

'e-Owls'



Contact us :

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Oldham & District Newsletter Archives : Read or download back copies [HERE](#)

July 2022

MLFHS - Oldham & District Branch Newsletter

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Branch News :

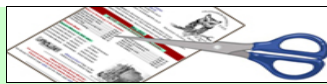
Branch Officers for 2022 -2023 :

Committee Member : Chairman : Linda Richardson
Committee Member : Treasurer : Gill Melton
Committee Member : Secretary : Joan Harrison
Committee Member : Newsletter : Sheila Goodyear
Committee Member : Webmistress : Sheila Goodyear

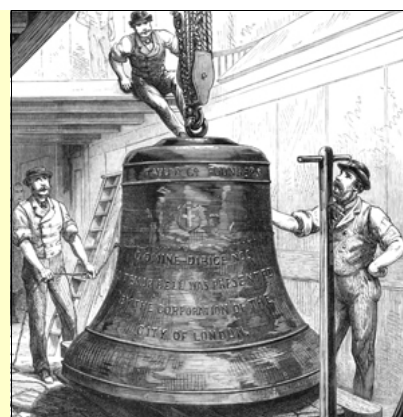
Links to the Website :



'Where to Find it'
On the Oldham & District
Website Pages



Newsletter **'Snippets' Page**
Find Articles, Transcriptions and
Gallery Images you missed



New Tenor Bell - St Paul's Cathedral
from, 'The Illustrated London News', 1878
(More in the Gallery)

Oldham & District Branch Meetings :

**For current information on all M&LFHS Meetings, and other public activities,
Please check on the Branch website pages for updated information.**

The Society Facebook page [HERE](#) and the Twitter page [HERE](#) will be updated frequently.

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### **Chairman's remarks :**

Hello and welcome to the July Newsletter.

I hope you are all enjoying the weather.

The Zoom aspect of our meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> June had to be cancelled because of unforeseen circumstances. Six people who had booked on Zoom actually turned up at the Library and joined the meeting. The Speaker was from the Greater Manchester Police Museum and her talk was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

After the meeting, questions were raised about whether we should continue with zoom or not. Apparently people feel happier with the Speaker standing in front of the audience talking to them, rather than talking to a computer screen. On the other hand we have to consider those people who supported us on Zoom during lockdown and have remained loyal now that we are back to "normal" meetings. We will have to try and find a solution to broadcasting Zoom and whether we might need a different technical set up. This will be up for discussion at our next committee meeting.

We would like to have your comments on this matter, please email me at the usual address. Enjoy reading the rest of the newsletter.

Best Wishes

Linda

Chairman, Oldham Branch

email me at < [chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk) >

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Editor's remarks.

Hi Everyone,

Firstly, I must apologise for that fact that the newsletter is shorter than the usual. Possibly a relief for some readers! I enjoy doing the transcriptions from old publications that I like to include but, this month, I have only been able to add one chapter to my on-going transcription of '*The Autobiography of a Manchester Cotton Manufacturer*' in the 'Mixed Bag'. Various unforeseen circumstances have limited the amount of time I have been able to spend on the newsletter or updating the website pages. Those same circumstances also prevented my being able to attend the Oldham Branch June Meeting and run the zoom element and, for that, I also apologise to the people who had registered for the talk online and were disappointed.

Sadly, again, we haven't received any contributions from our readers for the 'Mixed Bag'.

In the Gallery you can find some quite random pictures from the 1878 publications of '*The Illustrated London News*'.

Sheila

I am always very happy to receive articles, pictures etc., for the 'Mixed Bag' in the newsletter, copyright is always a tricky issue so do please make sure that you have the right to use any text or illustrations that you send! It is also helpful if you include mention of your source material.

You will retain copyright of any contributions that you send, whilst allowing MLFHS to re-use the material in an appropriate manner.

Editor reserves the right to edit any contributions before publication.

email me at : < Oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk >

Please note, regarding using the links to website pages or .pdf documents : if clicking on a link when the newsletter is viewed on the internet, without first downloading it onto the computer, the new page opens in the same window so the 'back button' has to be used to return to the newsletter.

Oldham & District Branch

Monthly Meetings

Happily, we are now planning to hold our monthly meetings as hybrids ... simultaneously on zoom and in the library. Over the past 18 months or so we have really appreciated the support that we have enjoyed both from local society members and those from further afield. However, in addition, we have also been able to welcome non-members with an interest in our programme, some of whom, gratifyingly, became members of the society as a result! Please continue to support the Branch, either in person at Oldham Library or on zoom if preferred.

Details, of the full programme of talks, are on the 'Meetings' page of the Branch website [HERE](#).

* Booking for an online talk remains free for everyone and is essential on [Eventbrite](#).

* No need to book if you attend in the library.

For attendance in person, in the library, members are free, non-members £3.

Wherever you live, Welcome!

Last Month's Meeting ... on zoom



Saturday,
11th June
at
2 pm



Greater Manchester Police Museum :

A dive into the archives of GMP Museum ... what we collect, why we collect it and how it is used now. Featuring case studies of some of our most unique items.

An illustrated talk given by Katie Henderson

Katie Henderson, from the Greater Manchester Police Museum, came to talk to us about the Police Museum and the history of policing in Manchester, Salford and the surrounding districts. Katie explained that the museum, which is on Newton Street, was originally a working police station until the 1970's. The station opened in 1879 and was extended in the 1890's. She gave us a virtual tour of the building, stopping in each of the rooms to tell us about the contents and displays in that room. It was like us actually walking through the building. When Robert Peel started the police force, the officers wore tailcoats, breeches and top hats. She explained to us the changes in the uniforms over the years and up to the present day. We were then shown pictures of the records kept for each member of the police force. These records contained the officer's personal details – height, eye colour, hair colour etc., together with any misdemeanours the officer may have been up to. Katie said the records for Oldham were some of the most comprehensive of all the records the museum holds. Some of the police admission records include photographs; Katie highlighted one record, of a police officer from the early 1900's, in which the photo showed a man of colour. Katie believes he was probably one of the first people of colour to join the police force in the country.

She went on to tell us about Clara Walkden, who was the first woman police officer to be given the powers of arrest in the North of England. Clara worked for the Oldham Police and she along with another woman in the South of England were the only women in the country able to arrest people.

Katie then showed us some of the methods of transport including horses and motor cycles, some of which are on display at the Museum.

We were then taken through to the cells which contained 2 wooden beds and a toilet, the flusher for which was on the outside of the cell wall so it couldn't be wrecked, broken or used as a weapon.

In busy periods up to 20 people could be crammed into one cell, although male and female prisoners were kept separate.

We then went through into the back yard of the building where the mortuary room was and which has since been demolished.

Finally we were taken through to the front desk where the sergeant would take details of the arrested person, book them in, and put them in the cells awaiting their journey to the Court. Katie said the museum has re-opened since the pandemic and some members of the audience asked if the records are accessible to the public and/or digitised. Katie said there are some electronic records which are searchable online, other records can be viewed at the museum. However, she advised the audience to contact the museum to make an appointment to view the records in person. Katie did state that any records under a 100 years old are not available to view, unless a death certificate could be provided, due to Data Protection Laws.

The virtual tour and talk were extremely interesting and everyone at the meeting enjoyed the whole afternoon.

Our many thanks to Katie Henderson for giving us such an interesting talk at our last meeting. The Museum itself is well worth a visit and we hope to invite Katie back next year to give us one of her other talks.

Newsletter editor's note ... This talk was originally planned as a hybrid talk but, unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances the zoom element had to be cancelled.

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**July Meeting ... hybrid, in Oldham Library and on zoom**



Saturday,  
9th July  
at  
2 pm



***The Area between Manchester Cathedral and Victoria Station***

The area between Manchester Cathedral and Victoria Station is the mediaeval heart of Manchester but largely unknown. There is a forgotten school, a lost river, the first site of Manchester Grammar School and a cemetery that refused to stay hidden.

An illustrated talk given by Geoffrey Scargill

Saturday 9th July, at 2pm

A hybrid meeting in the Performance Space at Oldham Library and on zoom.



- \* Online free booking, for all, for zoom link on [Eventbrite](#).
- \* No booking necessary for attendance in the library; members free, non-members £3.

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MLFHS Branches delivering their monthly meetings and talks

Anglo - Scots ... July Meeting

MLFHS, ANGLO-SCOTTISH BRANCH MEETING	Saturday, 2nd July at 2:30 pm	A Visit to 'Manchester Jewish Museum'
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Meet at Central Library at 1.30 pm to travel to Museum as a group.

Booking on [Eventbrite](#)

Anglo-Scottish Website Pages [HERE](#) for more information and booking details

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**Bolton ... July Meeting**

|                                              |                                            |                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MLFHS<br>Bolton Branch<br>Hybrid<br>Meetings | Wednesday,<br>6th<br>July<br>at<br>7:30 pm | <i>How can the Guild<br/>of One-Name<br/>Studies help me?<br/>given by<br/>Margaret Southgate</i> |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

A hybrid Meeting on zoom and at  
Bolton Golf Club, Lostock Park, Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL6 4AJ

all bookings on [Eventbrite](#)

**Bolton Website Pages** [HERE](#) for more information and booking details.

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MLFHS updates

Manchester ... July Meetings

MLFHS aka Manchester Ancestors	Wednesday, 20th July at 10:30 am	'Turnpikes and Maps in Manchester' given by Paul Hindle
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bookings on [Eventbrite](#)

At Manchester Central Library.

Keep an eye on the MLFHS Events Page or Eventbrite Bookings page, as some meetings may be added at short notice.

MLFHS Manchester, Website Events Page [HERE](#)

MLFHS Manchester, Eventbrite Bookings [HERE](#)

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**MLFHS Online Bookshop:** [HERE](#).

with CDs, Downloads, Maps, Registers, Local Interest Books, More General Publications, Miscellaneous Items with MLFHS Logo etc., and Offers.

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MLFHS Manchester & Branch e-Newsletters

MLFHS Manchester and each of the MLFHS branches publish a monthly e-newsletter which provides useful news items and articles etc. The e-newsletters are free and available to both members and non-members of MLFHS Society. Members receive the Manchester newsletter automatically and non-members can browse the archive and download any they wish. You can sign up to receive the Branches' newsletter links monthly, by following the links, below.

To sign-up, for a Branch newsletter, to be emailed each month, simply click the appropriate link below and complete the short form on the e-newsletter page, where you will also find copies of all past issues to browse.

[MLFHS](#) (Manchester)

[Bolton](#)

[Oldham](#)

[Anglo-Scottish](#)

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**MLFHS Updates to the Great Database** (located in the Members' area of the Website)

**Emails to the Members' forum**, from John Marsden (webmaster), listing the updates.

\* I have just uploaded another 575 references to the Godfrey Map Index.

These cover maps:

Boothstown & Astley Green 1904

Radcliffe 1927

Radcliffe North 1908

Ainsworth 1908

Bradshaw 1908

Thanks to John Gartside for these additions, which bring the total number of streets and buildings in the index up to 23,016.

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* I have just added a further 1,598 burials for St. Stephen, Audenshaw 1873-1884 to the Great Database.

Thanks to Mark Harrey for this addition. I have just added a further 1,598 burials for St. Stephen, Audenshaw 1873-1884 to the Great Database.

Thanks to Mark Harrey for this addition.

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\* I have just added 3,069 references from the Manchester Mercury for 1823 and 1824 (BMDs) and inquest reports from the Manchester Courier 1836-1840 to the Great Database.

Transcribed by Linda Bailey, Chris Hall and Chris Norcross.

If you are interested in taking part in this work (which is based on the Lancashire Libraries online newspaper collection) then contact me direct and I will put you in touch.

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* Another addition to the Great Database.

Baptisms at Bolton, Victoria Hall (Wes Meth) 1897-1965.

Transcribed by members of Bolton & District FHS (1,194 records)
Thanks to Graham Holt and his team for these.

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\* Royal Manchester School for the Deaf & Dumb

Another volume of admission forms to the school have been completed and added to the Great Database. These are for the period 1882-1890 and have been indexed by Jim Chadwick and his team (Marie Collier, Shirley King, Janet Moores, Chris Norcross), to whom thanks are due.

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* I have just added a further 633 street and building references to the Godfrey map Index. These are for maps:

Swinton Park 1907

Davyhulme 1894

Barton upon Irwell 1888

Stand & Outwood Gate 1907

Stoneclough 1907

Thanks are due to Chris Willis for this substantial expansion of the index.

There are still many maps to be indexed. If you have one of the maps which has not yet been added to the index and would be prepared to spend a couple of hours indexing the street and building names, I will be pleased to hear from you and tell you how to go about it.

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\* I have just added a small data set to The Great Database:

An index to names appearing in the account book of the Turton Overseers of the Poor.

Transcribed by Stephen Tonge of Bolton & District FHS. (288 records)

The index does not contain a lot of information, but may help those with ancestors in Turton.

Thanks to Stephen Tonge for this transcription.

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* I have just added another 1,591 burials to the Great Database. These are for Audenshaw, St. Stephen's 1884-1898.

Thanks to Mark Harrey for this addition.

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\* I have just added 1,860 burials for Ardwick, St. Thomas 1786-1801.

Thanks to Susan Mayall for this addition.

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Meetings and Talks at other Societies &/or Venues

Please note ...

Please check society/group websites or organisers for updated information

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**Oldham Historical Research Group: ... Meetings continue on zoom**



Wednesday  
13th  
July  
at  
7 pm

Please note, 2nd Wednesday instead of usual 3rd.



## "Oldham RLFC - Then and Now"

a free, illustrated presentation, on zoom, given by Michael Turner.  
Everyone welcome ... More details and free booking on Eventbrite [HERE](#)  
Your support for our meetings is appreciated and, if you would like more information, please email me at < pixnet.sg@gmail.com >.  
Website [HERE](#)

### **Saddleworth Historical Society Saturday 16th July at 2pm**

**The 'Annual Bernard Barnes Memorial Lecture',  
'Why the Pennines played a Leading Role in the Industrial Revolution.'**

an illustrated presentation given by Dr. Stephen Counce  
at the Saddleworth Museum, Art Gallery, High Street, Uppermill.  
Society members free but a charge to non-members on the door of £3.  
All welcome. Refreshments available.

Please note that there is no meeting in August.

Website [HERE](#)

**Saddleworth Civic Trust** has no meeting or event planned in July or August 2022.

#### **For both societies :**

Please note that if there is any upturn in the state of the ongoing Covid Pandemic, any or all of these meetings might be cancelled. Members of each Society should check with any Committee member, at the Museum office, if in doubt. You may be asked to wear a mask.

## **SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

### **GUIDED WALKS, SUMMER 2022 (Series 9 Rev.1)**

All walks are led by Alan Schofield and for further detailed information please contact him on 0161 338 6555.

**Wednesday 6th July.** Meet at 1.30pm at public car park at Waterworks Road, Castleshaw, off A62, Delph, Postcode OL3 5LZ. Walk is entitled " *Castleshaw Roman Forts & Cistercian Grange & recent excavations at the Roman Forts.*" Distance up to a mile.

**Wednesday 13th July.** Meet at 2pm outside Saddleworth Museum, Uppermill. Walk entitled " *Walls can Talk.*" This is a walk around centre of Uppermill to uncover its story from Corn Mill to Wool & Cotton Empires. Distance one mile.

**Wednesday 27th July.** Meet 1.30pm at Wool Road Basin Car Park, Dobcross. Postcode OL3 5NS. A one mile walk at slower pace entitled " *When Wool Road was First.*" To discover the story of this once important centre of industrial, social & transport development with several Saddleworth firsts.

For contact details, a list of the walks and other details, view or download the .pdf programme [HERE](#)

**Library Events & Gallery talks at Gallery Oldham; Curator talks** [HERE](#)  
on [Eventbrite](#) and [Instagram](#)

### **Family History Society of Cheshire : Tameside Group meeting.**

See their website [HERE](#)



## **Tameside History Club :**

Meetings on zoom.

Website and programme

&

## **Tameside Local Studies and Archives - Regular Sessions and Events**

Website and programme [HERE](#)

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Regional Heritage Centre :

Website [HERE](#)

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### **'A Mixed Bag'**

***'Autobiography Of A Manchester Cotton Manufacturer : Or Thirty Years' Experience Of Manchester '***, pub. 1887.

Originally published anonymously, later research showed that it was written by Henry S. Gibbs. The reviewer had given it 5 stars, as had others who had read it.

The author used pseudonyms throughout ... actual names, where discovered, in the footnotes.

#### **Serialised in the newsletters :**

The earlier chapters and an introduction can be read in previous months' newsletters, starting in October, and downloadable [HERE](#)

#### **Transcript: Chapter XIV**

#### **GOOD TRADE IN DOMESTICS - SOME LADY FRIENDS**

TUMBLETON returned from his three months' visit to the hydropathic establishment. I had been warned by those who knew him better than I did that he would come back with such increased powers of body and mind that our little office, the mill, even Manchester itself, would be too small for him. My surprise therefore was not a little on his reappearance at the office when I beheld him in all respects more quiet and dignified than I had yet seen. His complexion had become clear, and he was reduced in size to almost elegant proportions, and he assured me the experience of the three previous months though he would not wish to repeat it, had been highly satisfactory.

I had read so much of the process in his letters that I dreaded a *viva voce* repetition of it, and hastened from his presence with a sense of horror at the time before he would leave off describing and enlarging, if he once began the subject which was uppermost in his mind. He soon found listeners, patient or otherwise, to hearken to the recital of his late exploits in the baths, and for some months pack-sheets and douches were the theme of his conversation to the exclusion of looms and theology. His expression of pity for those who could not afford either time or money necessary for a similar visit was only equalled

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by his astonishment at the ignorance and prejudice of those who might, if they would, avail themselves of a like advantage. To my utter astonishment, and probably his own, very shortly after his return he was laid up with a severe cold, on his recovery from which hydropathy was less spoken of, and in time fell out of notice.

Our looms were very old ones, and according to the annual deduction for depreciation should have had only a nominal value when I joined Tumbleton. They were, however, taken at a pretty high valuation, which was all the worse for me and the better for Tumbleton. Notwithstanding their too high assessment they must inevitably come out and make place for others of more modern construction, otherwise we shall be out of the race. After the process of removing and

replenishing, which occupied much time in its completion, we went ahead. Tumbleton and Co. (I was the Co.), were manufacturers of a cloth called by the name of Domestics by the trade. Our cloth was received with favour, and as competition was not severely keen we realized good prices and made fair profits. Up to the time of my joining the firm three varieties of cloth only had been made, and these had now fallen into neglect. It was needful, therefore, to start afresh with a somewhat new fabric, and one which was likely to be not only popular but remunerative. For this object it became necessary to discard many of the old spinners who supplied us, and to use yarns made by men of a higher class. All this was effected with good results, and an active and healthy business followed. For a time Tumbleton was

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shocked with the innovations I had made, but he had the sagacity, whilst urging great caution, to abstain from any interference to which he was entitled, but wisely refrained from exercising. I never knew for what purpose our cloth, now in good demand, was applied. We supplied only the Manchester merchants, many of whom shipped them to Portugal, and others to the Brazils and South America. The home-trade houses, which took the largest quantity, supplied them to London and provincial wholesale houses, whilst a few Irishmen from Dublin and Cork came over periodically and bought from us by stealth, for the Manchester firms displayed a vast amount of zeal in their efforts to exclude those outside of the city from buying direct from the maker. I once found myself in hot collision with our chief customer on this subject.

I met an old Bristol friend in the city. He was one of those merchants from whom I had vainly solicited business for dear old John Thornton in the early days. I had made a customer of him at last, and he regularly called upon me when he visited Manchester. When I had told him all about the new firm and our progress he requested to be supplied with a few bales of our goods, and business ensued for a time until it became known by an accident that we were supplying an outsider. The secret would have been kept for some time longer but for an inquisitive youth who had been sent by his employer to our office to inquire after goods. He saw an addressed empty envelope on the desk, the handwriting on which he recognized as that of my old friend, and informed his

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master of the circumstance. This gentleman at our next interview threatened me with his dire vengeance unless I closed the account immediately. It had to be closed accordingly, but I ever regarded the act as a mean operation of which I was heartily ashamed.

Tumbleton was happy. In the matter of business he had little to do; indeed, he had a time of leisure never before known to him, and he availed himself of all the advantages it afforded. He re-visited Blackpool, making prolonged stays at his favourite hotel. He occasionally preached a sermon in some benighted outskirt of the city, and now and then he ventured to expound in the city itself. He attended any lecture he could hear on hygienic subjects, and especially any dealing with the human epidermis from a hydropathist's point of view, as also an occasional philosophical investigation of the atmosphere. These were subjects of which he never wearied, and yet, so strange and inexplicable is human inconsistency, he never took a morning bath when away from the "establishment," and seemed to delight in the atmosphere of a room with windows closed, unventilated, and wherein few besides himself could breathe with any comfort. He made also long visits to Bakewell, Buxton, and other parts of Derbyshire; and at Matlock he made the discovery of another hydropathic establishment from which he thought he might derive yet more advantage than that in Malvern.

But presently he felt the want of occupation. I had left him nothing to do; moreover I had

considerably increased his income. He began to

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think that the old house in which he had resided for so many years hardly accorded with the dignity of one who was at the head of our distinguished firm. The discovery of this incongruity resulted in his bidding adieu to the old home with all its associations; selling by auction the old-fashioned furniture, notwithstanding it had answered its purpose "well enough for him;" but it was neither modern nor in keeping with the imposing residence on which he had fixed his heart, and so everything was disposed of and the new dwelling provided with furniture and fittings to correspond with its owner's improved ideas. On my last visit to him at the old domicile, I suggested the sense of sadness with which he might be reasonably impressed, in the contemplation of leaving what had been his home for so many years. To my surprise he was seriously affected by my remark, and observed with some pathos, the circumstance, which he could not dismiss from his mind, of the many blessings of health and prosperity he had enjoyed there. He seemed to be conscious of having exposed himself to the charge of ambition, which he not only deprecated, but he also expressed sorrow at leaving the old home, and no pleasure in the prospect of entering the new one. "I know," said he, "what I have passed through in this house, but how can I tell what is before me in the other?" Any person might make a similar remark without eliciting a contradiction, but he evidently had some misgivings as to the future of his household.

Mr. Tumbleton had not been installed many months in his handsome newly-furnished residence

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(I do not think he had been there a year - I write from memory) before he was overtaken with a great domestic bereavement. Mrs. Tumbleton died somewhat suddenly. The shock was trying to him, but he bore up bravely. His wife was an amiable woman, but lacking the individuality of character in which her husband abounded. I never gathered from her conversation that after their removal to the new residence her happiness was increased in proportion to the additional responsibility attendant upon the necessity of three or four servants, when formerly one only was required.

Amongst the many friendships formed at the house of Mrs. Alison, those of three especially retain a firm hold on my memory. Two of Mrs. Alison's intimate friends were sisters and widowed ladies; they lived together in a pretty house not more than ten minutes' walk from my room. Mrs. Cowper\* the elder of the two, and Mrs. Alison, had been schoolfellows when they were children, and as each of them was not far distant from the span of "threescore years and ten," their friendship must have been of an enduring kind.

Mrs. Gower\*\*, the younger sister, was many years her junior. When I first knew them, Mrs. Airlie\*\*\*, their mamma, was alive, and resided with her two daughters; and at this period she had reached her eighty-third year, and with her faculties unimpaired. She was a majestic old lady, and always received me as an empress might welcome a friend. How I enjoyed, after the day's turmoil, to find myself knocking at the door of their hospitable

\* Cowper    \*\* Gore    \*\*\* Allen

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establishment, which was generally opened to me by an old man-servant, who was somewhat younger than his aged mistress. He had then, he told me, been in her service for fifty years, and of course would remain in it whilst life lasted. "Would I come in? The young ladies and the mistress are all at home."

The family had been in affluent circumstances, but I did not know them in those better days. I was pleased to know them now. I generally found them in the same room; mamma sitting in her

high-backed chair, with her inevitable book, which was generally the latest novel. The calmness and serenity of the room depended on the absence or otherwise of the younger sister, for she was the active and demonstrative member of the household; whilst Mrs. Cowper was quiet and reflective, and guided all with her rare judgment and intelligence. The welcome was equal from the three, though manifested in accordance with their separate natures. The fine old lady's grasp of the hand, which I regarded as equivalent to being raised to the peerage, was not more grateful to me than Mrs. Cowper's quiet but unmistakable warmth, or Mrs. Gower's more demonstrative greeting. After my admission to this little circle, it is not a matter for astonishment that my bachelor apartments, with its pleasant surroundings, became somewhat neglected.

Mrs. Cowper was exceptionally accomplished and clever. There was scarcely a subject upon which she could not give an intelligent opinion - indeed, so varied was her knowledge that young folks regarded her as a locomotive encyclopaedia, and as

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such she was frequently resorted to for information upon almost every conceivable subject. For some years I found myself spending evenings twice or thrice weekly in the atmosphere of the unique little circle, when very unexpectedly our hearts were wellnigh broken by a sudden and alarming illness with which Mrs. Cowper was overtaken. On my morning walk to the house to make inquiry, I was met by Mr. Schwartz, a mutual friend, who was returning from a similar errand, and from him heard, in sobbing accents, the doctor had pronounced the fatal words, "No hope!" I hurried on, and found my dear friend lying on her couch, calm and sweet, notwithstanding the intense suffering through which she had passed the previous night, but which had now ceased. Her aged mother was sitting by her side, waiting, in submission, the dreaded result, whilst active Mrs. Gower, with swollen eyes and haggard face, through constant watching, was busily engaged in such duties as the occasion necessitated, and waiting for the worst. Mrs. Cowper affectionately embraced me in their presence, and spoke in welcome words of her approaching end. I blessed her, and bade her adieu. During the day I obtained no tidings of her condition. I had to spend the evening with the Tumbletons, who observed my depression, and on leaving them Mrs. T. told me to "keep up," and remarked that she had more than once known people to recover who had been "given up" by the doctor. It proved so in this instance. On calling at Mrs. Airlie's house late that evening, Mrs. Gower turned a day's sorrow into a night's joy by the wonderful news she gave me of her

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sister, who had rallied, and Dr. W. had stated she would recover.

It was, indeed, a wonderful recovery, and the case received notice in an ensuing number of one of the medical journals. I hastened to carry the joyful news to another friend, who belonged to Mrs. Alison's favoured circle, and at whose house I had met him. Robert Frere\* lived in the neighbourhood, and I was soon at his house. Robert was one of those warm-hearted men, with an admixture of Scotch and Irish blood flowing through his veins, whose acquaintance, when formed, one feels instinctively must last for all time. His wife, who had delicate health, was a ward of the late

Mr. Alison, and in her sitting-room hung a portrait of the old gentleman, which was a speaking likeness, and had a life-like aspect - so much so that I thought it could not fail to have a regulating effect upon all her actions, had she been inclined to waywardness. She was delicate, however, and it was evident her life would not be an extended one. Nevertheless, she was so watched and nursed and cared for by her husband's almost woman-like fidelity that her life was prolonged and her cheerfulness sustained to the last. My good news excited their liveliest interest, and the evening was spent in landing and enumerating the many good qualities of the now convalescent patient. Mrs. Cowper's restoration was gradual and satisfactory. I spent an

hour or two every available evening in her company, reading books and amusing her as I best could, in reciting to her the

news and gossip of the day, and playing her favourite melodies on her old pianoforte. It was during

\* Robert Fraser

#### **p.158**

these occasions that the fine character she possessed impressed my mind. Her complete recovery was followed by the serious illness of her aged parent, whose loss we soon had to mourn. She departed at a greatly advanced age, with her faculties

unclouded to the last. At the house of Robert, I met his wife's sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wentworth\* whose acquaintance was a feature in my Manchester existence.

Whether in their own home, to which I frequently resorted, or that of their near relatives, where I often met them, I found them always the same - genial and true-hearted.

For many years I found a welcome at the house of either of the brothers-in-law, and at times I could have imagined myself to belong to them by nearer ties than friendship. Either of these two men I could almost bring myself to believe was my own brother, so open, so free, and well-intentioned was every incident that transpired between us during our long, uninterrupted friendship. Shall I ever meet the like again, now that I am in a strange and far-distant land? The answer is inevitable and unmistakable, Never! Of the long list of disappointments which greets one after bidding adieu to the native shores, which means bidding adieu to everything save memory, none exceeds that of the inability to replace one solitary friend. When Robert Frere, who was the earlier friend by a few days only, had experienced the bereavement which for a long time seemed inevitable, our friendship assumed a yet deeper form, which was manifested by a more frequent inter- change of visits, though, as a rule, I was the

\* Whitworth

#### **p.159**

visitor. His warehouse lay in my route from the mill to the Exchange, and I seldom or never passed it without showing him I was conscious of his whereabouts by making my appearance at his office door. Often at night, when about to retire, I have heard a tap at my window, when dear old Robert would present himself, with the request that I would un-slipper and re-boot myself, and, armed with weed and "churchwarden," accompany him to his solitary home. On such occasions I remained with him until long after the dawn of daylight, returning to my rooms when the mill chimneys, seen in the distance, were giving indication of preparations for the coming day.

It was not long before the surviving sister followed her relative, and my friend Wentworth, too, became a widower. His grief was quiet but intense, and the more so, as I think it was not apparent her end was so near. The sisters were not long undivided.

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From the e-Postbag

From our chairman, Linda ...

We have received a request from one of our members who lives in West Sussex.

He is looking for descendants of the Hoddy, Mortimer and Widdop families who live, or lived in Oldham with links to Suffolk. If you are researching the same families or you have any information which might assist, he is willing to share information with you.

If you can help please contact me by email at chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk

Thank you

A short selection of entries from the MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE [HERE](#) ...

since the last newsletter :

* Who doesn't remember the Ice Cream Van from their childhood? Find out about about the families that came from Italy.

[HERE](#)

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\* National Fairground and Circus Archive

[HERE](#)

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* Mary Day: Pardoning of a Poisoner Can anyone help us finish our story ... ?

[HERE](#)

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\* Association of Genealogists & Researchers in Archives. Listen to the whole second series of our Ask AGRA podcasts

[HERE](#)

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* Film producer Hopwood DePree swapped LA for Rochdale to save his family's ancient ancestral home.

[HERE](#)

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\* Phrases and sayings – from prison history

[HERE](#)

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* The History of the Biscuit : From Roman Rusk to Victorian Petits Fours

[HERE](#)

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\* The forgotten story of the husband and wife who helped build Wythenshawe and gave their name to Simonsway

[HERE](#)

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* How bed bugs were dealt with in the Georgian era

[HERE](#)

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\* Looking at the police career of an ancestor. Police records allied with newspaper reports give a fascinating insight into the life of a Victorian policeman.

[HERE](#)

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* MP of the Month: the untimely death of James Platt, MP for Oldham (1823-57)

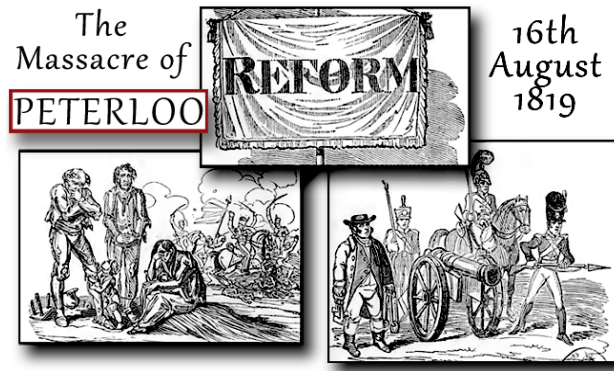
[HERE](#)

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\* For much more, visit the MLFHS Facebook Page : [HERE](#)

And [HERE](#) is the link to the MLFHS Twitter page.

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Visit the website for **The Peterloo Project** with particular reference to Oldham, people, accounts, life at the time and more ... at [Peterloo-Manchester](#)

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Although the long-anticipated Bi-Centenary has come and gone, there are some Peterloo websites still active with history, news, photos and reports.

You can make searches on websites such as :

**Manchester Histories - Peterloo 1819** ... Manchester Histories have created a website which publicises all that is happening, or has happened, around the region.

Visit their website [HERE](#)

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Need Help!

Oldham Local Studies and Archives is open

Our opening hours are as follows:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 10am-5pm; Tuesday 10am-2pm; Saturday 10am-4pm.

Although it will not be essential to book your place as has been the case over the last few months, we encourage you to consider booking in advance as this enables us to get everything ready in time for your visit, particularly if you wish to view archives. To order please visit:

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/forms/form/891/en/local_archives_document_order_form

If you wish to use PCs to access family history websites or to use microfilm readers, we advise you to book a place by contacting us at:

archives@oldham.gov.uk or telephone 0161 770 4654.

Local Studies and Archives at 84 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DN,

Archives are unique, original documents created in the course of everyday activities. Oldham's date from 1597 and cover an enormous range of subjects and activities :

- Hospital records
- Poor Law Union records
- Coroners Court records
- Local Authority records including Chadderton, Crompton, Failsworth, Lees, Oldham, Royton and Saddleworth
- Schools and education records
- Records for statutory bodies like the police force
- Church and religious records
- Business records
- Solicitors and estate agents records
- Trade unions and associations records

- Co-operative Society records
- Sports, entertainment and leisure records
- Personal, family and property records
- Society and Association records
- Records of Oldham communities

There is no charge to look at archival records although you would need to bring proof of your name and address (e.g. your driving licence) to do so.

Most archives can be produced immediately, with no advance booking required. However, some archives are stored off-site, in which case at least 2 days' notice is required in order to see them.

Other archives may be closed due to their fragile condition, or because they contain confidential information.

[Oldham Council Heritage Collections](#)

There are regularly changing displays in the Local Studies Library.

[Opening hours](#) and contact details.

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## Website Links

### Other Society Websites

Catholic Family History Society – [www.catholicfhs.co.uk](http://www.catholicfhs.co.uk)

Cheshire Local History Association – [www.cheshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.cheshirehistory.org.uk)

Chadderton Historical Society (archived website) – [www.chadderton-historical-society.org.uk](http://www.chadderton-historical-society.org.uk)

Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society - <https://www.lfhhs.org.uk/home.php>

Lancashire Local History Federation – [www.lancashirehistory.org](http://www.lancashirehistory.org)

Liverpool and South West Lancashire FHS – [www.lswlfhs.org.uk](http://www.lswlfhs.org.uk)

Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society – [www.mrias.co.uk](http://www.mrias.co.uk)

Oldham Historical Research Group – [www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg](http://www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg)

Peterloo - [Peterloo-Manchester](#)

Ranulf Higden Society (Latin transcription) - [Ranulf Higden Soc.](#)

Royton Local History Society – [www.rlhs.co.uk](http://www.rlhs.co.uk)

Saddleworth Historical Society – [www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk](http://www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk)

Tameside Local History Forum - [www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk](http://www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk)

Tameside Local & Family History - <http://tamesidefamilyhistory.co.uk/contents.htm>

The Victorian Society - [Manchester Regional Website](#)

### Some Useful Sites

GENUKI - [Lancashire](#)

Free BMD - [Search](#)

[National Library of Scotland](#) - Free to view, historic, zoomable maps of UK :

1891 - Oldham and locality [HERE](#)

Online Parish Clerk Project : Lancashire - [HERE](#)

British Association for Local History - [HERE](#)

and for their back issue journal downloads - [HERE](#)

Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, website, [HERE](#)

and for their back issue journal downloads, website, [HERE](#)

Internet Archive ... The Internet Archive offers over **24,000,000** freely downloadable books and texts. [HERE](#) There is also a collection of 1.3 million modern eBooks that may be borrowed by anyone with a free archive.org account.

Made in Greater Manchester (MIGM) [HERE](#) and Research guide [HERE](#)

Historical Maps of parish boundaries [HERE](#)

Regiments & Corps of the British Army (Wayback machine) [HERE](#)

Special Collections on Find My Past [HERE](#)

FmyP - The Manchester Collection [HERE](#)

Goad fire insurance maps of Manchester [HERE](#)

Cheshire Parish Register Project [HERE](#)

### Some Local Archives

Barnsley Museum & Discovery Centre – [www.experience-barnsley.com](http://www.experience-barnsley.com)

Birkenhead – [Local & Family History](#)

Bury – [www.bury.gov.uk/archives](http://www.bury.gov.uk/archives)

Chester - [Cheshire Archives & Local Studies](#) (linked from Discovery at the National Archives)

Derbyshire - [Local & Family History](#)

Leeds - [Leeds Local and Family History](#)

Liverpool Archives and Family History – <https://liverpool.gov.uk/archives>

Manchester - [Archives & Local History](#)

Oldham - [Local Studies & Archives](#)

Oldham - [Oldham Council Heritage Collections](#)

Preston – [www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives)

Stockport – [www.stockport.gov.uk/heritage-library-archives](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/heritage-library-archives)

Tameside Local Studies and Archives - <https://www.tameside.gov.uk/archives>

York – [www.york.ac.uk/borthwick](http://www.york.ac.uk/borthwick)

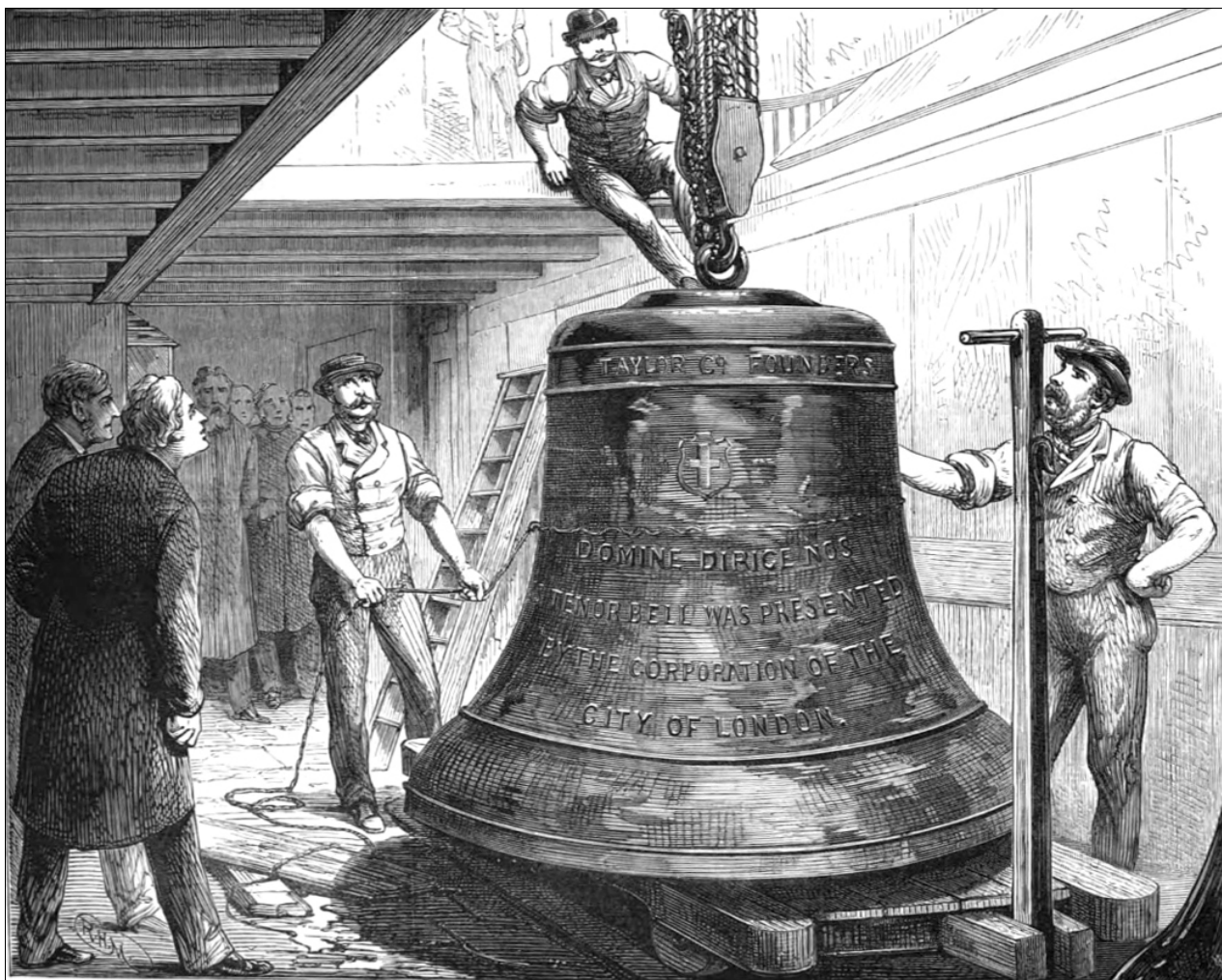


### For the Gallery

#### *The Illustrated London News*

Engravings taken from Vol. LXXIII July to December 1878.

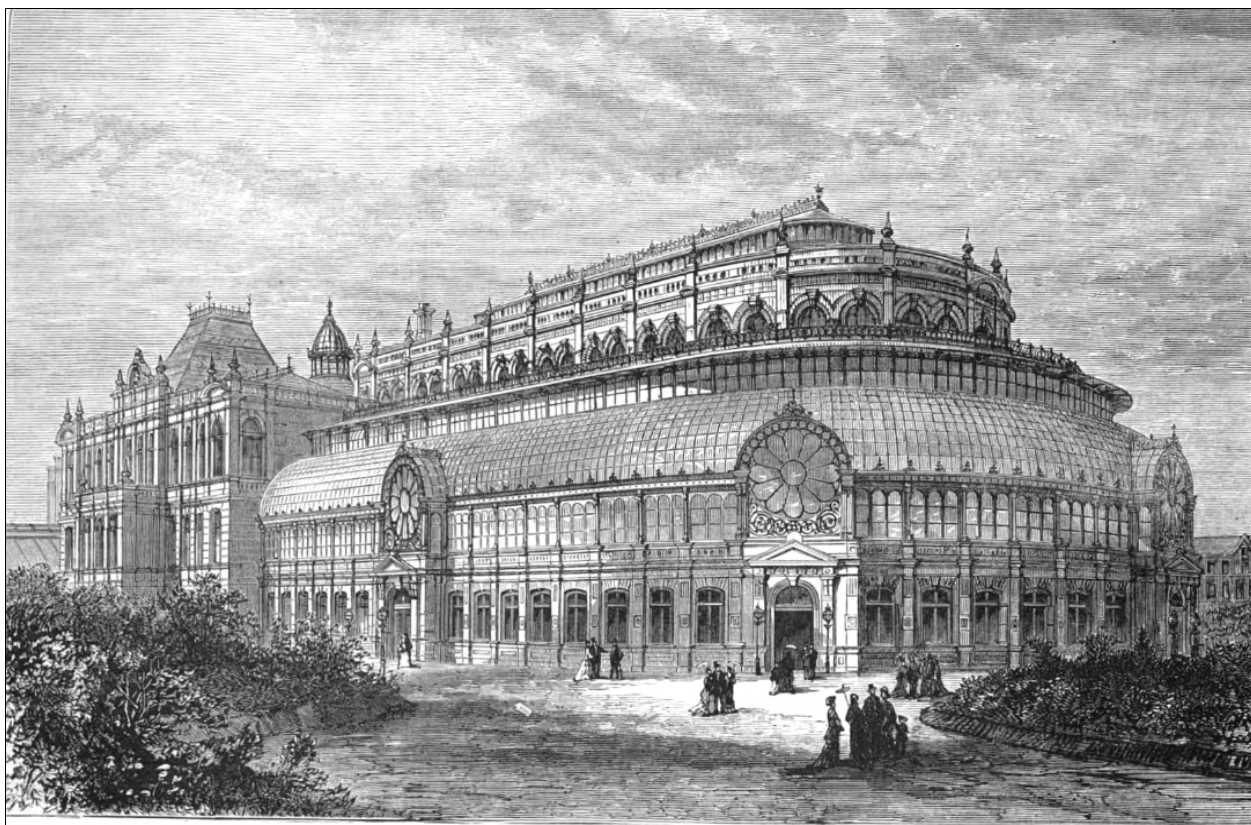
Click on the link [HERE](#) to look at the full publication and read the reports.



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NEW PEAL OF BELLS FOR ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: THE TENOR BELL, PRESENTED BY THE CITY CORPORATION.

*New Peal of Bells for St. Paul's Cathedral : The Tenor Bell*



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THE WINTER GARDENS AND AQUARIUM AT BLACKPOOL, LANCASHIRE.

*Winter Gardens & Aquarium at Blackpool*

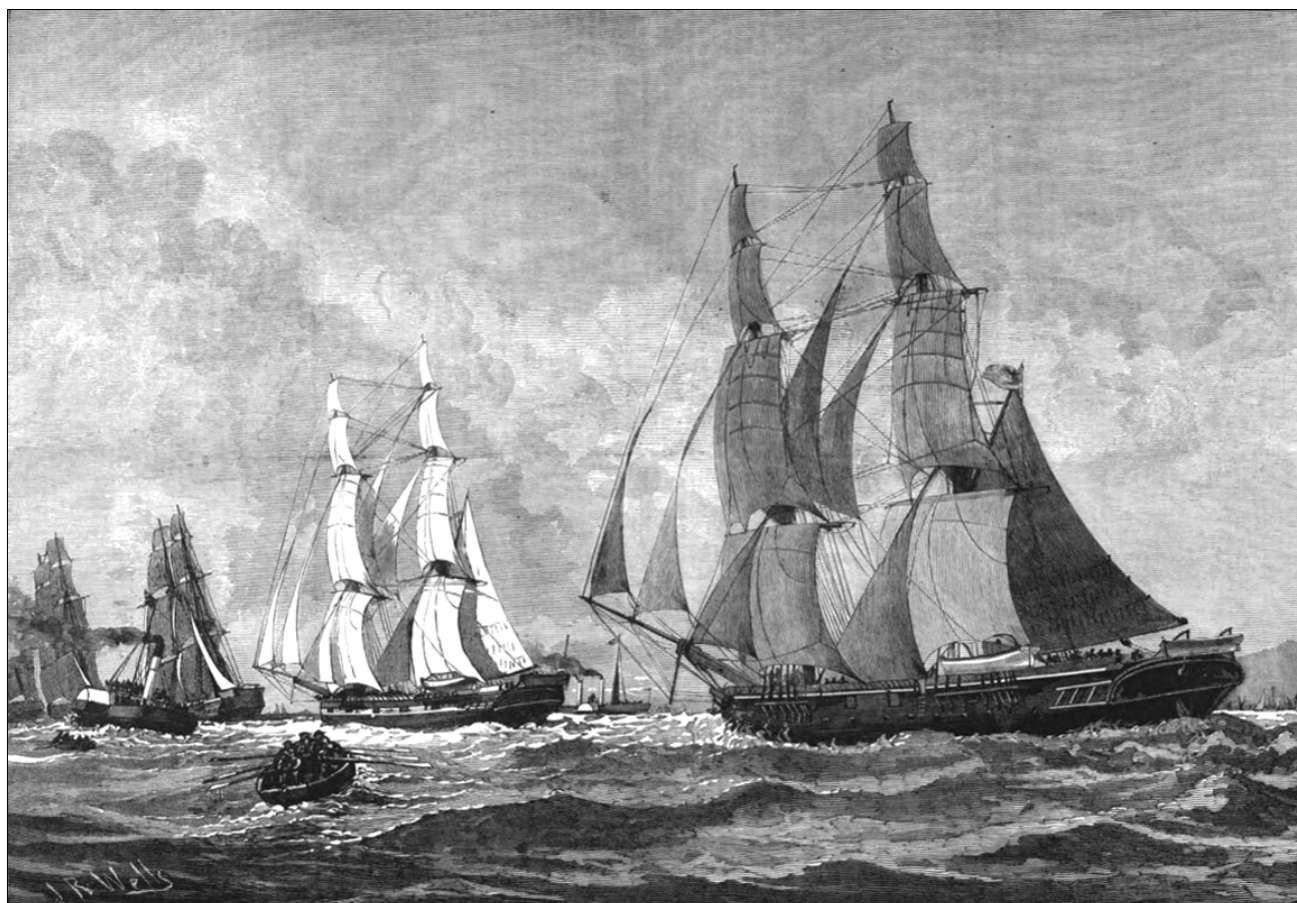




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PARIS EXHIBITION: THE ENGLISH HOUSES IN THE AVENUE OF NATIONS.

*Paris Exhibition : the English Houses in the Avenue of Nations*



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THE TRAINING-BRIGS RACE AT THE PLYMOUTH REGATTA.

*The Training-Brigs Race at the Plymouth Regatta*