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LANCASHIRE HISTORY MAGAZINE

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Clitheroe
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AGNES ETIENNE
The Tale of
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Player

PAUPERS AT THE POLLS?
Preston Votes, 1768



CONTENTS

4 VOICES FROM THE PAST

Listening in at Stock Well, Clitheroe

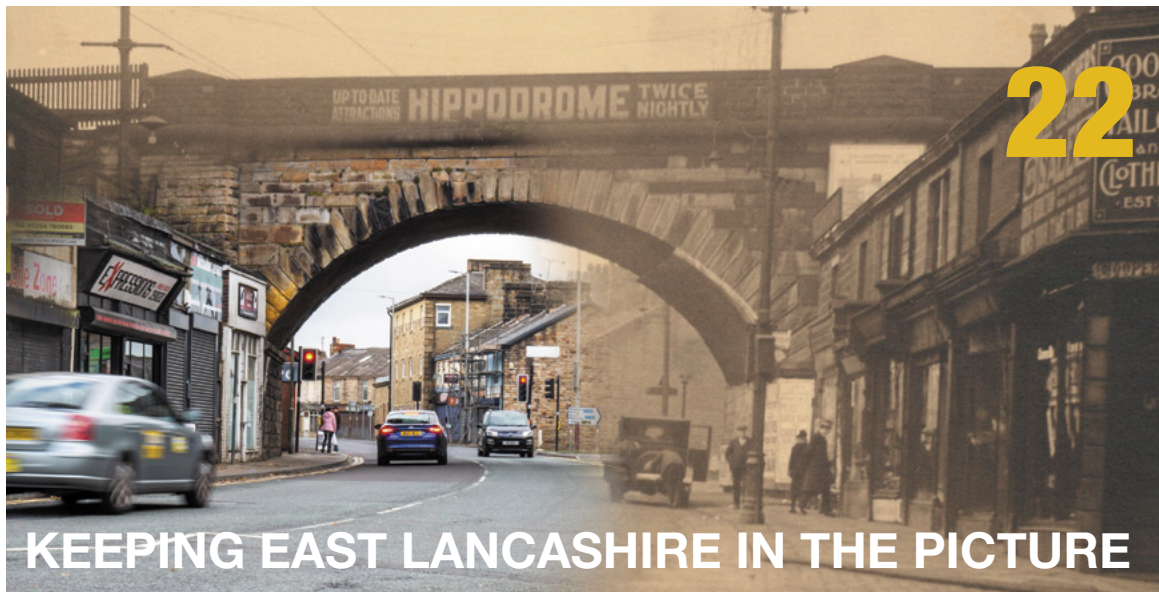
8 GEORGE WILKIN'S STORY

12 COURTING HISTORY

All-Women Jury at Clitheroe

14 AGNES ETIENNE

A Demon Dominican Dominoes Player



18 THE JEAN BIRTWISTLE COLLECTION

22 KEEPING EAST LANCASHIRE IN THE PICTURE

24 BETWEEN LAW AND CHARITY Poor Relief Under Lord Lilford

28 PRESTON'S FENIAN

32 MRS & MISS CHALONER Mayor and Mayoress of Preston

36 THE MISSING GLASS SLIDES OF LYTHAM



38 THE PAINTING AND LIFE OF THOMAS TURNER

40 ROBERT ALEXANDER MCFEETER

43 BOOK REVIEW
Writing for Social Change in
Temperance Periodicals

44 PAUPERS AT THE
POLLS?
Preston's 1768 Election

48 IN SEARCH OF THE
'LEATHER HUNTERS'

52 MY FAMILY HISTORY
A Lancashire Odyssey

55 CLARETS COLLECTED



MRS CHALONER, Mayor of Preston

Welcome to our third edition

This edition features a wide spread of articles from all corners of Lancashire and beyond, from domino clubs in Preston to medieval wells in Clitheroe and into the skies above Europe during the Second World War.

Dr Stephen Tate continues his exploration of the 'Leather Hunters' of Lancashire's early football culture. Salomea Chlebowska examines the history of poor relief through the Lilford of Bank Hall collections and Shirley Penman uncovers the story of Clitheroe's first all-women coroner's jury. Bill Shannon looks at Preston's links to the Irish revolutionary and author John Boyle O'Reilly and Mary Keenan delves into the history of a Southport woodcarver and his surviving work at Rufford Old Hall.

Our thanks are due to the researchers, volunteers, local and family historians and authors who contributed their stories and research to this edition. We hope you enjoy reading the stories featured, that you might learn something new about Lancashire's history and that you too feel the urge to put pen to paper and share your local history stories with the people of Lancashire.

Archives Editorial Team, Lancashire Archives & Local History, December 2023

archives@lancashire.gov.uk

You can find out more about how to contribute to the next edition of Archives on page 59.

Editorial correction from Edition 2: The text of the penultimate paragraph of Mike Derbyshire's article on Richard Burton was mis-proofed, with apologies to the author.



Stock Well, c.1920, the photographer Edmundson Buck seems to be inviting the viewer to join him in contemplation of the stocks uprights. The image might commemorate their being recently added to the well. (Edmundson Buck, Red Rose Collections, ECL20150106020)

VOICES FROM THE PAST: LISTENING IN AT STOCK WELL, CLITHEROE

By Andy Bowes

What answer would you give if I asked you the name of the oldest man-made thing in Clitheroe?

This was the question posed of his young readers almost a century ago by Arthur Langshaw,¹ acclaimed local historian and Headmaster of Ribblesdale Senior School. The answer given, he knew, would almost certainly be the imposing stone keep, built atop the limestone knoll in the Castle Grounds – formerly Stock Well Meadow – by Clitheroe’s Norman masters at some point in the late twelfth century. He also knew this answer would be wide of the mark by roughly a thousand years. It was a trick question.

The correct answer was the Roman road, long-buried, that skirts the east of Clitheroe's townlands. Langshaw was teasing out a deeper truth for his young audience to ponder. The Roman road couldn't be seen... but that didn't mean it wasn't there. You had to look for it.

But what if there were another man-made structure in Clitheroe that predated the stone keep? And what if, rather than something that couldn't be seen, it was something that couldn't be – or, perhaps more accurately, hasn't been – heard? Something that, if you listened carefully, could speak to an even earlier settlement at the limestone knoll? Hidden away in a corner of the old Stock Well Meadow, just a stone's throw from the Norman keep, we may find such a thing: the Stock Well that gave the meadow its name.

'The Spring by the Stump'

Like Clitheroe's other two medieval wells, it goes by more than one name. It is sometimes referred to as Stock Well, on account of it being one of the marshalling points for cattle brought to market. And, more commonly, it is called Stocks Well because, it is argued, the town stocks once stood at or near this spot.

In terms of the first explanation, there is no doubt that cattle bound for market would have been watered there. However, 'stock' as a collective term for animals bred for profit – or livestock – does not appear in use before the early sixteenth

century. Stock Well has been in existence for much longer than that. As for the second explanation, it is a notion that persists despite being dismissed by another local historian, William Self Weeks, as long ago as 1927:

'It has sometimes been stated, on account of the well...being called Stock, or Stocks Well, that the Stocks formerly stood at or near this spot. But from the following entry in the Bailiffs' Account for 1810, 'By Wm. Horns bill for setting up Cross and Stocks £6 15s', it is to be inferred that, at that date, they stood close to the Cross in the Market Place'.²

What, then, does Stock Well really mean? Perhaps we need to look not for an explanation but for a derivation. Our modern word 'stock' or 'stoke', derived from the Old English place-name element *stoc*, can have a variety of meanings. It can mean a place, as in Woodstock or 'the place in the woods'. It can also denote a place with some religious significance – such as Tavistock, with its abbey. Most commonly of all it signifies a secondary or outlying settlement, such as Stoke-on-Trent. None of these would appear to apply to Stock Well.

There is another Old English word, *stocc*, which is identical to *stoc* in its modern forms. New research by Clitheroe Library, recently corroborated by the English Place-Name Society, shows that it is here that we find the true meaning of Stock Well. Old English *stocc* is defined as, 'a



Clitheroe, 1727, looming over the town, the Norman keep is massively exaggerated... or is it? The picture demonstrates how imposing the new structure would have felt to villager and visitor alike. (Red Rose Collections, ECL20140128022)

tree trunk, esp. one left standing, a stump, a log of wood, a stock.’¹³ When we recall that Stock Well sits at the edge of what was, for centuries, a meadow – an area of grassland, sometimes naturally occurring but more often created from cleared woodland for the production of hay – an answer presents itself. We can reasonably infer that the stocc referred to in this case is most likely a tree stump – making Stock Well ‘the spring by the stump’.



Haymaking at Stock Well Meadow, c. 1900. The clearance of the trees that created the meadow is commemorated in the name of the well that gave the meadow its name. (Edmundson Buck, Red Rose Collections)

First Settlers

Stock Well is a voice from the past. It speaks to us from the time of the first settlement of Clitheroe’s limestone knoll and the contemporaneous clearance of the woodland surrounding it. Such a clearance would have served several purposes. First, it would have provided timber for the construction of the wooden palisade that preceded the stone structure we see today. Second, it would have given clear line of sight of enemies approaching. And third, it would have allowed for the creation of the meadow where, for centuries, locals gathered every summer with their long-bladed scythes to make hay for winter store – a practice that continued until the early years of the twentieth century.

Given that the well’s name commemorates an occasion rather than a date, we are bound to ask exactly when this first settlement occurred. In 1066, the Normans arrived. And it is generally accepted that by the late eleventh century there was a wooden fortification at the new administrative centre of the Honor – or medieval estate – of Clitheroe.

As an answer to Langshaw’s question, this alone would make Stock Well a century older than the stone keep. But was this the first timber structure? Or rather, if it was the first, was it built by the Normans? There is no archaeological evidence to support a pre-Norman settlement on the limestone knoll. However, there is documentary evidence to support such an idea. Transcribed and annotated from the Latin, the notes to a Charter from 1102 read as follows:

‘By this charter, Robert de Lacy grants to Ralph le Rous, for his homage and service... those messuages [buildings and land] which had formerly belonged to Orm, the Englishman, lying both within and below the wooden palisade, which formed the outer protection of the Castle of Clitheroe.’¹⁴

If Orme – or one of his ancestors – did occupy the knoll prior to the Conquest, it follows that the clearance of the woodland surrounding it would have taken place at this earlier time. It should be pointed out that in the forthcoming English Place-Name Society ‘Lancashire’ volumes, Stock Well is derived from Middle English *stok* rather than Old English *stocc*. This is, however, entirely consistent with the lack of early written sources for Lancashire place-names generally. We may, I believe, allow ourselves to consider the possibility that Stock Well is speaking to us from an altogether more distant period of Clitheroe’s history: the time of its first Anglo-Saxon settlement.

‘A Man-Made Structure’

I am not, of course, suggesting that the present-day structure of Stock Well pre-dates that of the stone keep. The Old English word *wella*, from which our modern word ‘well’ derives, referred originally to freshwater springs – springs with which, given the area’s limestone geology, Clitheroe was abundantly blessed. What I am suggesting is that even as the first wooden palisade was taking shape on the limestone knoll above it, Stock Well would have assumed its first, rudimentary, man-made structure.

Given the vital importance of a pure and reliable water supply, it was a necessity. A hole would have been dug around the spring, which would have filled to provide a pool for the drawing of

water. This, in turn, would have been partially surrounded by fencing to afford the pool some protection from contamination. A lime and gravel mix, to stabilise the ground around the pool, would have followed shortly thereafter. This was Stock Well in its earliest man-made days.

It was only later that all three wells assumed the stone forms by which we recognise them today: around 1519, it has been suggested, to cater to the increased late-Tudor footfall in the town after Henry VIII transferred Whalley's two annual fairs to Clitheroe. As I attempt to demonstrate in my book,⁵ these were themselves just part of a series of modifications to the wells that continued into the twentieth century – and which brings us full circle, back to the uprights from the town stocks.

Why, if Stock Well has nothing to do with the town stocks, do we find the old stone uprights from the town stocks sited there? We learned from Weeks that they were still in the Market Square in 1810. However, we also learn from a newspaper report that they were no longer within the borough by 1858. Now consider the following from photographer Edmundson Buck's lecture notes of 1925:

'...It is called Stock's well because the town stocks have been brought here to form the sides of the entrance, where they stood before is not known'.

“

...It is called Stock's well because the town stocks have been brought here to form the sides of the entrance, where they stood before is not known.”

Tellingly, his phrase 'have been brought here' suggests an action carried out within recent or living memory. It is not too fanciful to surmise that Buck's image of Stock Well, thought to have been taken around 1920, shows the photographer posing not so much with the well as with a new addition to it: the stocks themselves.

Taking Stock

Undoubtedly, certain elements of Stock Well are 'newer' additions. However, to dismiss the structure as somehow 'fake' would be to miss the bigger picture. Perhaps, à la Langshaw, Buck's photograph teases out another deeper truth for us to ponder. Unlike the shell of the long-abandoned keep, the many changes wrought to the town's wells over a thousand years – some for practical and some for sentimental reasons – testify to the intimate and constantly-evolving relationship between the wells and the town whose needs they for so long served. To tell the story of Clitheroe's three medieval wells is to tell the story of the town itself.

As this voice from the past reminds us, there is a sense in which Stock Well never changed at all. We did. It was calling out to us across the centuries in our native tongue, and all we needed were the ears to listen. ■



Stock Well, c. 1950. In a recently-wrought change, the higher south-west wall has been lowered to what some maintain was its original Tudor height. All three of Clitheroe's medieval wells have, over the centuries, been subject to many modifications. (Red Rose Collections, ECL20141216014)

References:

- ¹ Arthur Langshaw, *A Child's History of Clitheroe*, Clitheroe Advertiser & Times Co. Ltd., 1938
- ² William Self Weeks, *Clitheroe in the Seventeenth Century*, Clitheroe Advertiser & Times Co. Ltd, 1926-1928
- ³ A H Smith, *English Place-Name Elements - Part Two*, Cambridge, 1956
- ⁴ Series XV. Charter No. II. 23rd November 1102. 3 Henry I: Grant by Robert de Lacy to Ralph le Rous of Great Mearley, Twistleton, Land in Clitheroe, Great Mitton and Aughton. W Farrer, *Lancashire Pipe Rolls and Early Lancashire Charters*, Henry Young & Sons, 1902
- ⁵ Andy Bowes, *Reflections on the Water: A New Look at Clitheroe's Three Medieval Wells*. I hope to have it ready for publication by the end of 2023.



GEORGE WILKIN'S STORY

By Ian Wilkin

George Wilkin (author's records)

George Wilkin was born and raised in Oswaldtwistle near Accrington and after completing his education found employment as a Textile Machinist in one of the many mills still operating in the area. In 1938, on 17 November, just after his 23rd birthday, George Wilkin, my grandfather, enlisted as a Police Officer with Lancashire Constabulary and began what was to be a long and distinguished career.

His first posting as a Police Officer was to the industrial town of Bacup in the hill country of East Lancashire, where his job would be a 'Beat Bobby' on foot patrol. This was 1938, dark clouds of war were gathering over Europe. In these fearful times starting a family would have been a daunting prospect, but in the case of George and Jenny Wilkin that's exactly what happened; on 21 May 1939 their son, my father, arrived in the world.

In September 1939, when war was declared, the role of Police Officer was a reserved occupation, exempt from call up to military service. What a blessing that must have been to a young family with a new baby. But it wasn't long before the war came calling on the Wilkin household. Serving his country in a military capacity must never have been far from George's mind. On 22 February 1943 PC George Wilkin packed up his kit bag, bade farewell to his family and colleagues and joined the Royal Air Force. As a cadet he started out on a journey that would eventually see him travel the world, reach the rank of Sergeant and become the pilot of an aircraft manufactured in greater numbers than any other four-engined bomber in history, the mighty Consolidated B24 Liberator.

London, Regents Park Monday, 22 February 1943, RAF ACRC (Air Crew Reception Centre).

So it begins. This is where George found himself on his first day of RAF service. The ACRC inducted him into the RAF in the pavilion at Lords Cricket Ground. His introduction to the RAF began with all the usual issuing of kit, square bashing and the rapid adaptation to military life under the watchful eyes of the resident NCOs. After 20 days at ACRC, George and many fellow recruits left Regents Park; the destination this time was to be a far cry from the terraced streets

of the industrial north. Grandad was heading for Cambridge University, his second posting.

No 2 ITW (Initial Training Wing). George arrived in Cambridge in mid-March 1943 and took up residence in ITW accommodation at the famous Jesus College. For four months trained to become a member of the RAF, but soaring in the great blue yonder was some time away.

In July 1943 whilst still billeted at Cambridge, George took his first flight in the venerable bi-plane, the Tiger Moth of Marshall's Flying Training School, a civilian establishment contracted to the Royal Air Force. The aircraft were on the civil register and the flying activity does not appear in George's RAF Flying Logbook. This was where cadets were graded over a five-week period, in George's case for 28 Elementary Flying Training School and onward progression to the Empire Flight Training Syllabus. Passing out on 18 August he left Cambridge behind him, heading back to his native North West.

ACDC (Air Crew Despatch Centre) Heaton Park Manchester, 3 September 1943.

Only twenty miles from home (perhaps he got some leave) George was at the ACDC for around three weeks waiting for his posting. When it came it must have seemed like quite the adventure. George was off to Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. The usual route for RAF pilots to get to the Rhodesia Air Training Group (RATG) was by troop ship embarking from the port of Liverpool. Many of the air crew heading there were known to have come from the ranks of Police Forces across Britain. The voyage south began on 23 October 1943, two days before his 28th birthday. He disembarked at Cape Town, South Africa, with its heavily mined approaches and journeyed overland for two days to his destination.



George Wilkin (pictured front row, right) and British servicemen, at Abu Sueir airbase in Egypt (author's image)

ITW (Initial Training Wing) Hillside Camp, Bulawayo, 15 December 1943.

It was mid-December when he reached his first posting near Bulawayo where he would spend the next five weeks, before heading towards Salisbury (Harare) to RAF Mount Hampden where he would once again take to the skies.

28 EFTS (Elementary Flying Training School) RAF Mt Hampden, 22 January 1944.

George arrived at 28 EFTS where he would fly one of the RAF's latest training aircraft, the US built Fairchild Cornell. The first entry in the logbook is on 2 February 1944, cockpit familiarisation and flight preparation were the orders of the day. Flying up to four sorties a day (and night) he quickly built up the hours in the logbook and by mid-April with 81 hours, 55 minutes amassed, he passed his Elementary Flight Training Assessment. It was time to move on.

23 SFTS (Service Flying Training School) RAF Heany, Bulawayo, 21 April 1944.

One of the RAF's main multi engine training aircraft was the Airspeed Oxford. It was a plywood construction, not dissimilar to the De Havilland Mosquito, although its twin radial Cheetah X engines had nothing like the power of the Mosquito's illustrious V12 Merlins. On 24 April

1944 George took his first flight at 23 SFTS in AR948.

For the first few sorties he logged as second pilot, sat alongside Pilot Officer Murrin and finally listing himself as first pilot on April 28, flying Oxford R5939 with the words 'First Solo' proudly written in the 'Duty' column. Throughout the summer of 1944 George continued to develop as a pilot, the hours in the logbook building steadily. On 3 November 1944 he passed out of 23 SFTS and prepared to leave Southern Rhodesia, destined for the Middle East and larger aircraft.

With the successful D-Day landings in Normandy and the Allies advancing through France and the Low Countries, George was heading north towards combat. North Africa was safely in allied hands, the 8th Army having defeated Rommel and his Panzers. The allies pushed north through Italy and Rome was liberated. George moved to 1 Middle East Aircrew Reception Centre in Jerusalem, where he spent Christmas 1944 in the heart of the Holy Land. The New Year saw him remain in Palestine where his training continued.

77 OTU (Operational Training Unit) RAF Qastina, Palestine, 30 December 1944.

George arrived at RAF Qastina, now in Israel, the home of 77 OTU (Vickers Wellingtons) but it isn't until the end of the month that he took to the

skies. On 4 February he was listed as first pilot in a Wellington MF246. The log is filled now with words like, 'bombing', 'evasive action' and 'single engine flying', clearly in anticipation of things to come.

The OCU course lasted until 17 March 1945 and his qualification as 1st Pilot is signed off by Officer Commanding "A" Flight, Squadron Leader Kenneth Hubbard. Hubbard would later take part in Operation Grapple and was the pilot who would drop Britain's first atomic bomb from a Vickers Valiant of 49 Squadron in 1957.

Once again, it's time to move on, full Heavy Bomber qualification draws closer as indeed so does the prospect of war combat flying.

1675 HCU (Heavy Conversion Unit) RAF Abu Sueir, Egypt, 24 March 1945. The final hurdle before full qualification. RAF Abu Sueir (now Fayed Air Force Base) in the canal zone near Port Said was home to 1675 HCU and the Consolidated B24 Liberator which became the most mass-produced heavy bomber in history with over 19,000 made.

The OCU operated the Mk II variant and on 2 April 1945 George took to the air in one for the very first time; within two days he was listed as first pilot and went solo after just 12 hours. The sorties are getting much longer, the bombing training continues and 'fighter affiliation' appears for the first time too. George passed the course on 26 April and left 1675 HCU on 29 April 1945. This was the same day that German forces in Italy surrendered to the Allies.

22 PTC (Personnel Transit Centre) Almaza, Heliopolis, Egypt, 6 May 1945 – 12 May 1945. After successfully passing the HCU course in Abu Sueir, George found himself back in Heliopolis for a few days before heading to Italy and his squadron posting. What a few days this must have been; just two days after his arrival the war in Europe was over. Nazi Germany had capitulated, Berlin had fallen to the Red Army and Hitler was dead. George had missed the show; perhaps it was a great relief to him. He survived a conflict that had claimed the lives of more than eleven million people. Perhaps he was disappointed or felt guilty that he didn't get the opportunity to fight or to fully test his mettle. That's

something we'll never ever know, nor do we need to. However, there was still work to be done.

178 Squadron (Central Mediterranean Forces) RAF Amendola, 23 May 1945. 178 Squadron was based at airfields on the Foggia plain (The Foggia Complex), Italy. They had seen a lot of action over northern Italy, Austria and even parts of Poland and had taken heavy losses. They needed replacements and George was there to fly one of the squadron's Liberator Mk IV aircraft. Passing via 56 PTC in Gragano, he had finally reached his operational squadron.

June and July were filled with training flights, troop movements and bombing and gunnery practice and on 3 July he flew Liberator callsign "H" back to Hampshire to RAF Holmesley South in the New Forest where George managed to spend a couple of days with his wife and son before his return to Italy.

On 12 July 1945, George made his last flight, fittingly in a 178 squadron Liberator IV with the callsign "G" George, 2 hours flying 'Gunnery at Sea', thus completing 531 hours and 55 minutes of service flight.

He left the RAF on 13 September 1945, never taking the controls of an aircraft again. What is more, he is recorded back in his role of Police Constable in Bacup just two days later on the 15 September to start his post war life and career. That must have been some adjustment to make!

A long and distinguished career with Lancashire Constabulary followed. Several promotions saw George progress through the ranks. He was commended on three separate occasions and received the Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal in 1961. In 1969 he attained the rank of Superintendent, fittingly back in Accrington where this story started and where it would also sadly end. After achieving so much in a relatively short time, Grandad died in 1971 after a short illness; he was just 56 years old.

I was just nine at the time and looking back I wish I could have got to know him much better than I did.

George Wilkin, 26 October 1915 – 20 October 1971 ■

COURTING HISTORY: THE FIRST ALL-WOMEN CORONER'S JURY AT CLITHEROE

By Shirley Penman

For the first time in the history of Clitheroe's coroner's courts, a jury wholly composed of women sat at Clitheroe on 7 February 1934. With the East Lancashire Coroner, Mr F Rowland, they inquired into the death of a two day old baby. The Coroner announced that it was the first time that such a jury had been empanelled and that the case was pre-eminently one in which to have a jury composed of women.

When the franchise was extended to women, they also accepted the advantage or disadvantage of becoming members of the panel from which juries were drawn. The local newspapers reported that as long ago as 1929 the Clitheroe Coroner had held eight inquests with mixed juries, while in 1933 the same experiment with an all-women jury was made in a London coroner's court.

The Coroner said that a normal birth was where no operative interference was necessary. In the case into which they were enquiring, instruments had been used and as death had followed, it was necessary to hold an inquest.

Alfreda Riding, the Registered Nurse and Certified Midwife who conducted Ross Nursing Home, in York Street, Clitheroe, said that the child weighed eight and three-quarter pounds and it was necessary to use instruments at the birth which was conducted by Dr J S Fairweather with his brother, Mr D S Fairweather acting as anaesthetist. Certain bruises were caused but the child appeared normal on Saturday and Sunday. At 2:30 in the morning on Monday the child still seemed normal, but she was found at 6:30 the same morning breathing with difficulty and she died soon afterwards.



The Jury at Clitheroe, pictured from left: Mrs T S Hargreaves, Mrs P Townley, Mrs Joseph Wilson, Mrs F Lord, Mrs W Burnett, Mrs W Whipp (foreman), Mrs J Gorse, Mrs A Hanson and Mrs J Seed.

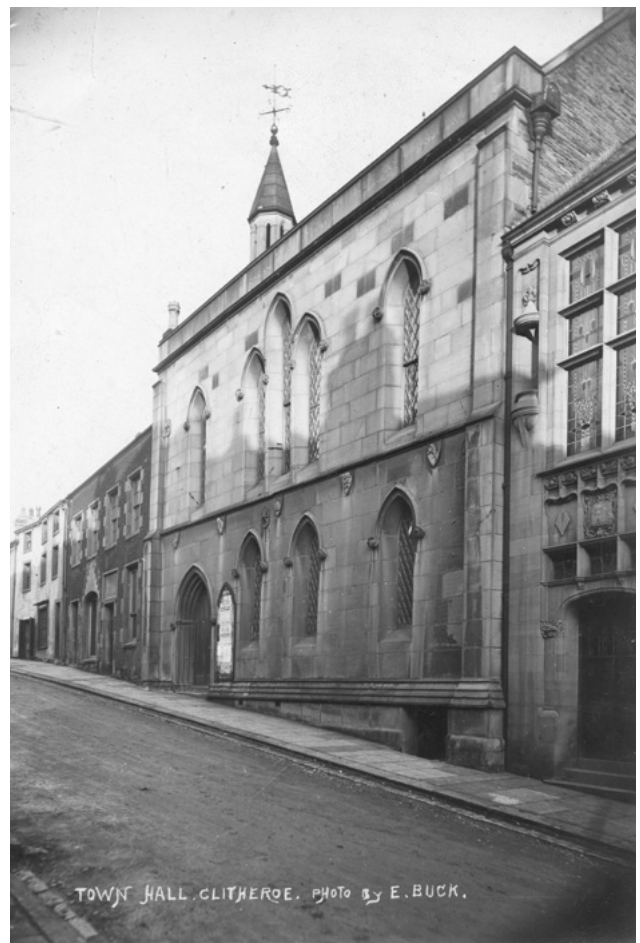
Doctor J S Fairweather, when called to the stand, said that he believed that the child died from intercranial haemorrhage but could not say whether the forceps had caused this. The Coroner then asked for a yes or no answer but the doctor stated that he could still not offer this. Mr Rowland turned to the women in the jury and said that he had no choice but order a post-mortem examination and that he was sorry to trouble them further but it was unavoidable. He then adjourned the inquest until the following morning.

On resuming the inquest in the Town Hall the next day, Mr Rowland asked Dr Martin of Haslingden, who had performed the post-mortem, if the child had died from intercranial haemorrhage and had it been caused by the forceps? The doctor replied that this had been the cause of death and that it could be the result of using forceps at a difficult birth and that it was almost certainly inevitable in this particular case. Addressing the jury, the Coroner said that their duty had been considerably lessened now that they had a direct answer to what he thought was a simple question.

Coroner Rowland said, 'I want you to weigh your verdict very carefully in this case, for it may be that your verdict will have very far extending results. Dr Martin has told you that there is nothing extraordinary in the use of these instruments and you, in your experience, will know that is so. Occasionally something extraordinary happens, and if something like that does happen and care has been taken then it is an accident. Maybe you will come to the conclusion that this death could have been avoided and that reasonable care had not been taken. You will, if you come to that conclusion, do your duty and say that death was not the result of an accident, and will say that death was due to misadventure. You would not in any way attempt to earmark a person who you thought was to blame in the matter. Again, if you think that nobody is to blame, I do not want you to say that anyone is free from blame. An "accidental death" verdict exonerates everybody, and it is better that you should not earmark anyone as being blameworthy or praiseworthy.'

Without retiring, the jury returned a verdict of 'Accidental death'. The Coroner continued, 'I am very much obliged and I should like to say at once that I entirely concur with your verdict'. The Coroner expressed sympathy with the parents observing that it was a very sad case and at the end of the hearing the jury associated themselves with this expression.

My text follows a story in the Clitheroe Advertiser and Times from 9 February 1934, with more detail of the result of the post-mortem, taken from the Lancashire Evening Telegraph. ■



Clitheroe Town Hall, c. 1920
(Red Rose Collections)



AGNES ETIENNE: The Tale of A Demon Dominican Dominoes Player

By Stephen Poleon

Domino players, taken in 2021 by local photographer Joseph Gudgeon. Agnes is wearing a pink beret.

Historians are correspondents of the past. We bring tales of long-bygone eras to modern-day audiences, providing insight into lives since passed. Newspaper reports, letters, diaries, published reminiscences and oral testimony anthologies coupled with official central and local government documents are all vital tools in the quest to bring yesteryear to the present. They can help paint a picture of lives since lost and perhaps forgotten – some simply abandoned to this fate through apathy and disinterest. Histories can however be revived through the realm of living history. This is an avenue to explore to make our quest a reality. Similar to all sources, living histories come with certain caveats. Most people are too busy navigating daily life and never give their past a second thought. People feel that their lives and memories are insignificant, saying, ‘who would be interested in me?’ or ‘there is not much I can tell you’. Some people express a reticence to speak about their lives simply because, as Caribbean elders would say, ‘me don’t like chat people’s business’.

The historian and author Colin Grant explains that Caribbean community elders possess a healthy suspicion or inability about speaking of the past. This Sicilian-like code of silence has led to a vacuum in the knowledge of their lives, their struggles and successes. Their children who are now parents and grandparents themselves often speak of not knowing much about these lives, or of the creation of a community and the unique institutions that became the bedrock of daily life.

In Preston, these institutions were Jalgos Sports and Social Club, the Caribbean Club, Preston Caribbean Carnival, and the Seventh Day Adventist Church. All but the Caribbean Club still exist today and questions regarding its closure remain unanswered. The inquiry into this precipitated a meeting with an elderly Dominican lady, who according to reliable and credible sources was a legendary fountain of knowledge on the subject of the Caribbean Club.

At first, this elderly lady was unsure about what she could tell me: what did I want with this information, what was I going to do with it? Explanations of my intentions were proffered but the impression was they were ill-received. Reassurances regarding the purpose of my research were given and it then suddenly occurred that asking personal questions may be somewhat traumatic. This lady uprooted herself from her home in Dominica in 1965 to make a 5,000-mile journey to join her husband in Preston. Her first impressions of her new home Preston were uttered with a one-word shudder: 'Cold!'

Not only was it cold but Preston was a decaying mill town with an abundance of dilapidated slums. Racial prejudice was widespread and a wide-ranging colour bar ensured West Indian women could not socialise outside of blues parties held in various homes throughout the town at weekends and watching cricket in the park on Sunday. West Indian men generally frequented the Jazz Bar and Dominicans before they established the Caribbean club, and patronised a pub called the Mitre where they regularly partook in rowdy games of dominoes.

Playing or indeed watching Caribbean-style dominoes is quite an experience. The shuffle of

the tiles has a mesmerizing quality. The tiles or cards as they are called in Preston are quickly snapped up by the players. The player holding a double six will produce a thunderous noise as the card is quickly slammed down on the table. An exuberant crescendo fills the air. And so battle commences.

“
The player holding a double six will produce a thunderous noise as the card is quickly slammed down on the table. An exuberant crescendo fills the air. And so battle commences.”

You see there is no such thing as a quiet friendly game of dominoes in any Caribbean setting. It is a fast-paced game where the quietest of people transform into roaring lions. In every game there can only be one winner, losing is not an option. Losers who play badly are routinely told to go back to domino school or join the lady's team. The inference in this testosterone-fuelled environment is that women have no place here. Yet, in some instances, the female of the species can be more deadlier than the male.

West Indian men may vex and hold court over any number of issues but their female counterparts will have the final say. Reader, if you have ever found yourself on the receiving end of a West Indian aunty's ire you will perfectly understand. If you have not let me explain. Being admonished by an Aunty strikes you with terror. She will cut you down to size just by looking at you. Hands on her hips, slightly arched back, pursed lips, and that thousand-yard stare she gives before an admonishment is enough to strike fear into anyone. A West Indian lady is a match for any man, especially those who feel she has no right to be playing a traditionally male game.



Preston Domino Tournament, 2019 (© Preston Black History Group/Tony Maiden)

A photograph of the Caribbean Club dominoes team shows a lone female with a beaming smile standing front and centre in this otherwise entirely male group. Whilst being interviewed about the history of the Caribbean Club this lady spoke in almost hushed tones. It is commonplace for a lot of interviewees when being recorded to speak very quietly as if they are divulging state secrets and are in danger of being overheard. Questions were answered in this manner until the question of playing for the dominoes team arose. Then a dramatic transformation occurred.

A passion in this quiet and softly spoken lady sprung to life. 'I don't have any friends when I play dominoes,' she exclaimed.

“
I don't have any friends
when I play dominoes,”

People have the impression that this is a genteel pursuit where enjoyment is derived from simply taking part. It doesn't matter if you win or lose, it is just a game you play among friends. It is after all a sedentary game played at a leisurely pace. If you walk into any Caribbean social space where this pastime is pursued you will be sorely disappointed if this is your expectation. It is a rambunctious, fast and furious, yet extremely skilful affair. When playing a single opponent, you have no friends in the game. Playing as part of a double, however, is an entirely different matter.

You are playing for your partner as much as you are playing for yourself. It is a game of memory by tracking which dominoes are put down on the table. The object is to memorise the patterns being laid out in front of you and stop your opponent whilst helping your partner place his or her cards on the table. Skilled and experienced players involved in the game since childhood are adept at reading the flow of the game and with good partnering will succeed. The aim is to prevail at all costs. Any advantage or edge you



Caribbean Club dominoes team. Agnes is at the front wearing her signature beret.



Preston Domino Tournament, 2019 (© Preston Black History Group/Tony Maiden)

can gain over your opponent must be maximized. One such tool in the box of tricks possessed by all players is known as code. The very nature of this word suggests a secretive subterfuge is at play. Indeed it is; however, it must remain a mystery. Whilst the interviewee explained these ciphers it is imperative that they remain in the shadows. Her opponents, whilst possessing their own secretive style of play, must be kept in ignorance. Winning, however, is not necessarily everything, a sense of togetherness and community cohesion is just as important.

Playing dominoes is an important social pursuit for the Caribbean diaspora. In 1972 when the Caribbean Club opened a dominoes team was formed. They regularly travelled across the country visiting other clubs to socialise and play dominoes with their fellow West Indians. When another West Indian club opened in Preston, Jalgos Sports and Social Club in 1976, an annual match between the two clubs took place. It would alternate between the two clubs with an awards ceremony held on each occasion. These matches have been described as friendly. Of course, after the tournament ended a dance occurred where both winners and losers danced in a spirit of togetherness. However, amidst the sweet sound of the shuffle, the deafening slam of the cards on the table and the cacophony of battle, a demure Dominican lady held her own against a plethora of all-comers hell-bent on defeating her team.

History often records the achievements of men with scant regard for women. The history of Preston's Caribbean community is littered with the records of the men who established the institutions that are the foundation of this diaspora. Jalgos West Indian Cricket Club was founded by Jamaicans and one Dominican in 1962. The following year in 1963, Dominican United FC was founded by Dominicans and one Jamaican. A few years later the nucleus of this team would form the Caribbean Cricket Club, joining Jalgos in the league and opening the Caribbean Club in 1972. Two of the Caribbean club's founders were responsible for the creation of the carnival in Preston. In the meantime, a demure Dominican lady started a journey as a demon domino player. She deserves her place in the annals of history. Her name is Agnes Etienne.

“
... a demure Dominican
lady started a journey as a
demon domino player. Her
name is Agnes Etienne.”

The Jean Birtwistle Collection

By Keri Nicholson and Lee Sanderson

Jean Birtwistle grew up in Lancaster, attending Skerton Junior School as a child and returning there in 1971 as a teacher. She shared her love of local history with her pupils, carrying out research projects which helped them to understand the rapid changes which had taken place in the area they lived.



Residents of Main Street, Skerton, celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, 1953
(Lancashire Archives & Local History, DDX 3655)

Main Street in Skerton was the main route through the village, and at one time thrived with a range of shops and pubs. Housing in the area was arranged around yards, most with shared toilets and water supplies. By the 1950s the local health inspectors believed that the housing was no longer fit for purpose, with children in the area contracting tuberculosis and families living in what the Council believed to be squalid conditions. The decision was made to demolish most of the housing along Main Street and the Ramparts, replacing them with blocks of flats.

The records donated by Jean Birtwistle include two notable elements. Firstly, there is a wonderful collection of historic photographs showing Skerton and the people who lived there from the nineteenth century through to the start of the redevelopment of the 1960s. A small selection of these photographs were eventually published in the book *Skerton in Times Past*, now out of print but still held in Lancashire Library local history collections.

Secondly, a project carried out by students at Skerton school involved researching the former residents of Main Street and mapping the area before the slum clearances took place. This research was largely carried out by interviewing residents, which allowed for snapshots of personal memory unlikely to be included in official records. These include May Dougan at 115 Main Street who made wedding cakes for many people on the street, and Jess and Thomas Roberts at 26 Main Street who had a parrot. Children would take potato peelings for the parrot and were given peanuts in return.

The collection was particularly interesting for one of my colleagues, Lee Sanderson, who himself grew up in Skerton. He explains why the collection is so meaningful.

‘This is a fantastic collection of photographs of some of Skerton’s oldest streets which celebrates the social and cultural aspects of the area, and a reminder of its Victorian infrastructure. Included in this collection are several photos depicting members of my own family – the Howards – who owned multiple houses and businesses along Main Street and the Ramparts.

“

Growing up in the area, I became familiar with Skerton’s streets from a young age and fondly remember listening to my grandparents”

‘Growing up in the area, I became familiar with Skerton’s streets from a young age and fondly remember listening to my grandparents’ local stories over tea and biscuits. I recall seeing a photograph depicting two gentlemen outside the Blue Anchor pub where one of them had a distinctive pocket watch hanging out of his waistcoat jacket. My grandad told me his name was William Howard and he was my second great-grandfather; moreover, that he had once owned several properties in the Skerton area, yet he was also a regular in the Blue Anchor, which used to be on Main Street. Having never met my great-grandfather, hearing these stories was always an enjoyable experience and made me feel connected to my family’s past.’

The Jean Birtwistle collection can be viewed at Lancashire Archives & Local History, reference DDX 3655. ■

If you would like to donate any records, maps, photographs or other historic material to the Archives, please get in touch with us at archives@lancashire.gov.uk Our collections cover the length and breadth of Lancashire and contain everything from medieval deeds to lockdown poetry; we’d be delighted to hear from you.

The Friends of Lancashire Archives



The staff at Lancashire Archives do a grand job looking after the county's documentary heritage, bringing it out for us to study and making links between people today and the past. They are well supported by Lancashire County Council to do this work, but there's always more to do.

Which is where the Friends of Lancashire Archives come in! As a charity, we're able to apply for funds not available to local authority services. We hold legacies generously left by former Archives supporters and users. And we also have a handy fundraising sideline in cake-making for Café Archive at events.

These funds – whatever their source – allow us to support the Archives' special projects. We've helped to buy material for the collection so it can be available to everyone. We've funded posts so work can be carried out to conserve and catalogue collections. Right now, we're backing the new 'Keeping East Lancashire in the Picture' and 'Clarets Collected' projects.

The Friends' contributions to these projects helps to unlock funding from organisations, such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and individuals by demonstrating our commitment and support. This means we can effectively double – or triple, or even more – our money to make it go much further.

It's the same with our wonderful members. If you care about preserving Lancashire's heritage, why not join us. Your £10 subscription can be worth at least twice as much to the Archives. And your support and encouragement through membership is beyond counting. It's a thank you to those hard-working staff, a demonstration to funders that the Archives are well-supported and a way of making sure that Lancashire's historic records continue to bring the county's heritage to the fore.

**You can join online on our website www.flarchives.co.uk.
Or email membership@flarchives.co.uk. Or fill in a form
on your next visit to the Archives.**

We look forward to meeting you.



SHAPING THE FUTURE: LANCASHIRE WOMEN'S LIVES, 1950-1980

How much changed for women in Lancashire in the years 1950-1980 as Britain transformed and women led the charge to create a new society?

Shaping The Future examines Lancashire women at work, in politics and civic society, entertainment and recreation, home lives and through fashion.

Come and explore our new exhibition and women's lives in Lancashire through the county's archive collections – find out more about some of the women who shaped our present.

Featuring original collections, sound recordings and objects from Lancashire Archives, Lancashire Museum Service, The Harris Museum, and Blackburn with Darwen Library Service.

Shaping the Future is open at Lancashire Archives & Local History and runs until January 2024. For more information please visit www.lancashire.gov.uk/archives ■



'Now and then... Blackburn Road Railway Bridge, Accrington

“

This exciting two-year project, 2023-2025, will bring together thousands of people in East Lancashire, of different ages and backgrounds, to make the amazing collections of historic photographs in their libraries more accessible, inclusive and sustainable. ”



KEEPING EAST LANCASHIRE IN THE PICTURE

With a budget of of £220,000 - £192,000 provided by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and £30,000 from the Friends of Lancashire Archives - the project will see schools, community groups and individuals in Burnley, Pendle and Hyndburn invited and encouraged to

- **Explore** their rich photographic heritage and help make digital versions of 100,000 images in the library collections.
- **Create** new collections by finding significant existing images from within their communities and by taking new photographs that reflect life now.
- **Share** both old and new images, online – through Red Rose Collections - and offline, in ways that engage even more people in a creative and fun way.

An inclusive volunteering programme will be at the heart of what we do, with 75 digitisation and research volunteer opportunities created across 4 project hubs based in local libraries in Accrington, Burnley, Nelson and Colne.

Volunteer recruitment will start in autumn 2023.

A key project aim is to ensure that the library photographic collections reflect the diversity of the communities in East Lancashire. 15% of people in Burnley and Hyndburn are of South Asian heritage, and in Pendle it's 27%, but this is not reflected in the collections - the project will help redress this imbalance.

Contact us at archives@lancashire.gov.uk or on **01772 533031** if you want to know more about the project, particularly if you are interested in getting involved. We'd love to hear from you!

Thanks to National Lottery players. We are also grateful to the Friends of Lancashire Archives for their support of this project. ■



Pupils from Hyndburn Park Primary School, Accrington, taking part in a consultation session at Accrington Library



Bank Hall, Bretherton, photographed in the 1930s

BETWEEN LAW AND CHARITY: Poor relief under the New Poor Law in the Lord Lilford of Bank Hall collection (DDLI)

By Salomea Chlebowska

The English Poor Law was a system that developed from the sixteenth century onwards to provide relief for the poor. When the Poor Law is discussed, its two stages are considered: the Old Poor Law, passed in the reign of Elizabeth I, ordered the poor relief to be administered and distributed at a parish level, entrusting it to some extent to the Christian charity; and the New Poor Law, passed in 1834, that intended to create a centralised system of poor relief.

The New Law was heavily influenced by reforming voices arguing that redistributing money to paupers removed the incentive to work and undermined the relationship between poor and charity, perpetuating the state of poverty and social disorder by making the poor entitled to relief regardless of their behaviour or intentions to change their circumstances. The New Law intended to control the redistribution of poor relief, eliminate outdoor relief, assistance in the form of money, food, clothing or goods gifting, or goods, in favour of indoor relief, a form of assistance that required the poor to enter a workhouse.

Charities continued to relieve the poor, charitable donations were maintained, and outdoor relief was still available. Economic shocks of the nineteenth century contributed to the continuation of different types of outdoor relief and in certain places made it more widespread than it had been under the Old Law. The so-called cotton famine, caused by the cutting off of the supply of raw materials as a result of the American Civil War, struck Lancashire mill towns hard and affected the whole British economy between 1861 and 1865. According to Jonathan Healey, Lancashire spent less than the southern counties on formal poor relief which caused greater dependence on outdoor relief in Lancashire.¹ The papers of the Lilford Family of Bank Hall (reference DDLI) in Lancashire Archives show the reality of the organisation of indoor poor relief, but also offer concrete examples of how outdoor relief was provided that was provided for distressed Lancastrians.

The extent to which the New Poor Law broke with or continued Old Poor Law practices is highly contested. Unquestionably the government was trying to achieve greater compliance, especially in terms of redistribution of out-relief: the 1842 Outdoor Labour Test allowed the guardians to employ in the workhouse unemployed seasonal workers to stop them from applying for relief. The 1844 Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order tightened out-relief regulations in rural areas. Moreover, the monetary relief was reduced significantly in favour of relief in kind.² Lord Lilford's papers on poor relief reflect the government's push for centralisation of the poor relief system, including detailed records of poor relief on a local level as well as the

communication between local committees and the national one.

One series in the Lilford papers (reference, DDLI/Box 3) contains statistics and correspondence relating to Leigh's poor law guardians and the Manufacturer's Distress Relief Committee. The records show that the Relief Committee required local committees to answer certain queries prior to accessing any aid. Said questions concerned expenditures in food and wages, the amount distributed gratuitously, any purchases, accommodation of the poor in the workhouse, number and class of relieved poor. Apart from the Committee queries and answers to them, the box contains the minutes from the proceedings of the Atherton committee sent to the main Manufacturer's Distress Relief Committee. The minutes show that the proceedings focused mostly on water conveyance, workhouse management or the number of individuals employed every fortnight. The Lilford records reveal the problems of the workhouses related to their poor condition and maintenance. DDLI/Box 3 holds records of workhouse inspection with a description of all issues that impeded healthy living conditions and the workhouse rules. Nevertheless, none of the documents indicate any solutions to the described problems. Even though the centralised formal relief under the New Law seemed to be better organised than previously, the records show the growing bureaucracy. Apart from recording the change of employment status of a certain number of paupers, there is no evidence of much concern about the quality of life of individuals.

Due to the difficulty of enforcing and controlling the implementation of the new principles of poor relief at a local level, the guardians of the poor continued outdoor relief. It often worked for their own benefit; maintaining an individual in a workhouse was more expensive. Even though the workhouse was recommended due to the concerns of presenting the paupers with relief in the form of cash payments, relief in food was still favoured over money by the central authorities, because it was more difficult to misuse it and it was less likely that only one person in the family would benefit from it. DDLI/Box 12 holds records of the distribution of rabbits to Atherton tenants in distress from the

1860s. They include accounts of Lord Lilford and letters sent by him in January 1863, February 1863, January 1864, and January 1866, about a donation of rabbits to the poor operatives of Atherton. It shows the ongoing charitable support during the cotton famine. Other records include a list of tenants, with their names and residences, that were to receive rabbits. The records show that the family situation and physical abilities of the distressed tenant were not taken much into consideration; rather the rabbits were distributed equally.

The relief in food was not limited to the provision of fresh produce. DDLI/Box 12 holds a record giving a small insight into the provision of warm meals to the poor in Atherton.



It is a letter from Kenyon House that includes a list of, ‘ingredients for making 50 gallons of good nutritious soup’ with the recipe and a breakdown of the ingredients.”

It is a letter from Kenyon House that includes a list of, ‘ingredients for making 50 gallons of good nutritious soup’ with the recipe and a breakdown of the ingredients. The recipe included onions, potatoes, and carrots, but also meal and beef mince. The relief in food allowed to some extent to counter hunger, the most pressing aspect of poverty; nevertheless, it was by no means the only or even the most popular type of outdoor relief.

Steven King argues that clothing the poor was one of the basic tasks of the poor relief system.³ It was influenced by Christian obligation, since the Bible considers clothing of the naked as important as providing them with food and drink:



For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in, naked, and ye clothed me... I say unto you, since ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

‘For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in, naked, and ye clothed me... I say unto you, since ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me’. Keeping paupers warm reduced the expenditure on medical relief. The Lilford collection does not provide much evidence for the specific provision of clothing, but there are many documents detailing the provision of blankets to tenants in distress. Atherton relief committee papers (DDLI/Box 12) include a list of items bought by Lady Lilford’s Charity for the Christmas of 1852 and the majority of items were different textiles intended to keep the paupers clothed or warm: blankets, linen cloths, drills, handkerchiefs. DDLI/Box 10 contains documents on the supply of blankets to named paupers. In 1859 Mr and Mrs Powys were gifting blankets to poor people at Christmas and the records show the lists made with the name and addresses of people who were supposed to receive them. Another document, a letter from Thomas Lee, lists the people who are, ‘in much need of blankets’ and apart from their name and residence the state of their bedding is specified. It shows that not only people who did not have any blankets were deemed in need of them, but

List of Tenants 2 Rabbits each
March 2nd 1866

Leigh

Emmanuel Shovelton

Henry Calland

William Eden

Richard Greenough

William Boardman

Peter Wright

Vicar of Leigh

Atherton

Rev. Samuel Johnson

Thomas Daylor

John Pemberton

Thomas Warburton

William Hesketh (Manor House)

Rev. James Bower

~~Abraham Bower~~ Ben: Wittington

J. P. Fletcher

James Pownall

Henry Soherwood

Amintin Selby

Mrs. Selby

J. D. Selby

also those who had 'blanket thin and almost done', 'only one blanket', or were 'short on blankets for their family'. It would be too optimistic to assume that poor relief was generous and ensured decent living, but the records show that owning one blanket was not considered enough and often did not disqualify an individual from receiving relief. The records show how charitable funds, organisations and individuals saw the importance of clothing for the poor. It is interesting to see how specific they were in providing the poor relief; blankets and other items were designated to named individuals.

The Lilford collection does not give the full picture of the poor relief under the New Poor Laws, but in documenting specific examples of poor relief designated for distressed Atherton tenants, the papers give an insight into the formal and informal relief systems, both indoor and outdoor. Lord Lilford's papers will be of great interest to anyone investigating poor relief in Lancashire, but also those interested in the history of the families of Atherton, Powys, and Leigh, as well as the history of the estates of Atherton Hall and Bank Hall. ■

List of tenants in Atherton and Leigh receiving two rabbits each, 2 March 1866 (Lancashire Archives & Local History, DDLi Box 3)

References:

- ¹ Jonathan Healey, 'By the charity of good people': poverty and neighbourly support in seventeenth century Lancashire', *Family & Community History*, 2016
- ² E T Hurren, 'Protesting about Pauperism: Poverty, Politics and Poor Relief in Late-Victorian England, 1870-1900', *Royal Historical Society*, 2015
- ³ Steven King, 'Reclothing the English Poor, 1750-1840', *Textile History*, 2002
- ⁴ King James Bible, Mt 25, 35-40

PRESTON'S FENIAN

BY WILLIAM D SHANNON, PHD, FSA

Driving recently down Deepdale, Preston, I was startled to see a familiar face staring at me from an advertisement on the side of a bus shelter. The advertisement was for an Australian wine called '19 Crimes', which featured on its label a photograph of a ruggedly-handsome but glowering young man, wearing the uniform of a convict. Although it did not say so on the bottle, that man was John Boyle O'Reilly, a distant relation of mine by marriage. What struck me most forcibly was the coincidence that the bus shelter was no more than a couple of hundred metres from where I knew John himself lived in Preston, albeit briefly.

The brand name of the wine refers to the nineteen felonies which in the nineteenth century could be punishable by transportation to the Penal Colonies of Australia. Although the label does not go into details, a QR code takes you to a website where an AI-generated 'augmented reality' image and voice of John tells us he was 'Convicted of crime 18, spared the hangman's noose, banished to Australia...'. Number 18 in the list of things punishable by transportation was 'persons

rerieved from capital punishment' – but it does not tell you that John's crime was, in fact, high treason.

My connection with John Boyle stems from the second marriage of my great-grandfather, who after the death of his first wife married Margaret Merry in 1909. Some sixty years ago, in the Liverpool Local History Library, when I probably should have been researching some essay for university, I came across an obituary in the



Number 81 Barton Terrace (centre), Deepdale Road, John Boyle O'Reilly's Preston home 1859-1863

result of much economy, out of his earnings.

MR. JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.—IRISH PATRIOT AND POET.

HIS CAREER IN PRESTON, &c.

Mr. John Boyle O'Reilly one of the best known of Irish American citizens, whose death occurred on Sunday morning, was born at Dowth Castle, County Meath, on the 28th June, 1844.

Mr. O'Reilly began his business career in a printing office in Dublin, and worked in the composing room there for three or four years. At the age of 17 he left the Irish capital and came on a visit to his aunt, who at that time lived in Barton-terrace in this town. She induced him to stay, and he obtained a situation as "turnover apprentice," and worked for over two years as a compositor in the building where

Extract from the Preston Chronicle on the death of John Boyle O'Reilly,
16 August 1890

Liverpool Echo for 26 July 1918, headed 'Death of Mrs John Shannon'. This reported that the former Miss Merry had been appointed Visitor by the Liverpool Committee, 'and had the distinction during the four years of the committee's existence of being the only lady visitor in Great Britain'. This referred to her work for the 'distress committee' that had been formed to combat unemployment and poverty in Liverpool. However, of more relevance to our subject, she was also described by the paper as 'niece of the late John Boyle O'Reilly, the widely-known Irish poet and writer, and who, for many years prior to his tragic death was editor of the Boston Pilot'. No mention here of high treason and it was to be some time before I was able slowly to piece together more about the dramatic history of the man whose biography was to be written in 2011 by Ian Kenneally, under the title, 'From the Earth, a Cry: The Story of John Boyle O'Reilly', the cover of which bears the same convict photo to be seen on the 19 Wines label (see also Ian Kenneally's website www.johnboyleoreilly.com). In fact, though, I had first seen that photo in 1998, when the Australian novelist Thomas Kenneally published his history of transportation of Irishmen and women to Australia,

entitled, 'The Great Shame: A Story of the Irish in the Old World and the New'.

John Boyle O'Reilly's parents were Eliza Boyle and William David O'Reilly, who married in Dublin before moving to Dowth, Co. Meath in the 1830s. John, born in June 1844, was the third of eight children. Eliza managed an orphanage located in Dowth Castle, while William taught at the National School in Dowth – so the family was probably unaffected by the Famine. John began work as an apprentice printer with the Drogheda Argus, but in 1859 met James Watkinson, an English ship's captain who was married to John's aunt, Eliza's sister Christiana (Crissy), and who was living in Preston. James invited John to accompany him back to Preston, which he did in late August or early September 1859, aged just fifteen. On arriving in Preston, he got a job on the Preston Guardian, initially as a printer but later as a reporter.

The Watkinson family lived at 81 Barton Terrace. Barton Terrace was on Deepdale Road, to the south (town side) of Stephenson Terrace, separated from it by Deepdale Street. The terrace appears to have been built in the 1830s, not far



Photograph of John Boyle O'Reilly, taken at Mountjoy prison in Dublin before his transfer to England, from The New York Public Library, reference 1111434

from Preston Prison, opened in 1790, but rebuilt in the style of a castle from 1840. The 1861 census shows James (described as a 'Master Mariner') and Crissy, with their son William, plus a niece Margaret Rielly, aged 20, born in Meath, Ireland; this must be John's elder sister (despite the spelling). There are then two other children, described as 'visitors', one of whom is Katherine Rielly, aged eleven, also born in Meath. Although Kenneally does not give us details of the younger children of William and Eliza, this too must be a sister of John. But there is no sign of John, who must have been away that night – perhaps he was visiting his home in Ireland, or on business for the newspaper – or away with his regiment.

In 1860, aged sixteen, John had joined Company 2 of the 11th Lancashire Rifle Volunteers. The regiment had been formed in May 1859, against the background of a fear of a French war, and recruits were enrolled at the Militia Depot, alongside the prison. Was this just a spirit of adventure – or was he already an Irish

Republican, planning to learn to use the weapons he might later be called upon to use, come the revolution? We cannot know, but we learn from an obituary in the Preston Chronicle (16 August 1890) that, 'he attended assiduously to his duties as a volunteer, both on parade and at rifle practice: and the last time he wore the uniform was at the review which was held on the Marsh on the day the Prince of Wales was married, March 10, 1863. In three weeks after that, he left Preston, never to return'. The Chronicle goes on to report 'how deeply he cherished the remembrances of his stay in Preston', quoting a letter of his in which he refers to 'dear old Preston' and reminisces about taking part, 'on the Ribble in an out-rigger, striking away under Walton heights, or pulling a boat race... between the bridges'. He also recalled doing a walk from Ribchester to Stonyhurst, a day that 'stands out as one of the happiest and brightest in my life'.

In March 1863, having resigned from the regiment, John, aged 18, returned to Ireland, where he joined the 10th Hussars, a cavalry regiment which had recently seen action in the Crimean War. He enlisted at Dundalk, and was stationed first in County Tipperary, then moved to Islandbridge Barracks, Dublin. In or around 1864, he joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood, commonly known as the 'Fenians' – and he set to work recruiting his fellow soldiers to the cause. He was said to have recruited 80 of them. The Preston Chronicle chose to report the story not in their own words but in extracts 'from a magazine published in Boston (Mass.) in the year 1879'.

'At that time (1863), whenever half a dozen Irishmen were gathered together, one of them, at least, was sure to be a Fenian, or Irish Republican, pledged to secure liberty for his country. For three years O'Reilly worked with these men, and, while outwardly a well-drilled, obedient soldier, clothed in "England's cruel red", he never ceased to plan for the day when the "wearing of the green" might again be permitted. The time came when it seemed as if the blow might be struck, and Ireland might be free. But, as has happened scores of times before in her history, the plot for her deliverance was betrayed

by a spy, and the men who would have broken her chains were arrested for high treason and thrown into prison. For days Ireland was in a state of terror, as warrant after warrant was served and cell after cell filled by her patriot sons. And then came the trials and the sentences, and Mr O'Reilly found himself doomed to imprisonment for life... afterwards commuted to twenty years... He was successively an inmate of Chatham, Portsmouth, Portland and Dartmoor, before he was sent to Australia.'

In fact, he had initially been sentenced to death, but this had been commuted on account of his age. As a footnote, it is worth pointing out that the convict photo on the 19 Wines bottle has been doctored. The original, taken at Mountjoy prison in Dublin before his transfer to England shows him with a placard across his chest bearing his name, while below the photo is the legend 'John O'Reilly, 10th Hussars'.

“

Now aged 23, after transportation on the convict ship 'Hougoumont', John reached Fremantle, and was put to work in gangs making roads. But from the start he was also making plans for his escape.”

Now aged 23, after transportation on the convict ship 'Hougoumont', John reached Fremantle, and was put to work in gangs making roads. But from the start he was also making plans for his escape. He cultivated a relationship with a warder, Henry Woodman, and was made a convict constable. At some point he also cultivated a different sort of relationship with the warder's daughter Jessie, who, as Ian Kenneally discovered, became

pregnant (the child did not survive). Meanwhile, John had become friendly with a Catholic priest, Fr McCabe, and they plotted John's escape together. In February 1869, John absconded from camp and, after various adventures, found his way onto an American whaling ship, the *Gazelle*, which took him as far as St Helena, where another American ship took him on to Liverpool, whence another American ship took him on to Philadelphia, where he arrived, to a hero's welcome, in November 1869.

He moved on to Boston, where he began a new career as a journalist, writer, poet, lecturer, and leading Irish republican, including getting involved in the abortive Fenian Raid on Canada in 1870. In 1876 he helped to organise a successful escape of six Fenian prisoners from Fremantle, Australia, known as the Catalpa Rescue. He had meanwhile begun work as a journalist on the *Boston Pilot* in 1870, and went on to become its joint owner in 1876, and editor. His novel *Moondyne*, a fictionalised account of Australian convict life, was serialised in the *Pilot* in 1878-1879 – and is still well worth a read. He died in 1890, aged only 46.

What is perhaps remarkable is the way his death of this convicted traitor was treated back in Preston, with the *Chronicle* heading its piece 'Mr John Boyle O'Reilly, Irish Patriot and Poet', and ending its eulogy with a report of a meeting of the National League in Dublin, where a resolution had been passed 'placing on record the profound grief of the Irish people at the death of Mr John Boyle O'Reilly, an exiled Fenian'.

“

John began a new career as a journalist, writer, poet, lecturer, and leading Irish republican.”



MRS AND MISS CHALONER - MAYOR AND MAYORESS OF PRESTON (1983-1984)

‘Equality is still a myth – women have to do twice
as well to get half as far’, Dorothy Chaloner, 1984

By Dr Carmel Hustler

Dorothy Chaloner, Mayor of Preston, 1983-1984 (Lancashire Archives & Local History, DDX 3684)

A fascinating set of scrapbooks and photographs covering the tenure of Mrs Dorothy Chaloner (1921-2005) and Dr Penny Chaloner (1953-2022) as Mayor and Mayoress of Preston (1983-1984) was recently deposited at Lancashire Archives (DDX 3684). Prior to her election as Mayor, Dorothy had represented Greyfriars Ward since 1970 and was a member of Fulwood Urban District Council and Preston Borough Council when it was formed in 1973. As Chairman of the Housing Committee (1976-1980) she pioneered joint venture schemes to meet Preston's housing needs and sheltered accommodation for the elderly doubled. She was a founder member of the Ladies Charity Committee which raised thousands of pounds and acted as Chairman for the Preston Conference for Women's Organisations and as a governor for Parklands School and Newman College. Dorothy was also a local justice of the peace and took a year's break from the bench and resigned from various committees to focus on her mayoral role. Her husband had died four years earlier so her daughter Penny stepped in to support her mother as Mayor.

The First Female Mayor: Avice Pimblet (1879-1963)

The position of Mayor of Preston dates to Preston's first charter, granted in 1179 by Henry II, with Preston's first named mayor recorded in 1327. The first female Mayor of Preston was Avice Pimblet (1879-1963) who was also the first woman town councillor and first woman alderman. An active campaigner for women and children's needs she helped to establish a welfare centre for children under five and as mayor, organised a three day fête in Avenham and Miller parks helping to raise 20% of the cost of a new maternity wing at Preston Royal Infirmary. Her achievements were recognised with a blue plaque, unveiled in Winckley Square, Preston, where she lived between 1919 and 1963. The next female mayor was not until 1958 when Mary Ann Wignall undertook the role, with fourteen other women including Dorothy following on, the most recent female Mayor of Preston being most recently being Margaret McManus in 2015-2016.

The Scrapbooks

The scrapbooks appear to have been compiled by Penny during her time as Mayoress. In 1983, Penny was an assistant professor at New Jersey State University in organic chemistry and took a year-long sabbatical to accompany her mother. Prior to this she achieved a double first-class honours degree at Girton College, Cambridge and was awarded a Research Fellowship at St Hugh's College, Oxford University where she completed her PhD. After her year as mayoress she took up a role at the University of Sussex, spending the rest of her career in the Chemistry department. In 2006, she played a vital role in the campaign to save chemistry teaching, which led to the creation of a Science and Technology Select Committee, halting the wave of chemistry department closures across the UK.

The scrapbooks contain a huge range of items including weekly schedules of appointments, invitations, photographs, newspaper articles, programmes, place/name cards and brochures. The list of engagements attended by them both

is extensive, and you only need to look at the appointment schedules to see how busy they were.

A few examples of events attended include: the visit of H.R.H. Princess of Wales to the official opening of the Royal Preston Hospital, the Preston Standing Conference of Women's Organisations, a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, the Battle of Britain Service of Remembrance, St. Ignatius 150th Year Anniversary celebrations, Preston & District Philatelic Society Maritime Convention, the Boys Brigade Centenary Gala, Grimsargh Village Hall opening, Recklinghausen visit, the Licensed Victuallers Association Banquet & Ball, the Preston Royal Naval Association Annual Dinner, the opening of Townbrook House, the Remembrance Day Service, a Duke of Edinburgh's Award Presentation, the UK Snooker Championship and the filming of the International Battle of the Bands hosted by DJ David Jenson, filmed by the BBC and judged by Kim Wilde, Robin Gibb and Paul Gambaccini.

Mayor Chaloner participated in a ceremony at the Harris Museum for the presentation of a book that had been given to Alderman Margerison to record all his visits to the Non-Conformist Sunday Schools in and around Preston when he was Mayor 1904-1905. Also handed over was a silver trowel and wooden mallet used by the Mayoress Mrs Mary Margerison in the foundation stone laying ceremony of Tulketh Mill on 13 May 1905. When Dorothy attended the Polish 65th Independence Day Anniversary celebrations she was awarded a Polish gold cross of merit by the Polish community by Mr M Wojnerowski, representing the Polish government in exile. This cross was a civilian award, given to people who helped the Polish cause, recognising that Dorothy had been a good friend to the Polish community in Preston for many years.

Woman of the Year

Dorothy also organised the first 'Woman of the Year' awards requesting people to nominate women who undertook work for the benefit the community, believing that there were many 'unsung heroines' volunteering/working in

charities, setting up new initiatives or scientists researching something for the benefit of all. A total of 36 women were nominated for various reasons, ranging from working with charities, refugees, children, hospitals, and under-represented groups. The fund-raising event was organised by a women's committee and with all seats sold, attended by approximately 420 women. The winner was Margaret O'Donoghue who after caring for her own parents and in her job as a health visitor saw the need for professional care for the elderly and ill. She joined a group of volunteers and won the award for her work in helping to raise more than £300,000 for the St. Catherine's Hospice Appeal. This was from an initial target of £20,000 and resulted in the establishment of the hospice at Lostock Hall, with Margaret still focusing on raising another £200,000 towards the running costs. In addition, the 'Woman of the Year' event raised £3,000 for the NSPCC and Dorothy stated, 'We live in a changing world, and I hope this event will highlight the changing role of women in this new world', believing that every nominee also deserved to win the award.

Dorothy's Thoughts on the Role

In an interview with the Lancashire Evening Post (15 May 1984) after completing her year as mayor, she stated, 'We have a queen on the throne, a woman Prime Minister, a woman as Lord mayor of London and women leading parties at county and local level but equality is still a myth – women have to do twice as well to get half as far'. She also stated that alongside meeting The Princess of Wales and attending a Royal Garden Party to meet the Queen, she would also remember fondly meeting a wide range of people of all ages at events across the region. She never missed any of her committee meetings. Dorothy added, 'It isn't easy for a woman mayor, as you don't have the support of a wife at home. In between functions, I have had to do the shopping, the cooking, the cleaning, the ironing – for the simple reason that if I don't do these, no-one else will.' During her year as Mayor, she was often the sole woman present at functions, attending many all-male dinners.



Dorothy Chaloner and her daughter Penny Chaloner
(Lancashire Archives & Local History, DDX 3684)

She also commented on the weight of the Preston town chain declaring that wearing the chain was a literal burden as well as a metaphoric one: ‘you have no idea how tiring it can be wearing that chain for long periods... It also does nothing for your clothes. The chain was designed with a man’s suit in mind, so I had to buy clothes to suit the chain. Now I have a wardrobe of dresses that I don’t really like.’

Dorothy and Penny worked tirelessly promoting Preston and Lancashire and representing local people. Together, they played a notable part in preserving and developing this important role as well as helping the charities and causes Dorothy promoted.

However, to return 40 years later to Dorothy’s comment that ‘equality is still a myth – women have to do twice as well to get half as far’, the question needs to be asked, is this still the case or have women now gained an equal place alongside men? A debate that will undoubtedly raise conflicting views. ■



Invitation to a garden party at Buckingham Palace, 1983 (Lancashire Archives & Local History, DDX 3684)



Club Day ceremony on The Green, Lytham (Lytham Heritage Group Archives)

THE MISSING GLASS SLIDES OF LYTHAM

By David Hoyle, Lytham Archivist,
Lytham Heritage Group

Alfred Thompson and his family lived at a rented property at 11 West Beach, Lytham, from 1873 to 1909. His wife, his mother, his wife's mother, four daughters, four sons and three servants also lived in the house.

As a photographer he appears to have been active between 1889 and 1907 and his subjects ranged from family portraits to widespread record pictures. These included images of Lytham, St Annes, Fleetwood, Liverpool, the Lake District and Blackpool. Family pictures were taken at home in the front garden or in the coach house and possibly a conservatory at the rear. Subsequently, the premises at the rear became 'Neptune Cottage' on Livesey Street.

Alfred passed away in 1909 and his collection of glass slides went missing. In 1968, Cicely Stringer was acting Akela with the 1st Lytham Cub group who met in the Scout hut behind the Victory Hall at St Cuthbert's church in Lytham.

In the attic of the Hall she discovered a large tin trunk containing a magic lantern and about 300, 3 inch by 3 inch glass slides. Some 40 were local views and the rest were commercially produced

subjects. A typewritten guide to the local views was included in the trunk which, I suspect, was provided by Eddie Harper who was Scoutmaster around 1950.

Eventually the whole collection of glass negatives and slides became divided. Some ended up in Lytham Library, some in St Annes Library, about 300 plates were bought by a local undertaker named Maurice Rawcliffe, who purchased them for £700 in June 1996.

When Maurice died in 2012 the collection was given to Alan Ashton of the Lytham Heritage Group. They were left at Alan's house until the Heritage Group set to work on the slides and restored the images to their original state using scanners and some photograph editing software.

The slides are now at the Archive of Lytham Heritage, all digitally re-mastered and the collection has been used in two popular exhibitions held at the Lytham Heritage Centre.

The story of Alfred's family was that not one of his children married and the youngest daughter, Bertha, lived her life in Lytham until her death in 1942.

A digital collection of these fabulous images is deposited with Lancashire Archives & Local History for all to see and enjoy. ■



Lytham beach, view of Lytham Windmill

THE PAINTING AND LIFE OF THOMAS TURNER 1794

By Stephen Henders



Halsall Parish Church, by Thomas Turner

This painting, measuring 20" x 14" was listed at the prestigious auction house Spink of London in 1939. Thomas Turner was born on 4 April 1768 and baptised in Halsall medieval church in south-west Lancashire. The importance of his work is in its uniqueness. He not only captured the interior of a parish church, which had been considerably adapted to suit the mode of worship of the day, but he also shows a service in progress, frozen in time, a subject matter very few painters explored.

Turner's father, John Turner, married Elizabeth Harrison on 7 February 1765. Thomas was their only son but they had three daughters, Ellen, Ellen and Mary. It is likely that the first Ellen died and the second daughter, younger than Thomas, took the name of his eldest sister. Thomas married Ellen Tyler, described as a spinster of the parish, on 15 August 1791, three years before he created the painting. Jacob Hodgson was the curate who married them. Thomas was a tenant farmer, by trade a 'husbandman' which denotes he had a small farm holding. They had a daughter in 1772 called Ann, born on 5 June.



Interior of Halsall Parish Church during a service, taken from the same position Thomas Turner worked from, 2023 (author's image)

Thomas was only 26 in 1794 when he painted the Reverend Glover Moore preaching to the parishioners in a church which had been converted from its medieval aspect into a meeting room sometime in the mid-1700s. Speculation has it that the Reverend was preaching about the continued reign of terror in France after the French Revolution of 1789. There are no religious symbols to be seen anywhere in the painting, instead the royal coat of arms of George III takes prominent place. Thomas went a step further than just showing the interior of the church, which makes it an invaluable record for church historians. The painting is also very important for the village because it captures such a different appearance to the parish church; different to the way it was when it was built in the fourteenth century, and in which it was restored in the late 1800s. The restoration of 1883 involved lowering the south wall, against which the elevated pew is mounted, the opening up of the chancel and exposing the clerestory and chantry windows.

Thomas probably only painted as a hobby and how his painting ended up in one of the biggest auction houses in London is a mystery. It may have been commissioned by Colonel Mordaunt who was a local mill owner and the Patron of the church. Mordaunt was eager to off-load his responsibility as Patron, which he did six years after the painting. The

painting may have served as an advertisement to tempt another wealthy merchant to buy the deeds and the 'living' which in Halsall was quite prosperous. A wealthy ship owner called Bryan Blundell bought the advowson (deeds of the church) in 1800. Bryan Blundell and his son Jonathan were heavily involved in the shipping of slaves.

Thomas died age 50 and was buried in the church by George Holden, the curate, on 18 August 1818. Thomas did not achieve greatness like his namesake of the time, J W Turner who painted masterpieces, but Thomas's small contribution has done much to further our understanding of village worship at the time.

The article about the painting was published in the London Illustrated News in January 1939. The article, written by Frank Davis, situates its importance with reference to the great Dutch painters such as Dewitte who painted church interiors. Reference was made in the next edition that an auction of this painting was to be held at a top auction house in London.

In an effort to locate the fate of this work, a visit was made by the author to the auction house Spink, but their records do not record the sale of this painting in 1939 so the search for its whereabouts goes on. The original was in colour and shows a hatchment on the wall which belonged to the Ireland family, Lords of Lydiate, who owned the huge, elevated pew shown in the painting. The hatchment is in black and marked the death of Edward Ireland in 1662. His coat of arms, on the hatchment, harked back to the ancient Coat of Arms of the Ireland family of Lydiate and is discernible by the rows of fleur de lys. It hung in the church until the renovations in the nineteenth century. It is not known what happened to it. Most churches preserve hatchments for decoration and heritage purposes, but the Ireland hatchment may have been damaged beyond repair and destroyed. ■



ROBERT ALEXANDER MCFEETER (1850-1924)

By Mary Keenan

The Lancashire Hussars passing Manchester Arms, 67 Eastbank Street, Southport, May 1899
(Sefton Library Services)

After thorough research many details are known about the woodcarver behind 'Bramble Spray' at Rufford Old Hall. Although the following summary is incomplete it is sufficient to present a brief history of the woodcarver.

Robert Alexander McFeeter was born in Glasgow in 1850, most likely at the Glasgow Lying-In Hospital and Dispensary, Rottenrow, Glasgow, to Flora McFeeter (nee Douglas) from Argyllshire and to Andrew McFeeter from Glasgow.

The family moved to England and in 1858 were living in Anchor Street, North Meols, Southport. On 5 April 1858, when Robert was just eight years old, his father died at home at the age of 34, of 'Diseased liver, Rheumatism, Bleeding of the nose, 5 Weeks Exhaustion'.

Andrew McFeeter had been a cabinet maker journeyman and no doubt Robert inherited his father's carving tools and the skills to use them. Around this time Flora gave birth to her second son, William.

Less than one year on, Flora moved temporarily to Manchester for her wedding at the Cathedral Parish Church on 21 February 1859 to John Ashton, shoemaker journeyman. John had been living at 9 Anchor Street, Southport with his wife and two children from at least 1851. However, there is no further mention of the children, Richard aged ten and Mary Ann aged six, or of when he was widowed.

Prior to the wedding, John resided at 15 Bootle Street, Deansgate, and Flora resided at Holts Place, Camp Street, Manchester. After their wedding they returned to Southport.

In 1861, John and Flora Ashton were living at 11 Anchor Street, North Meols with Flora's two sons, Robert McFeeter aged ten, and William Ashton aged three. However, there is no mention of William after that date. Between 1861 and 1891 Robert, his mother and stepfather continued to live at 11 Anchor Street. Also in the house at various times were lodgers and other working people, a laundress with her two year old child, a French polisher, bricksetter, and a Denbighshire coachman.

Throughout his life Robert was a woodcarver. The Bramble Spray was possibly his show piece. In 1877 Robert had a workshop at 61a Eastbank Street, next to Wesley Street, which he used until 1890. The only other named work known of Robert's was a pear-wood carving made in 1886 of a Medallion of Homer, commissioned by the Southport Liberal Ladies, the Southport Branch of the Women's Liberal Association. Suitable for a library table it was mounted on an Italian walnut, easel-shaped frame made by cabinet maker Joseph Mathias Fawke of Southport. It was a gift for MP William Ewart Gladstone's 78th birthday on 29 December 1886.

By 1890, Robert had moved his workshop from 61a Eastbank Street to 67a, where he worked until 1899. The following year, John Ashton, master shoemaker, attended by his stepson, died at home on 24 December 1891, aged 77, of 'Senile Decay'. His final resting place has not yet been located.

Robert continued to live at 11 Anchor Street with his mother. He now had two leasehold properties, numbers 2 and 4 Scarisbrick New Road, Southport. By 1893 Robert and his mother were living at 'Derby Villa', 2 Scarisbrick New Road and labourer Robert Hulme occupied 11 Anchor Street. In 1902 the house name of 2 Scarisbrick New Road was changed to 'Glenorchy', a place in Argyllshire where Flora perhaps came from with deep meaning for Robert.

Flora had been ill since 1893 and died at home on 15 July 1896 of 'Malignant disease of Breast 3 years, Exhaustion'. Her final resting place has not yet been located.

Ten weeks later, on 24 September 1896, at the age of almost 46, Robert married Phoebe Protheroe, aged 33, at the Baptist Tabernacle,



'Bramble Spray' at Rufford Old Hall, National Trust,
© National Trust / Mike Howells & Roger Johnson

with its ornate spiked dome, situated next door to Robert's home, and possibly where Robert had met Phoebe, who lived close by at 101 Shakespeare Street. Phoebe was born in 1863 at Velindre, Brecknockshire, Wales.

Robert continued to work at 67a Eastbank Street up to 1899, and during the first few months of that year, 67 Eastbank Street became the Manchester Arms beerhouse with John Robinson's name showing above the Manchester Arms sign.

The Lancashire Hussars visited Southport regularly and the photograph pictured was taken in May 1899 – after that year the electric trams with overhead wires began to run along Eastbank Street and down Scarisbrick New Road and the Hussars uniform was changed to khaki. The Lancashire Hussars were a spectacle in the years they came to Southport to train on the sands, and it can be imagined that Robert would come out of his workshop from behind the Manchester Arms to stand and watch them coming into town.

The Lancashire Hussars visited Southport regularly and the photograph pictured was taken in May 1899 – after that year the electric trams with overhead wires began to run along Eastbank Street and down Scarisbrick New Road and the Hussars uniform was changed to khaki. The Lancashire Hussars were a spectacle in the years they came to Southport to train on the sands, and it can be imagined that Robert would come out of his workshop from behind the Manchester Arms to stand and watch them coming into town.

In 1900, Robert Alexander McFeeter moved to a workshop at the back of Virginia Street while changing over from his workshop behind 67



Gravestone of Robert Alexander, Flora and Phoebe McFeeter (Mary Keenan)

Eastbank Street. By 1904 his workshop address was 1 Bridge Grove, close to his home. It was also the workshop for William Forgham (boot and shoe maker) and Thomas Kay (upholsterer). By 1908-1909 William Sullivan (boot and shoe maker) had taken over from Forgham and by 1912 Henry Holmes was there with tailor Richard Chilton, Miles Blundell oil merchant and seedsman (telephone 768), and Thomas Kay.

Robert continued working but in 1924 was not recorded at Bridge Grove, although George Edward Williams (porter) was there along with Miss Frances A Bennet. Thomas Kay had expanded his business and moved to 7 Bridge Grove to become E and T Kay (house furnishers, upholsterers and cabinet makers).

Robert was taken ill and admitted to the Turner Memorial Home at Dingle Head, Liverpool, where he died on 4 September 1924 of 'Right Hemiplegic Cerebral Haemorrhage' and 'Bronchitis', the informant being the Matron, M. Brewer Brice.

Robert Alexander McFeeter was buried at Duke Street Cemetery, Southport. His mother Flora Ashton had died in 1896 and is remembered on the head stone. After her husband's death Phoebe continued to live at 'Glenorchy', previously being converted into apartments, until at least 1941. In 1944 Phoebe was visiting, or staying, at 19 Lancaster Villas, Merthyr Tydfil, where she died on 29 February 1944 of 'Bronchitis' and 'Disorderly action of the heart'. Phoebe was buried at Duke Street Cemetery, Southport next to her beloved husband, now 'At Rest'. ■

BOOK REVIEW

Writing for Social Change in Temperance Periodicals: Conviction and Career, by Dr Annemarie McAllister.

Routledge, 2022. £96 hardback, £29.59 e-book.

The largest children's movement in British history was the temperance movement. At its peak from the 1890s to the 1920s, more than three million were involved in the Band of Hope and other youth temperance movements, dedicated to total abstinence from alcohol. Children attended weekly meetings, attached to churches, chapels and friendly societies such as the Good Templars, where they would sing songs, recite poems, play games and listen to illustrated talks about the evils of drink.

It was a national movement, connected chiefly by the press – magazines and newspapers with big circulations. In this new book Annemarie McAllister of the University of Central Lancashire explores some of the writers and editors who helped to fill the pages of these publications (there were at least 57 different temperance weeklies and monthlies by the 1870s). In doing so she raises broader questions, about how social movements used the press to further their work, how writing gave new opportunities to working-class members of these organisations, and how our fixed ideas of 'amateur' and 'professional' writers fall apart when faced with the complexity of individuals' lives.

The book uses seven case studies of writers and editors to explore the huge world of temperance print culture, from the 1840s to the 1930s, across the UK, including two Lancashire writers. One of these was William Hoyle (1834–1895) of Didsbury, Manchester, a commercial traveller by day, but outside working hours a famous composer of temperance hymns and songs, who 'gave generations of people catchy words to speak or sing, supporting and expressing their convictions'.

The other is Mary Magdalen Forrester (1859–1934), who started as a cotton dyer and maker-up in the mills of Salford, but went on to edit three temperance papers, in which she published her own poetry and serialised novels. Annemarie argues that she produced high-quality literary work, at a furious pace, and deserves to be read for more than historical interest. Indeed, she says that temperance fiction should be considered a literary genre in its own right.

Hoyle's writing had a huge impact, yet he was an 'amateur'. Forrester was relatively unusual as a paid 'professional' editor and writer, as most of the material in temperance publications was contributed for free. Both were motivated by personal commitment to the cause. This was 'writing as political or social activism', produced mainly by working-class people, involved in a movement that was created and controlled by the working classes. Writing for these publications could fulfil many needs, beyond earning an income, and cannot be neatly categorised as 'either work, leisure, or pastime'.

The book is based on a huge amount of research in many archives, involving the reading of thousands of issues of temperance magazines and papers. Its conclusions can be applied to other social movements such as women's suffrage, for whom periodicals were also the 'powerhouse' which drove the movements. The book is written in a clear, accessible style, and I hope a paperback edition is soon available so that this pioneering study of activist writers can be read more widely.

Andrew Hobbs ■

Listen In!

You can find out more about the temperance movement in Lancashire by listening to our Thoughts from Lancashire Archives podcast on the subject, featuring Dr Annemarie McAllister, visit

www.lancashire.gov.uk/archives

Paupers at the Polls? Preston's 1798 Election

BY DAVE BERRY

Thomas Dewhurst

Evan Heath— I know him; he lives in Preston, he served his time here— he has been abroad a year & an half— he returned the 26th of Sept: last— he went away— because of a Bastard Child— he has worked constantly with me since he came.— . . . John Woods.— I know D. he was charged with a Bastard Child by Carley the Overseer p^r me, as Overseer of Fishwick L^{ts}, to indemnify the Town— He applyd in the name of Miss Dewhurst, M^{rs}.— Mr. Carley.— I paid the L^s. D. ran away for the Child and his M^{rs}. desired me to pay it I did pay it but not as Overseer. I knew nothing of the Election. I had no view in it.— Tho: Graystock.— I conversed with him at the Boardhead in Fairgate on his coming, he sayd on talking of this Election he was obliged to come for the side that w^od clear him of the Bastard, w^od go away the Wood afterwards.— I was courting him to be of our side.— Evan Heath before sayd he expected him as a Journeyman for they w^od clear him of the Bastard— Dewhurst sayd if I w^od clear him of the Bastard I find Money to pay off what had been advanced by the other party, he w^od vote for Burgoyne.— Tho: Turner.— the first time I saw him was at the Boardhead— he sayd he w^od gladly have been on th^e side— but he must vote for those who cleared him of the Bast Child.— admitted.

50.

Examination of Thomas Dewhurst, from the Register of Preston Voters (Lancashire Archives & Local History, DDPD 11/51/23)

The 1768 general election was notorious for the level of violence, corruption, eye-watering expenditure and the eventual reversal of the result by the House of Lords. Numerous documents were produced through the various legal battles and many of these survive at Lancashire Archives & Local History.

The Whigs wanted the electorate to be as wide as possible and used a 1661 House of Lords ruling that gave the impression that 'all the inhabitants' should be allowed to vote. If allowed this would take control over the electorate away from the Tory controlled Corporation and open up voting to Catholics, Quakers and paupers.

Records on so-called paupers are scant in general, but the election records give us more information than usual on this section of society. In a non-contested election, paupers, or anyone receiving or suspected of receiving charities of any sort would have been automatically disqualified, but this election was different – all the male population of Preston was a potential voter. The bailiff was given the onerous task of determining who was a legitimate voter, often in consultation with the candidates. With respect to paupers, he took into consideration residents of the almshouses

or the poorhouse, those being supported by the town in the form of poor relief and those being supported by a charity. In many of these cases the pauperism might have occurred in the past so the bailiff had to judge if this was relevant. The candidates could cross-examine the potential voters, or even bring in witnesses to back their arguments. The results of the cross-examinations form the basis of this article.

The name Henry Varley, overseer of the poorhouse, appears throughout the records. He was often called upon to provide evidence as to the date and frequency of any support given.

Henry Walmsley came to vote but was objected to as being in receipt of Sacrament (charity) money. Sacrament money was collected at services of Holy Communion and would normally be given to paupers of good standing and virtue who had fallen on hard times.

'Parish clerk [witness] stated that it wasn't Henry but his wife who received the money. Hy Varley [witness] – says he frequently gives money to the wives where the Husb[an]ds names are entered in the List. Mr Andrews, the vicar – says the money is charity & that she has recd it pretty constantly for near 20 years last.'

Interestingly, Andrews mentions there were another '66 wives' in this position; their husbands, for one reason or another, being unable to support their families. In another note Walmsley was also shown to have received support from the Crook and Rishton charities.

Another voter, William Wiggins, came to vote.

'He apply'd to th' Mayor and sayd he cou'd not maintain himself & wanted relief.'

Again, Henry Varley admitted to having relieved Wiggins' wife several times.

After the arrival of the above two voters, a discussion took place regarding the voting rights of paupers, when it was the wife who received support. A decision was made to the effect that a wife receiving alms should not affect a husband's right to vote. The implication being that by disqualifying someone because of alms being given to wives, too much power was given to the vicar. The vicar was under the patronage of the Stanley family and, indirectly, the Whigs.

Thomas Heath was in a similar situation. His wife was in receipt of the Rishton Charity. This charity dates from William Rishton's will of 1729 and gave the mayor and aldermen of Preston the right and the funding to relieve the poor at Christmas.

'Margt Latham [witness] – says she does not know of the wife rece[iv]in[g] it but says she has heard her say Serjt Dawson was a good man & had given her half a crown. Serjt. Dawson [witness] - his wife has recd it 2 or 3 times but unknown to her Husband, because he tho[ugh]t he wo[ul]d spend it being a drinking man. Received Crook and Rishton charity.'

'Serjeant Dawson' was William Dawson, a minor official employed by the corporation.

Those who had spent time in the workhouse or had some form of poor relief were still recorded. Samuel Cooke (alias Coupe) was objected to as being a pauper. He:

'...lived in the workhouse 7 or 8 months ago now lives with his sister, was very ill when first into the workhouse, now is well & has had no relief for some time.'

His vote was rejected but the reasons were uncertain, especially when compared to earlier voters with similar backgrounds - perhaps due to the more forensic cross-examinations or, perhaps, because others within the Cooke family were Catholic and therefore likely to be disqualified from voting. A number of Catholics did vote but they first had to swear an oath of allegiance.

When Thomas Connell appeared, witnesses had to be brought in specially.

'Holland, the Overseer of Walton, gave him a shilling part of some charity money last Good Friday.'

In this case, since this wasn't a Preston charity, his vote was allowed. This also suggests that time and money were expended in bringing in Holland to vote. Connell's brother, as a witness, describes Thomas as coming into Preston to vote for the Whig party but they 'disappointed him' and so he switched to the Tory party. Not surprisingly he was obliged to take the bribery oath.

John Stanley senior and John Stanley junior both arrived to vote.



Goosnargh Hospital, from Charles Hardwick's, 'History of the Borough of Preston', 1857 (Lancashire Archives & Local History, E02 PRE/HAR)

'Obj: to as receipt of Jolly's Charity which was proved.'

Both were rejected and John Stanley junior was required to provide evidence of being over 21 years of age. Jolly's charity was a short-lived charity and by 1834 had disappeared from the records.

It was difficult to separate the role of overseer of the poorhouse, with an individual relieving someone who fell on hard times. When Henry Dickinson arrived:

'Obj: to as a pauper – Varley having paid his rent but not as Overseer as Varley declared.'

Similarly, when Robert Clayton came to vote there was an objection that James Heald paid his rent for him. Heald responded with, 'says he gave him gratis'.

Individuals within the town would often support paupers in different ways. Thomas Johnson came to vote.

'Obj: to as a pauper. Inhabitancy proved by Hy. Varley – Liddall [witness] He lived in a Charity House given by Mr Winkley til within two years

last. Mr Winkley gives Houses to any poor persons he pleases. Mr Bickerstaff – he is a poor man that now lives in the House & for that Reason was put into the House. Johnson came out in the beg[inin]g of January. They are reputed Alms houses.'

The Winckley family appears large in the history of Preston. The Mr Winckley in the above record was probably Nicholas Winckley who became mayor of Preston in 1774.

Thomas Place arrived with:

'A promise of being admitted into Goosnargh Charity – since accepted.'

The Goosnargh charity was set up by Dr Bushell as a 'hospital for decayed gentlemen or gentlewomen of better rank'. Extra requirement being that they should not be receiving relief from any town or township nor being Catholic. The hospital still exists in Goosnargh and is now run by the trustees of Bushell House.

The witness for Thomas Leatherbarrow perhaps gives a little too much information.

'George Hudd [witness]: He has the pleasure not

to have a wife – follows no Trade – I think he has little. He likes the pot (beer) too well, but he is my wife's uncle & I support him. I can't say whether I expect to be paid for his maintenance – he came long before there was any thoughts of an Election & only went to see his relations. Obj: by Mr Lee – that L{eatherbarrow] is kept by charity & that being a pauper, he is dependent & not a good vote.'

Thomas Dewhurst may not have been a pauper but the situation below illustrates that the overseer took on many roles. It also shows how easily voters were open to bribery.

'Evan Heath [Witness] – I know him; he lives in Preston, he served his time here – he has been abroad a year & an half, he returned the 26th of Sept: last – he went Away because of a Bastard Child – he has work'd constantly with me since he came. John Woods [Witness] – I know D(ewhurst). he was charged with a bastard child & Hy Varley the Overseer p[ai]d me, as Overseer of ffishwick £5, to indemnify the Town – he apply'd in the name Widow Dewhurst, the mo[th]er. Hy. Varley I paid the £5. D[ewhurst] ran away for the child and his mo[th]er desired me to pay it. I did pay it but not as Overseer. Thos. Graystock [Witness] – I conversed with him at the Boars head in Friergate on his coming, he say'd on talking of the Election he was obliged to come for the side that would clear him of the Bastard & wo[ul]d go away the week afterwards – I was courting him to be of our side. Dewhurst sayd if I wo[ul]d clear him of the Bast[ar]d or find money to pay off what had been advanced by the other party, he wo[ul]d vote for Burgoyne.'

Henry Sill was also objected to as a pauper, because he received outdoor relief. This record also gives an indication of the support that could be given to an individual.

'Obj: to as a pauper. Hy. Varley – abt last Cand[lema]s but one he was bad and had Town's pay - & in the Spring he had Cloaths bo[ugh]t which I paid for.

Mich[ae]l Emmett – I saved his life – last Winter but one, I was told he was starving and expiring, and I made a collection for him of 10s which he received - and abt this time 12 months I bought him 2 shirts – which I gave him.

Mr Myers – when I was Mayor last year, I ordered him relief within the year – within a year from this time.

Hy. Brewer – He and his Brother came & desired to lodge in my Kiln – a malster – I have given him many a shilling & made a collection for him – Mr Myres gave me 5s for him. I have often relieved him with Meat & Drink.

Mich[ae]l Emmett – I took a Bed for him we carry'd him thither & he stayed there a month 6 weeks – since Col. B[urgoyne] declared himself candidate he and his Brother have been boarded at lbbot's.

Hy. Brewer – He was taken out of the Kiln abt a week after Sir Peter's Election – then carried to lbbot's, was there above a ffortn[igh]t – I paid for House Room all the while he was there - Carried him victuals in the latter p[ar]t of the time – paid for the whole as Overseer. He went from there to Bramwell's.

Rd Bramwell – I made him a pair of Breeches after he came from lbbot's – near a Fortn[igh]t – within a 12 m[on]th[s] from this time. Allowed.'

Michael Emmett was probably the landlord of the Ram's Head inn which was demolished in the 1880s to make way for the Harris Museum and Library. Henry Brewer produced malt and beer for the many hotels and pubs in Preston. In another document he mentions that he was brewing eighteen barrels a week in the run up to the election – bribes in the form of food and drink were rife. In yet another document Brewer admitted to betting five guineas on Colonel Burgoyne to win the election, which caused his vote to be rejected.

The 1768 election in Preston, with the widening of the male franchise, produced detailed information on most of the male population. Unusually, most of these records were scant in the coverage of the middle and upper classes but concentrated on the pauper and working classes; their votes were often in dispute. For this group, their stories were not entirely forgotten. ■

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Register of Preston Voters, DDPD/11/51
Preston poll book, DDKE/Box87/6

In search of the 'leather-hunters'

Using archives to trace Lancashire's early
football enthusiasts (Part Two)

Dr Stephen Tate



Knockout heroes... Darwen FC's FA Cup exploits in the late 1870s helped fire the imagination of soccer followers across Lancashire and the success of the team, pictured, was the prime reason behind the launch of the East Lancashire Cricket and Football Times (Blackburn with Darwen Library & Information Service)

Part One of this article, carried in Issue Two of *Archives*, examined rare survivals of ephemera associated with one of the first football clubs to be formed in Lancashire in the 1870s, Darwen Rangers FC. The receipts, minute book and printed fixture lists cast light on how young men, caught up in the new football fever, combined to create teams, organise matches and lay the foundations of the soccer network of leagues, cups and derbies we enjoy today. Part Two traces the development of the football fan culture associated with Lancashire's early clubs and the extraordinary flowering of the Saturday football press in the county's textile towns.

Newspaper advertising clerk, William Pickford, was employed on the 'Bolton Evening News' between 1878 and 1883, and one of the teenager's most enjoyable duties, 'was to go to the office on a Saturday evening when the big football results were telegraphed, write them on big sheets of paper and stick them in the windows. The street used to be crowded with people'. In Burnley, at the same time, a small number of shopkeepers adorned their windows and the street with placards announcing news of local team selections and match results as a lure to passing trade. Pubs became central to the news network too; the Eagle and Child in Blackburn, and Burnley's Royal Oak Hotel, among many, offering customers first word of a day's results through specially arranged telegrams to the premises. For away matches in particular, news of a fixture could take days to appear in the local weekly press, with often minimal coverage.

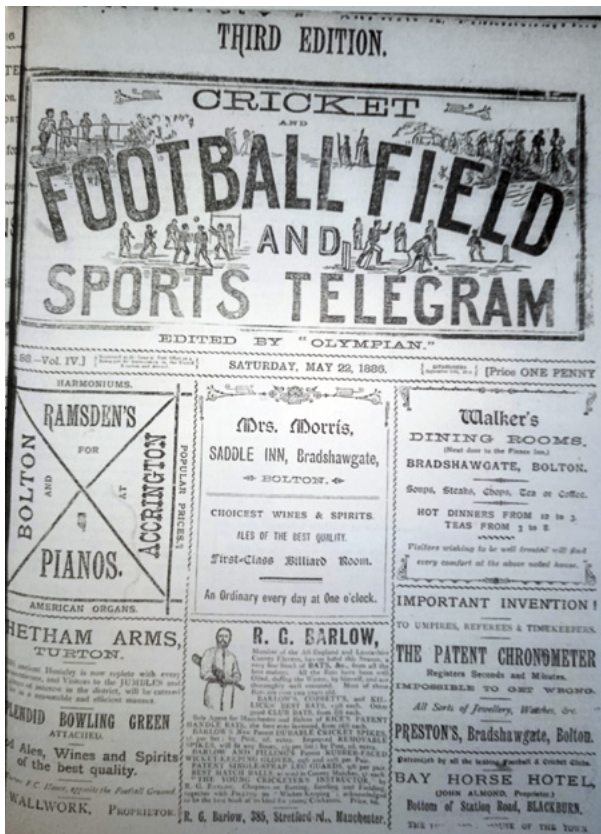
But the 'Evening News' management was soon tapping into the football market in a more formal manner with the launch in 1884 of the penny 'Football Field and Sports Telegram', a Saturday afternoon and evening, multi-edition sports paper carrying news of all manner of sports, but primarily football. Around that year, two other Lancashire titles were launched, heralding the era of the Saturday night football specials, serving up a diet of results, match reports, fixtures, gossip, targeted advertising and all things sporting. The West Midlands saw a similar rush of press enterprise around football, which mirrors both regions' centrality in the development of association football at the time.

The Saturday football specials, often printed on pink, green or buff-coloured newsprint to stand out from the regular news editions, would become a staple of twentieth-century football coverage nationally before TV, radio and internet news rendered them obsolete.

In Blackburn, mill hand-turned-reporter-turned publican, Edmund Walmsley, set the ball rolling with 'Saturday Football', seemingly in 1883, followed by sister publication 'Cricketers' Herald' the following year. By 1886 Walmsley changed tack with the launch of the year-round catch-all 'Cricketers' Herald, Athletic and Football Times'.

Similar enterprise to that shown in Bolton and Blackburn can be found in Preston. There is word of a sports publication, the 'Telegraph', circulating in 1881, but copies do not seem to have survived. In late August 1884, 'Football News' was on sale on Saturdays, like its contemporaries costing one penny. Its existence only came to light to modern scholars a few years ago. Surviving editions for 1884, 1887 and 1888 are in private hands, but the National Football Museum has digital copies at its Preston-based archive.

'Football News' provides a precious window on Lancashire's earliest soccer sub-culture. It is to hand in the four-page 25 October 1884, edition, in a series of small advertisements for Preston businesses offering a Preston North End-branded match ball for 7s, waterproof versions for 7s 6d, PNE-branded cigars, at 2d and 3d, and all colours and styles of football jerseys with special pricing for club purchases. A 'Bee Hive' brand of football in 'all sizes' is offered. The rival 'Victor Football' was being manufactured in Bolton. A



Giving the fans what they want... Bolton-based Football Field helped pioneer a new brand of sports paper and sports journalism, with a print run extending well into the twentieth century

further retailer, 'Having specially got up a boot to suit the demands of the coming season', was advertising its use by players at Preston North End, Preston Swifts, Higher Walton and Lostock Hall clubs as a selling point. The Gaiety Theatre of Varieties was, 'The resort of all Footballers'.

A dining establishment was offering 'special accommodation for footballers'. A 'North End Pudding' had been featured on a recent menu. Still on the food front, those following North End second XI at Wigan Association had 'cleared' a restaurant in the pit town 'of all its eatables'. PNE playing cards were on sale, too. The Deepdale Hotel branded itself, 'The North End Club House, where Football Teams and their friends visiting Preston will always be welcome'.

Preston Swifts' game at Wheelton was a talking point, with a pigeon carried by the

away supporters in a paper bag unceremoniously rocketed skywards when a wayward shot at goal proved 'a regular stinger' when hitting the crowd. Was it a homing pigeon tasked with taking the result back to Preston but forced into early flight? One of the same supporters' group, seemingly from the Brookhouse Inn, was credited with the strongest lungs for 10 miles around Preston. He was part of the club's 'shouting committee' and was seen the day after 'drinking buttered rum to cure his hoarseness'.

By the 1887 editions of 'Football News' the 'Stayer Lozenge' was being promoted to help maintain, 'economic power, avoid fatigue, and undergo with ease prolonged exertion of mind or body'!

By the 1887 editions of 'Football News' the 'Stayer Lozenge' was being promoted to help maintain, 'economic power, avoid fatigue, and undergo with ease prolonged exertion of mind or body'!

'Harry Robinson's chips and tripe were in great demand last Saturday', when Fleetwood Rangers entertained West Manchester. PNE were seemingly accompanied on their travels by the 'big drum', 'almost pounded out of all recognition'. Allcock's 'Porous Plasters' were recommended for rugby or association players suffering 'wrench or sprain'. A PNE 'Football Guide' was on sale and team photographs adorned the paper's office window in Fishergate. Racing tipster ads were promoted and get-rich-quick prize draws.

A PNE 'Football Guide' was on sale and team photographs adorned the paper's office window in Fishergate. Racing tipster ads were promoted and get-rich-quick prize draws.

A similar pattern of advertising activity can be found in Bolton's 'Football Field and Sports Telegram'. The early editions in 1884 carried advertisements for football boots, jerseys, 'drawers' and rulebooks together with pubs and restaurants catering for spectators' needs. One Blackburn boot manufacturer tapped into the FA Cup Final success of the town's Olympic and Rovers in the previous two seasons, by claiming its 'Celebrated' boots played 'their share in bringing the English Cup to Lancashire'.

The marketing of sports-related material blossomed and by 1886 the Saturday paper was awash with similar adverts, with the range expanding to take in waterproof coats for spectators, fund-raising draws for clubs, timepieces for match officials, washing materials for dirty kit, cure-all ointments and potions for playing mishaps, and football accident insurance for both players... and spectators! Playing kit was now available in boys', youths' and men's sizes.

The risks of playing the game were acknowledged from the outset, with 'Assurance Against Football Accidents' offered by a Burnley insurance agent who promised £6 a week for 'total disablement', and £1.10s for 'partial' incapacitation, for up to 26 weeks, for an annual premium of 10s. An extra 7s 6d would secure a £500 payment if injuries proved fatal! Burnley FC's first skipper, Tom Midgley, was an early beneficiary in 1883, claiming benefits after he was charged simultaneously by two opponents off the ball, resulting in, 'a rather severe strain in the back'.

The intimate relationship between the pub trade and football is plain to see with, for example, the Footballers' Arms in Burnley urging spectators on their way to Turf Moor to call in and see host Dannie Friel for 'Football Chat' and cheap cigars. The licensee, Friel, was a Burnley player and the pub itself seems to have undergone a name change around that time to reflect its proximity to the football ground. A second pub with the same name was close to the ground, too. The Swan Hotel, Accrington, run by the captain of Accrington FC, was urging fans to 'Call and see Jud and hear the Latest Football Gossip'.

Attracting niche market advertisers would be crucial for the likes of 'Football Field' in Bolton (1884), 'Football News' in Preston (1884), and 'Saturday Football' in Blackburn (1883). By way of contrast, the much earlier Darwen print enterprise, 'East Lancashire Cricket and Football Times' (mentioned in Part One), had failed in a matter of months. The first edition was timed to provide news of Darwen FC's FA Cup quarter-final tie in London against Old Etonians played the day before. The club's earlier exploits in taking on and beating southern-based opposition had thrilled

Lancashire's football followers. A report by 'Special Telegram' covered two pages of the approximately A4-sized (quarto) eight-page paper – by the standards of the day, a reporting coup. It was the first written report of the game to reach the mill town. Football coverage in the more established weekly press of Darwen, Blackburn and the surrounding towns could be extremely limited and hit-and-miss.

Seemingly, limited readership, difficulty attracting news from sporting clubs to fill the columns, and an alarming paucity of advertisements rendered it a commercial flop. Between its collapse in spring 1879 and the launch of new Saturday titles in 1883/84, two Blackburn-based clubs had reached FA Cup Finals and the new Lancashire FA Cup had been competed for with increasing zest over four seasons with a rush of new clubs. A football commercial infrastructure grew – one that quickly grasped the benefits of press advertisements and chimed with a wider popular working-class culture buoyed by factory and mill family earnings.

Increasing numbers of football followers were prepared to pay admission charges to see the game played. Special football trains were being run. A flavour of matchday enterprise is presented in a 'Preston Herald' feature on the lure of football at Deepdale in January 1884, with the writer marvelling at 'an interminable lane of hot potato engines, ice creameries, orange and ginger bread stands, and other approved appliances for turning an honest penny' on the approach to the ground. The Darwen paper had simply been ahead of its time, a victim of its own precocious arrival before a commercial sporting network had developed sufficiently to sustain it. ■

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'Football Field', Bolton Evening News Archive, Bolton History Centre

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MY FAMILY HISTORY: A LANCASHIRE ODYSSEY

By Judith Farrell (nee Grindrod)

Years ago I started tracing my direct paternal line and in those pre-digitisation days spent time at the family research centre at the Mormon Temple in Chorley, at the Lancashire Record Office and many libraries where I could view microfiche holdings. It was slow progress and as I was working full-time and with a young family I didn't have much time to devote to the project.

When I retired fifteen years ago the research options available had grown enormously. I dusted off the small box file of neatly written cards, fired up the laptop and set to work. Now I have a direct-line tree containing over 4,000 names, 140 more trees of indirect ancestors, contacts around the world and a job for life.

My maiden name is Grindrod. Every Grindrod in the world traces their ancestors back to the Rochdale area of East Lancashire, to Ricci Grindrode (1595-1664) and his forefathers. The name comes from the Norse/Old English place names in the area – GRENE (green) ROD (a clearing); GRENE ROYD (green valley). Green in this context means 'new' – an area cleared for agricultural use. There are at least sixteen different spellings of the name in the records of St Chad's Church, Rochdale, but Grindrod is the spelling settled on over time. The ancient Parish of Rochdale was most extensive, comprising the Townships of Butterworth, Castleton, Spotland and Wardleworth, Wuerdle and Wardle, Blatchinworth, Calderbrook, Todmorden and Walsden. The last named seven Townships were grouped under the name of Huddersfield – not to be confused with Huddersfield in Yorkshire which

some very badly researched documents claim! It's my ambition to record all the Grindrods. I'll never manage it but I enjoy the research and the social history is fascinating.

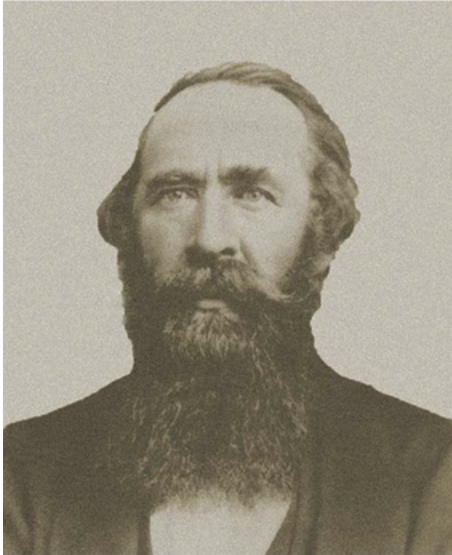
“

It's my ambition to record all the Grindrods. I'll never manage it but I enjoy the research and the social history is fascinating.”

My father's line never left Lancashire and I live here on the coast, so am able to visit everywhere in which I am interested. I have learnt much about the history of Lancashire, of the people, of politics, of religion. Incorrectly transcribed and misspelt names have been challenging, some terrible trees posted online have irritated me beyond reason and discoveries sending me down previously unknown lines have made it all worthwhile.

The Grindrods were generally of the dissenting faiths, Wesleyan, Methodist and Quaker, as you would perhaps expect in East Lancashire, and are well documented in the records of Hardshaw, Marsden and Pilkington. 'The Compendium of Methodist Laws' was written by Reverend Edmund Grindrod (1786-1842). Many Grindrods were stonemasons and they supplied the stone for the building of Liverpool docks from their Cheshire quarries. A contemporary document speaks bitterly of the stranglehold that these 'men of the dissenting faiths' have on business at the docks.

Two of my direct ancestors, who were brothers and both stonemasons, migrated to Manchester from Rochdale at the start of the Industrial Revolution. They became wealthy property owners, particularly in the Piccadilly area, and



Dr Ralph Barnes Grindrod (author's image)

diversified into many enterprises, handily marrying their daughters to the sons of their business partners. Their sons became businessmen (one being described as 'the only honest stockbroker') and medical doctors, qualifying at the University of Oxford. Dr Ralph Barnes Grindrod preached to thousands in the streets of Manchester about the evils of alcohol and according to records, 'spent two fortunes' in establishing The Band of Hope. My cousin and I are descended from the sons of Dr Ralph's father's second marriage; no fortunes for us! Dr Ralph became a famous hydropathic doctor in Malvern, Worcestershire, and a water fountain dedicated to him is in the grounds of Malvern College. His son was Dr Charles Grindrod, a medical practitioner but also a talented amateur photographer. He was a great friend of the composer Edward Elgar and the photograph that illustrates many works on Elgar and is on the Elgar website is known as 'The Grindrod Portrait'.

The research goes on, there is always another line to follow. All my trees are publicly available on the Ancestry website and I have met so many 'relatives' online and in person – the lady in Devon I visited and was astonished to find displayed on her lounge wall samplers worked by an ancestor of mine over 200 years ago; the gentleman who visited the First World War cemeteries in France carrying a red rose to place on the grave of the first Lancashire lad he came across; Jackie Grindrod in America who writes to me every Christmas; Roger, who sends me old documents to transcribe; the chap who has just moved into an old Rochdale farmhouse and

has found evidence of a Grindrod, a previous owner, in the cellar.

A few years ago my daughter and I were wandering the grounds of St Chad's Church, Rochdale, scrutinising the gravestones, laid flat around the church to create a walkway. Through the grey drizzle appeared an elderly lady dressed in flowing eastern robes. She asked what we were doing and, despite her limited English and my non-existent Arabic, we managed a conversation. I explained that we were looking for our ancestors. She told us of her life in the Middle East, how her parents had died when she was young, she was raised by her grandparents, her husband had died and now she was living with her son in Rochdale. She gestured around and said how she often sits on the bench in the churchyard and she says a prayer for all the people buried there 'it's an Arab prayer, but that doesn't matter, because we are all the same'.



The blood of Ricci Grinderode has spread far and wide – the humble, the titled, the rich, the poor ” ”

The blood of Ricci Grinderode has spread far and wide – the humble, the titled, the rich, the poor – the Peaky Blinder in Birmingham, the murderer in Manchester, the daughter marrying into an aristocratic family descended from Anne of Austria and the Dauphins of France, the weaver who died in the Rochdale workhouse, the women who died in childbirth, the preachers who travelled Lancashire spreading the Wesleyan gospel, the yeomen, the colliers, those who went to the new world seeking a better life – one family, rooted in Lancashire.

I often think of that charming lady in St Chad's churchyard and despite having no religious beliefs myself, am moved and grateful that she prays for our ancestors in this corner of Lancashire 'because we are all the same'. ■

CLARETS COLLECTED: A FOOTBALL TOWN ARCHIVE AT BURNLEY LIBRARY

Burnley FC is one of the original twelve clubs that founded the Football League in 1889. Since 1882 the ups and downs of the club have been a significant thread in the history of our national game. The Clarets won the FA Cup in 1913-1914 and are the only team to have been champions in all four divisions. In 1987, at its lowest point, the club almost dropped out of the league altogether. A home win of 2-1 over Orient saved them on the last day of the season. Now, with Burnley back in the top flight, Clarets Collected is helping to collect and preserve the Club's story, and make it available for everyone to explore, enjoy and celebrate.

The core of the collection arrived at the library in April 2023 – a small group of Burnley fans have generously donated their personal collections of match programmes, fanzines, photographs, memorabilia. This group includes Dave Thomas, author of over 20 books about the club.

The Friends of Lancashire Archives are funding a project officer to catalogue what's arrived, store it safely and work with fans to grow the collection further.

That's only the start though. Over the next two years the plan is to:

- Make the collection available to anyone who wants to drop-in at Burnley Library
- Involve volunteers in what we are doing
- Develop a new gallery space at the library with a Clarets exhibitions and events programme
- Explore ways of making the collection available online
- Offer sessions to schools so that children can learn about the heritage of the club

We will be working with Burnley Football Club in the Community and the National Football Museum, and would be delighted if any individuals or organisations would like to find out more about how to get involved.

You can read more about the project on the FLA website at www.flarchives.co.uk ■

Images courtesy of Burnley Civic Trust.



MAKING MUSIC

An exciting new local history display will be launching in 2024 at Chorley Local History. Music enthusiast John Winstanley will be sharing his passion for local music in Chorley. John discovered the music world during adulthood and his musical interests were fired up by the noughties version of Punk. He became a music journalist, radio DJ, gig and festival promoter. Between 2002 and 2007 he encouraged local musicians and became a popular band manager. John also became an agent for music venues and owned a record business.

The display will be unveiled in January 2024 in Chorley Local History, Chorley Library. For more information please contact archives@lancashire.gov.uk



NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Have you got a story to tell or some research to share? We are looking for submissions that relate to the history of Lancashire, its people, or places – from ancient history to the present day. Find out more at: lancashire.gov.uk/archives

General Contributor Information

- Lancashire Archives will acknowledge all contributions received by authors. Articles must be submitted prior to the advertised copy deadline.
- A decision to publish will be at the discretion of Lancashire Archives; articles may be held on file for future publication.
- Lancashire Archives may edit your submission or include additional images or information; we are not able to pay contributor fees.

Submission Guidelines:

- Submissions should be sent in preference by email to archives@lancashire.gov.uk, or posted to Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane, Preston. The Archives will be unable to return content submitted by post unless by prior agreement.
- Articles should be between 500 and 1500 words. Longer articles can be submitted for consideration by prior agreement.
- Include suitable images, scanned at 300dpi as TIF files. Copyright and usage permissions should be provided for all images submitted.
- Include your name and contact details with your submission. Contact information will be held in compliance with Lancashire County Council's Privacy Notice available at www.lancashire.gov.uk

The copy deadline for submissions for the next edition is 1 March 2024.



**HAVE A WHEELIE
GOOD TIME...
AT LANCASHIRE
ARCHIVES &
LOCAL HISTORY!**

Find out more about the local history in your area
by getting in touch or visiting us at
Lancashire Archives!

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lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives**