesday morning was a dreadful downpour of rain preventing many children from reaching school. Of those who did come 12 were wet through, the rest, 16 in number were kept till 10.15 and then sent home for the day. The road leading from Cloughton and Farleton was flooded near Stocks Bridge to the depth of 3 feet and water was crossing the road in various places.
(Hornby CE Primary School, 9 September 1908)

Extract 8

Attendance this morning wretched. Caused by a custom in the town called "pace egging" – the children going round the various shops begging small cakes. Most of the absentees put in an appearance in the afternoon and presented all kinds of equivocating excuses.
(Chapel Street British School, Blackburn, 22 March 1869)

Extract 9

Some of the children attend irregularly, perhaps three or four times in a week present, & absent for a week or two. I have seen some of the parents of these children and their excuse is that "they are kept at home to nurse and run errands".

(Rawtenstall Newchurch CE Primary, February 1878)

Extract 10

The children by the name of L... have been away all week haymaking. It has been raining more or less during the whole of the week. Haymaking consequently has been impossible. These children are most unsatisfactory in their attendance.

(Edgeside CE Primary School, Rossendale, July 1903)

Extract 11

Closed school for the week on account of violent snow-storm, only 9 children on opening on Monday morning, & 11 on Tuesday and opened again on Wednesday for only 7; closed for week.

(Sharneyford CP School, Bacup, March 1886)

Extract 12

The children are having a holiday on Monday and Tuesday Aug: 22nd and 23rd because the mills are to be closed on those days and many of the parents will go away to the sea-side & probably take their children with them.

(Rawtenstall Newchurch CE Primary School August 1892)

Points arising

As with considering illnesses, much scope exists for children to compare their own experiences of school life with those of children in the past, building their understanding around the concept of change and continuity. It is clear from the extracts that local events and practices worked against good attendance. Children could discuss the fact that in earlier times part-time work sometimes took priority. Children at that time took part in local customs, which can be considered in more detail.

Extract 10 raises the issue of truancy. The concern about good attendance was an issue, given that school income partly depended on achieving it.

With regard to extracts 6-12, a categorisation exercise can also be attempted.

Category headings might be given – bad weather; children working; and local events – or children might be asked to formulate their own categories. Problems arising can be considered. A simpler approach would be to ask them to find, say, two examples that are concerned with bad weather affecting attendance.

Such themes can be extended by asking children about their own experiences in this respect and by bringing in further log book evidence. For example, the head teacher at Clarborough in Nottingham wrote in his log book on the 17 October 1907:

A very wet morning, registers were not marked. Very few children came, and these being very wet having had to walk two miles, were dismissed at the suggestion of one of the Managers, the Rev. W. Langford.



*Great Harwood National School class and teacher c.1910
Red Rose Collections ID 239030*

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Lancashire County Council's Red Rose Collections contain thousands of images, including many showing schools and pupils from the early 20th century [Red Rose Collections from Lancashire County Council](#)

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