

'e-Owls'



Contact us :

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

February 2023

MLFHS - Oldham & District Branch Newsletter

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Branch Information & News :

Branch Officers for 2022 -2023 :

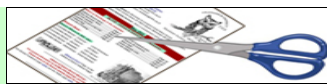
Committee Member : Chairman :	Linda Richardson
Committee Member : Treasurer :	Gill Melton
Committee Member : Secretary :	Joan Harrison
Committee Member : Newsletter :	Sheila Goodyear
Committee Member : Webmistress :	Sheila Goodyear

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



February, from:
Très riches heures du Duc de Berry

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 February newsletter.

Our January meeting went down a storm and a good discussion was had afterwards. Chris Helme, our Speaker, took us down memory lane from just after WW2 up to around the 1970's and reminded us of school days, bath nights, your first job, courting, putting things towards your "bottom drawer" and recalling some of the sayings our mothers and grandparents used to say to us, for example "If you fall out of that tree and break your legs, don't come running to me". Our February meeting is also on Zoom. Details are on the website and tickets are freely available on Eventbrite.

The Branch is still looking to recruit volunteers to help out. Maybe you could give a bit of your time to helping out at the meetings or research for projects. Please contact me if you are interested in doing some volunteering for our Branch.

Enjoy reading the rest of the newsletter.

Best Wishes

Linda Richardson

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,

We're now into the New Year of 2023 and the celebrations at Christmas and New Year have become distant memories! I'm not in the habit of making New Year Resolutions so have no broken ones to admit to having broken!

In the Mixed Bag we have more pages from of *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men* (3rd series) by T. Swindells, pub. 1907. The two pictures which accompany those chapters are in the Gallery. We also continue with Frank Pogson's, '*A Ginnet To Life*'.

Oldham & District kicked off the 2023 programme of Branch meetings with '*How We Used To Live*' an illustrated talk given by Chris Helme which was great ... more about it in the Branch meetings section.

Everyone must have been very busy recently as, sadly, there is nothing to report from the e-Postbag.

Searching for something quite different, I inadvertently came across the website [Huddersfield exposed](#) which has quite a lot of material relevant for Saddleworth. This website is well worth exploring. The item that caught my attention was a transcription about 'tenters' transcribed from the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 1938. I have photos of the 'tenters' near 'Heights' but now I've learned a little bit more about them. I've included the photo I have, with the map and the transcription, in the Gallery.

Wishing a happy and peaceful 2023 for everyone,

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.

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## Oldham & District Branch

### Monthly Meetings

#### Last Month's Meeting

#### January Meeting



Saturday,  
14th Jan.  
at  
2 pm



#### 'How We Used To Live'

An illustrated talk given by Chris Helme

*"This is a PowerPoint presentation with my running commentary that will take the audience from the day they were born ..."*

February's meeting was only on zoom and 60 had signed up to attend. The weather in Oldham was vile and I, for one, was really glad we didn't have to trek to Oldham Library for the talk. I don't suppose we should complain too much, though, as one attendee in Canada said that it was -17°, where she was, with deep snow!

We have welcomed Chris Helme as a speaker, in the past, so we knew we would also enjoy this talk. The keynote was humour! What a joyous trip down 'memory lane', for us all, from the years following WW2 to the time when we left school and found employment and might have married!

We visited the scenes, where we could have been born, whether in hospital or at home and how our names might have been chosen. Perhaps they were after a favourite film star, celebrity, a football team or even its anthem! There were pictures of bath time, in the kitchen sink or in a tin bath.

Next we visited the outside 'loo' with its squares of newspaper, hanging on a string, to be used for toilet paper; and then we were reminded of the rolls of Izal ... nothing like the soft paper of today! Chris's family had another use for it ... as tracing paper! One roll in the 'loo' and one in the toy box!

We were reminded of the door-to-door salesmen, the ice-cream van and the rag-and-bone man... Chris's picture was of him handing out balloons or goldfish. My own recollection is of him with a donkey and cart, trading 'donkey stones' for our own old things.

Still in the streets and we saw ourselves, as children, playing football, hide-and-seek or skipping and, again, our own memories came bubbling to the surface.

Then we were in the classroom; it was tightly packed with children sitting in long rows, at their little wooden desks (with lift-up lids and inkwells). The stories were of school dinners and monitors. There we saw the classroom pet hamster, that everyone wanted to take home and look after for the summer holidays. Those long weeks with mum terrified that it would suddenly

die whilst in her care!

Before the holidays, though, there might have been sports day with the sack race, egg and spoon, 3-legged and wheelbarrow races. Chris had tips on how to make sure you were the winner!

Summer holidays beckoned for some ... perhaps in a caravan or at a Butlin's Holiday Camp where dad might take part in a 'knobbly knees' competition. No such things as 'holiday clothes'; it was jacket, shirt and tie, trousers, shoes and socks for the men.

Back home and Saturdays usually meant children's cinema in the afternoon... usually 'Cowboys and Indians'. As the years went by this would give way to the Church Socials where there was dancing and the first opportunities to start 'courting' and taking someone home to meet the parents!

For many, in their teenage years, there would be their first jobs and the unwelcome experience of 'tipping up' their weekly wage packet to mum as they contributed to the family finances. Girls might start thinking of a 'bottom drawer' to collect together the items she would need, against the time when she hoped to marry and set up her own home. Into it would go bedding, tablecloths, kitchen items and anything that came as gifts or took her fancy. Chris's presentation came to an end with the wedding day ... and a new chapter in life.

Chris gave us lots of pictures to illustrate the memories and keep us all engaged, as we laughed or nodded our heads in understanding when our own memories came flooding back. Every picture or string of, 'what mum might have said', was accompanied by anecdotes and little stories, all of which were guaranteed to stir our own memories even further; frequently they were little things long forgotten whether from choice or otherwise. The chat box was alive with these as the audience responded with empathetic comments or their own memories.

Many thanks, Chris, for such a truly enjoyable skip down 'memory lane'.

Sheila Goodyear

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The 2023 Branch Programme of Meetings will include 4 meetings as hybrids, 4 meetings only in the library and 4 on zoom.

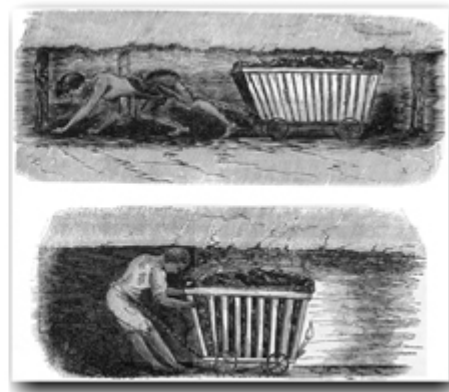
Details, of the programme of talks for the first 3 months of 2023, are on the website '*Meetings*' page of the Branch website [HERE](#) and the rest of the programme will be added as soon as possible.

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### February meeting



Saturday,  
11th Feb.  
at  
2 pm



### ***'Pit Lasses - the Female Miners of 1842'***

An illustrated presentation given by Denise Bates who is an historian and writer.

Denise's interest in female miners started when she discovered that she was descended from one of them.

The talk looks at the role of Women and girls working underground in coal mines.

This free talk is on zoom only.



Booking on [Eventbrite](#) is essential.

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MLFHS Branches delivering their monthly meetings and talks

Anglo - Scots ... only on zoom

MLFHS, ANGLO-SCOTTISH BRANCH MEETING	Saturday, 4th February at 2pm	"Mother Dead, Father in Prison" an illustrated talk given by Kate Keter
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Booking essential on [Eventbrite](#)

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

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**Bolton ... hybrid meeting**

|                                                |                                               |                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MLFHS<br>Bolton Branch<br>Meetings -<br>Hybrid | Wednesday<br>1st<br>February<br>at<br>7:30 pm | '20th Century<br>Photography<br>Identification'<br>given by<br>Steve Gill |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Hybrid Meeting ... on zoom and in person**

at Bolton Golf Club, Lostock Park, Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL6 4AJ

Booking for zoom on [Eventbrite](#)

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

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MLFHS updates

Manchester ... No meetings for February in the programme at this time

All Bookings on [Eventbrite](#)

Keep an eye on the following pages, 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.

\* Getting the new year off to a flying start, 41,872 names have been added to the Catholic Records Index at <https://www.mlfhs.uk/databases/catholic-records>

The names are from the baptism registers of:

Our Lady of Grace, Prestwich 1889-1923

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Ordsall 1877-1912

Downloads of both registers with images, transcripts and indexes are available as downloads from the MLFHS shop.

Thanks are due to Madeline Best and her team for this latest addition.

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* Another substantial addition to The Great Database.

This consists of 5,773 BMD announcements from the Manchester Courier for 1842-43

There are, in addition, 719 reports from the same paper relating to bigamy cases 1825-1860

Thanks are due to Linda Bailey, Laura Lewis, Chris Norcross and Chris Hall for this collection.

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\* Indexes with 231 new references for two more maps have been added to the Godfrey Map Index at: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/databases/godfrey-map-index>

These are for Westhoughton 1907 and Wingates & Chew Moor 1927.

Thanks to John Gartside for these.

There are still plenty of maps still to be indexed. If you own any of these maps and are prepared to give a few hours to indexing them, please contact me.

John

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* New data has been added at www.lancashirebmd.org.uk as follows:

Amended 11,787 Births for Manchester RD to include mother's maiden name, comprising: Bradford (1908-1914)

Thanks are due to My Manchester Archives team for these.

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\* I have just added 414 street and location references for the Alan Godfrey maps of Rainsough, Kersal & Hilton Park 1907, Wardley 1904 and Worsley 1904 to the Godfrey Map Index.

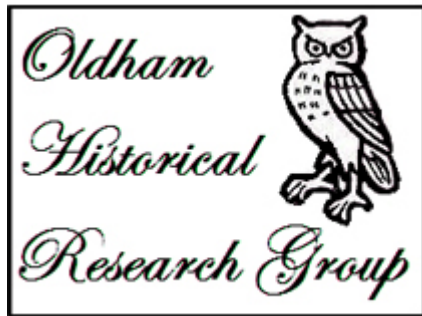
Thanks to Chris Willis for these latest entries.

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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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Wednesday  
15th  
February  
at  
7 pm



free zoom meeting on Wednesday 15th at 7pm.

**'James Naysmyth, Inventor of the Steam Hammer - His Story'**

A free, illustrated presentation given by Hilary Hartigan

Everyone welcome ... More details and free booking on [Eventbrite](#)

Your support for our meetings is appreciated and, if you would like more information, please email me at < pixnet.sg@gmail.com >.

Website [HERE](#)

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Moorside & District Historical Society, Moorside Cricket Club, Turfpit Lane, OL4 2ND

Moorside & District Historical Society

Monday 20th February 2023.

"Local Temperance Hotels"

& Pleasure Gardens

Part eight of local Public Houses

illustrated presentation by Mike Smith.



To be held in the Moorside Cricket Club, Turfpit Lane, Moorside. OL4 2ND

7-30 p.m. all are welcome. Please use the rear side door.

Note: Other meeting planned for the third Monday of the month, next year.

Except for the summer break July & August + December. £2 including refreshment.

April ~ September meeting in St Thomas' Church Hall. OL1 4SJ

Monday 20th February, at 7:30

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**Saddleworth Historical Society** ... Wednesday 8th February at 7:30

***'Water & Stone, Diggle Revealed.'***

an illustrated presentation by Alan Schofield

7:30 at the Saddleworth Museum Gallery.

At this meeting Society members are free, but a charge to non-members is applicable on the door of £3. All are welcome. Refreshments are available.

Website [HERE](#)

**Saddleworth Civic Trust** has no meeting or event planned in February or March.

If & when this situation changes members of the Society will be notified directly and through the local Press.

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

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**Family History Society of Cheshire : Tameside Group meeting.**  
See their website [HERE](#)

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Tameside History Club :

Meetings on zoom.

Website and programme

&

Tameside Local Studies and Archives - Regular Sessions and Events

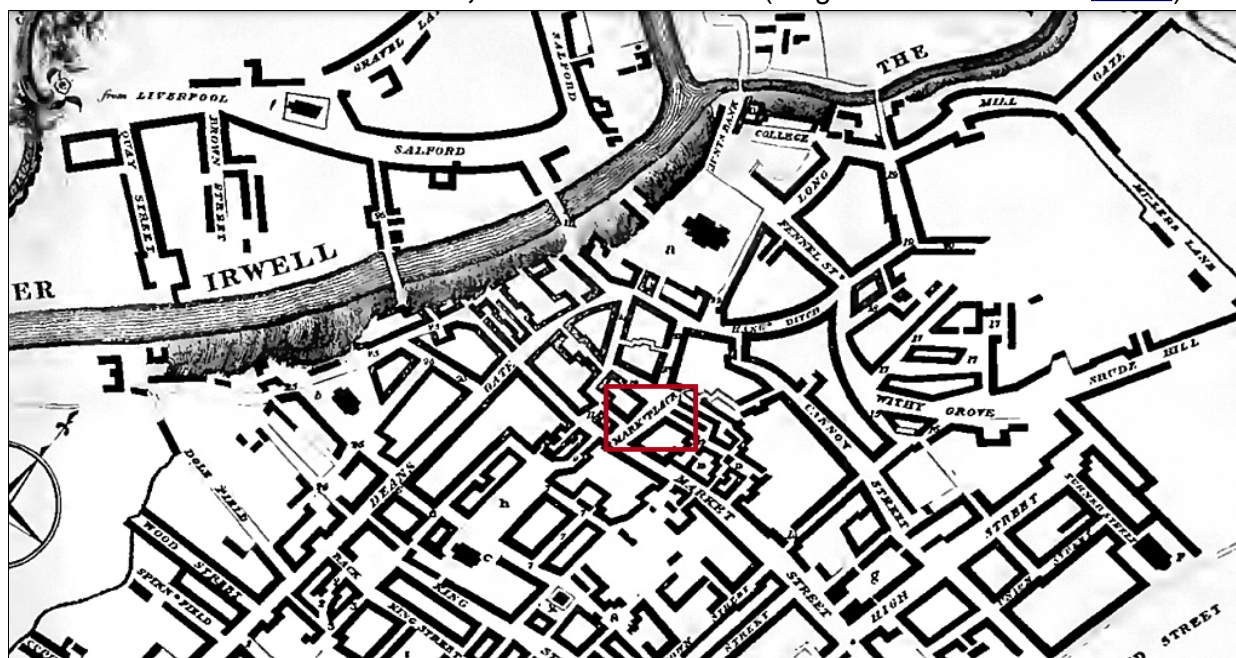
Website and programme [HERE](#)

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**Regional Heritage Centre :**

Website [HERE](#)

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'A Mixed Bag'

Manchester - Salford 1772, with Market Place (Larger scale on website [HERE](#))



from: **OLD MANCHESTER - A Series of Views** ... Drawn by Ralston, James, and Others

Our latest serialisation from *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men* (2nd series) by T. Swindells, pub. 1907, started in the newsletter for 2022-12, continues with transcriptions from p.191 - p.220

* Photo opposite p.197, of '*The Market Place Forty Years Ago*', is in the Gallery

* Photo opposite p. 215, of '*The Market Place Today*', is in the Gallery

THE MARKET PLACE

PART X

p.191

WHITWORTH'S MANCHESTER MAGAZINE.

Amongst the most interesting reminiscences of the Market Place are those associated with the early issues from the Manchester newspaper press. The first of these was Whitworth's "Manchester Magazine," which owed its origin to a family that had for several generations previously, been connected with our town. Thus we find as far back as 1690, mention made in the poll book of Zacchary Whitworth, who carried on business as a stationer in Smithy Door. His son, John, succeeded him in business, and dying on August 2nd, 1727, was buried at Cross-street Chapel. Robert Whitworth, the newspaper proprietor, was son of John Whitworth. The paper started on December 22nd, 1730, under the title of the "Manchester Gazette," but seven years later it became the "Manchester Magazine." It has been suggested that the reason for the change was the fact that in 1735 Robert Whitworth pleaded guilty at the Lancaster Assizes to a charge of uttering counterfeit stamped paper. It will be easily understood that in the days of the newspaper stamp duty, when every newspaper bore the imprint of the familiar, but never popular Government stamp, there was a strong temptation to the proprietor of struggling local news-sheet to print a counterfeit representation of the stamp on some of the copies of his journal. This was Whitworth's offence, and it is

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supposed that as a result of his conviction, after struggling for some time with his old newspaper title, he decided to make the change referred to. The imprint states that it was "printed by R. Whitworth, at the Three Bibles, opposite the Exchange, next the Cross, where advertisements are taken in. Advertisements will be inserted at 2s. 6d. each, but if very short and concerning anything lost, or houses, &c., to lett, at 2s. each, tho' one shilling duty is paid to the King each time any is inserted." This reminds us that in addition to a newspaper duty, a tax of one shilling was imposed for every advertisement that appeared in the paper. The paper was a small four paged sheet, whose three columns each were filled principally With advertisements and cuttings from the London papers. Local news was rare, being confined to an occasional marriage, death, accident, or 'public meeting. News and rumours from the seat of war, political gossip, and society items appear to have been popular; but even with these aids the editor seems to have a difficulty in filling his space with matters that would secure a satisfactory circulation. Recourse was often made to special articles, some of which displayed considerable merit. In view of these facts the following sentence reads rather curiously. It formed a headline on page 1. "This paper contains more news than any other sold in these parts; often an Essay to promote Religion, Good Manners, Trade, &c., or an antidote to the poisonous nonsense of the 'London Evening Post.' " The file of the paper in the Reference Library is the most complete known, but it is wanting in many numbers. Thus for the period of most interest to us, that of the

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1745 rising, there is almost a complete absence of copies - although in the issues for July and August, 1746, we find reports of the trial of Colonel Francis Townley and the other Manchester

Rebels. Whitworth appears to have made special efforts to secure adequate reports of a trial which he knew would interest all classes of Manchester people. He at the same time advanced the price of his paper to twopence. On June 24th, 1746, he wrote :

“The great expense that attends the publication of the ‘Manchester Magazine,’ in collecting the best intelligence, sending special messengers for the news to have it earlier than usual, in having the said paper larger and more copious in news than others, and also the general expectation now of having a minute and particular account of the tryals of the rebels, obligeth the printer to raise the price of it from three-halfpence to twopence; which it is hoped will not give umbrage, as no care or expense shall be wanting to make it more equal to the advanced price. The printer of the said paper has a person at London to attend the tryals of the rebels.”

About the same time the printing office was removed and was afterwards described as being “betwixt the Angel and the Bull’s Head Inn ” in the Market Place. This shop, which in a later generation served the purposes of a Post Office was removed when the Market street widening took place. In 1756 the title of the paper was changed to “Whitworth’s Manchester Advertiser and General Magazine,” but another paper having secured

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the popular favour the older journal waned in prosperity, and although the printer resorted to several means for reviving it, it gradually flickered out. The last issue appeared on March 25th, 1760, and in it the printer said tha "finding the profits not an equivalent for the trouble (he) intends to print no more news after this week." Whitworth, in addition to issuing his newspaper, published several volumes, the first of which was a volume of miscellaneous poems which appeared in 1733; and the most important of which was the first edition of the works of Tim Bobbin. He died October 27th, 1772.

Space will only permit of one or two quotations being given. A gentleman in London sent a letter containing the following item of news: “You saw the extraordinary red lights in the sky last Tuesday evening, and know that they were succeeded by a storm. Perhaps you may be pleased with knowing some part of their effects. The day before (the story is certainly true) a poor woman came to our professor of geometry, and begged him to recover for her five pounds four shillings which had been stolen out of her house, and had ruined both her and her husband. The professor, to carry on the humour of being a conjuror, told her to come to him again in three days. The woman, returning home, told all her neighbours the professor would get her money. At night came such uncommon lights, and so violent a storm, with which the thief being terrified, concluding it all happened on his account, actually brought the money and threw it into the house, where it was found the next morning.” In one number appears the story of Hannah

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Snell, the female soldier who petitioned for some reward for seven years’ service in the army, performed by her in the name of James Gray. It was in the days of the Press Gang, and her sweetheart being pressed into the King’s service, she put on male attire, enlisted, became his messmate, and sailed to the wars in the same ship. With great bravery she fought at her lover’s side during the siege of Pondicherry and elsewhere, until he died. Although seven times wounded, her sex was neither discovered nor suspected until, upon returning to her home in Worcester, she thought proper to reveal her secret in the petition referred to. A pension of thirty pounds a year was granted to her by the Government. She continued to wear male attire, a laced hat and cockade, sword and ruffles, and was forbidden to alter the military dress without further orders from the Duke of Cumberland. The end of the world has been so often predicted that one marvels at persons being found who shall be willing to believe the next person who

ventures to make a similar prediction. One of these false prophets figures thus in the columns of our newspaper. "A person who has lately left off the business of a shoemaker, and for some time followed the employment of a field preacher, was taken near Carnaby Market, and carried before a justice, for impiously affirming that he had received positive commands from God by an angel, to declare that the dissolution of the world would be the Sunday morning following; which time is happily elapsed to our comfort, and his own conviction." Another case was that of "A Life Guardsman who prophesied the destruction of the City of Westminster,

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but who was found to be mad. The superstitious tendency of the age is amply proved by several cases referred to in our paper. We thus read that "Last Sunday, being the first of April, several hundred people went from this town (London), and parts adjoining, to Edmonton, upon the report of a hen having laid an egg there the day before, whereon was inscribed in large capital letters, 'Beware of the third shock,' when, to their great mortification, they were very well wetted by the rain, and returned home with the salutations of all they met." With these references we leave Robin Whitworth's publication, and for a few pages turn our attention to the journal that had much to do with its death.

p.197 (picture opposite this page in the Gallery)

PART XI

HARROP'S 'MANCHESTER MERCURY'

Joseph Harrop will be long remembered as the printer who was responsible for the first appearance of the newspaper that had a longer life than any similar local venture associated with the eighteenth century. As we glance down the columns of those old-time journals, and read the various items of news that were supposed to interest our great-grandparents, we find the impulse strong within us to compare the miniature sheet of those days with the mammoth pennyworths of to-day. Such a comparison is not quite reasonable, as will be realised when we remember the very different conditions connected with the production of both. Apart from all such differences, the old sheets present many features that should be interesting to us. In order to prove this, I will in my next chapter give a somewhat detailed account of the contents of a single issue of Robin Whitworth's paper. Before doing so I purpose to give the story of the newspaper that was responsible for the death of the "Manchester Magazine." Joseph Harrop, who carried on the business of a printer, married Ellen Williamson, in April, 1749, and three years later launched his long-lived newspaper. The first number appeared on March 3rd, 1752, and was introduced to the townsfolk in the following editorial :—

"Having been greatly encouraged to publish a weekly

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newspaper, I have advertised that I intend speedily to proceed upon that design; and having now procured a new set of types to print with, I have here begun to execute it. I shall take care to answer the proposals in my advertisement by the contents of the paper, and a favourable reception will, I hope, enable me to do it with success. Though in a time of general peace, a great dearth of foreign advices may be urged as a discouragement to my undertaking at this juncture; yet the friendly excitement that I have had, and the honest desire of employment in my proper calling, in the place of my nativity, are motives excusable, at least for attempting in a private station, to bespeak the encouragement of the public, to whom I propose to give all the satisfaction that I can, and be no just cause of offence whatsoever. Such of my countrymen and others who intend me the favour of their subscriptions, shall have the paper delivered at their houses with all due care and expedition by their obliged humble servant, Joseph Harrop."

The first numbers appeared under the title of "Harrop's Manchester Mercury," but in the ninth

issue it became “Harrop’s Manchester Mercury and General Advertiser.” In later years it again changed to “The Manchester Mercury, and Harrop’s General Advertiser,” and in its closing years it was known as “The Manchester Mercury, and Tuesday’s General Advertiser.” The price also varied from time to time. At first the charge was three-halfpence; but as the stamp duty on newspapers rose in consequence of our Continental wars, and as the expenses connected with the publication of the sheet rose, the price gradually rose. Thus by half-penny

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stages, the price grew from three-halfpence to seven-pence. The publishing day was Tuesday - and the publishing office was described as being “at the sign of the printing press opposite (on the clock side of) the Exchange, where advertisements are taken in and all manner of printing work performed after the neatest and cheapest manner.”

Harrop was a man of considerable enterprise, for we find that in 1756 he tried to make some arrangement with Robert Whitworth, by which, meeting the mail at Derby, they might have Saturday’s “London Gazette” and other evening papers by Monday afternoon, the expense to be borne by the two equally. Whitworth declined but Harrop decided to carry out the scheme alone; Harrop announced this, but went on to say, “so that the town must either wait as heretofore for the news, or have it at the sole expense of this proprietor, who, out of gratitude to the public for the kind reception they have given his paper ” determined to bear the expense himself. His readers consequently received London news before the arrival in town of the London newspaper, and as a result the circulation grew. Whitworth’s at the same time fell off, and four years later the “Mercury” was left alone. In 1764, in order to promote the sale of his newspaper, Harrop published in weekly instalments in its columns a history of England, which extended to 778 pages, and which cost the publisher onehundred guineas. The paper was gradually growing in popularity, this being evidenced by the increasing number of advertisements, many of which are worthy of notice, as giving side glances on the social life of the

PART XI

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newspaper, I have advertised that I intend speedily to proceed upon that design; and having now procured a new set of types to print with, I have here begun to execute it. I shall take care to answer the proposals in my advertisement by the contents of the paper, and a favourable

reception will, I hope, enable me to do it with success. Though in a time of general peace, a great dearth of foreign advices may be urged as a discouragement to my undertaking at this juncture; yet the friendly excitement that I have had, and the honest desire of employment in my proper calling, in the place of my nativity, are motives excusable, at least for attempting in a private station, to bespeak the encouragement of the public, to whom I propose to give all the satisfaction that I can, and be no just cause of offence whatsoever. Such of my countrymen and others who intend me the favour of their subscriptions, shall have the paper delivered at their houses with all due care and expedition by their obliged humble servant, Joseph Harrop."

The first numbers appeared under the title of "Harrop's Manchester Mercury," but in the ninth issue it became "Harrop's Manchester Mercury and General Advertiser." In later years it again changed to "The Manchester Mercury, and Harrop's General Advertiser," and in its closing years it was known as "The Manchester Mercury, and Tuesday's General Advertiser." The price also varied from time to time. At first the charge was three-halfpence; but as the stamp duty on newspapers rose in consequence of our Continental wars, and as the expenses connected with the publication of the sheet rose, the price gradually rose. Thus by half-penny

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stages, the price grew from three-halfpence to seven-pence. The publishing day was Tuesday - and the publishing office was described as being "at the sign of the printing press opposite (on the clock side of) the Exchange, where advertisements are taken in and all manner of printing work performed after the neatest and cheapest manner."

Harrop was a man of considerable enterprise, for we find that in 1756 he tried to make some arrangement with Robert Whitworth, by which, meeting the mail at Derby, they might have Saturday's "London Gazette" and other evening papers by Monday afternoon, the expense to be borne by the two equally. Whitworth declined but Harrop decided to carry out the scheme alone; Harrop announced this, but went on to say, "so that the town must either wait as heretofore for the news, or have it at the sole expense of this proprietor, who, out of gratitude to the public for the kind reception they have given his paper" determined to bear the expense himself. His readers consequently received London news before the arrival in town of the London newspaper, and as a result the circulation grew. Whitworth's at the same time fell off, and four years later the "Mercury" was left alone. In 1764, in order to promote the sale of his newspaper, Harrop published in weekly instalments in its columns a history of England, which extended to 778 pages, and which cost the publisher one hundred guineas. The paper was gradually growing in popularity, this being evidenced by the increasing number of advertisements, many of which are worthy of notice, as giving side glances on the social life of the

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period. The three following are worthy of perusal.

"Wanted. An Apprentice by the Printer of this paper, where may be had, just published, 2s. 6d., "The Way to Christ Discovered."

"Any Gentleman or Lady wanting to purchase a Black Boy, 12 years of age, with a good character, has had the smallpox and the measles. Whoever this will suit, may by applying at the Higher Swan and Saracen's Head, in Market-street Lane, Manchester, meet with a proper person to deal with them on reasonable terms."

"Manchester, Stockport, Buxton, Ashburn, and Derby Flying Machine to London in three days. Begin on Monday, the 3rd of March, 1760, from the Swan with Two Necks in Lad Lane, London, and from Mr. Radford's, the Royal Oak Inn, in Market-street Lane, Manchester, every Monday and Thursday mornings at four o'clock, and lies at the Angel, in Northampton, the first night, the second at the George Inn, in Derby, and the third at Manchester; and at the same inns from

Manchester to London. Each person to pay Two Pounds Five Shillings, to be allowed Fourteen Pounds weight of Luggage, all above to pay Threepence per Pound, and so in proportion for any part of the road. Outside Passengers and children on the Lap to pay half-price. Performed (if God permits) by

John Handforth.

Matt Howe.

Samuel Granville.

William Richardson.

During the period of the American War of Independence, the “Mercury” gave loyal support to the Government, and from time to time Harrop issued supplementary

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sheets containing war news. The language used on such occasions was marked by its expressiveness, as, for instance, when one of these extra sheets was issued on January 7th, 1777, the printer placed the following heading above the items of news:

“A New Year’s Gift for all true lovers of their King and Country, and a receipt in full to the most wicked, daring, and unnatural rebellion that ever disgraced the annals of history, fomented and abetted by a Junto of Republicans on this side the Atlantic. John Harrop, printer of ‘Manchester Mercury’ with unspeakable pleasure again presents his friends gratis with the following ‘London Express’ extraordinary, which he received by express on Thursday morning at three o’clock.”

The result of the great struggle must have been a matter of great surprise to our printer, who on many occasions ransacked his dictionary for expletives to apply to the sympathisers of the American Colonists, and as a result his monopoly as a newspaper proprietor was seriously opposed on several occasions. In 1788, Joseph Harrop retired from business, and left the conduct of the paper in the hands of his son James. He lived in retirement for sixteen years, and died Jan. 20th, 1804; being interred in St. John’s Churchyard Deansgate. James Harrop, in addition to his printing business, took over the management of the Post Office, the description of his business in the directory for 1797 being, “printer, bookseller, stationer, stamp distributor, medicine vendor, and post office.” He died February 22nd, 1823, in his 66th year, and the proprietorship of the newspaper passed to his son. In the meantime other newspapers had come into

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being, more than one being connected with the Reform movement. Wheeler’s “Chronicle” proved to be a more serious opponent, because, like the “Mercury” it advocated Tory politics. As far back as 1793 the “Chronicle” with a circulation of 4,750 copies per week, not only exceeded that of the “Mercury,” but claimed to stand first amongst newspapers published outside London. The last issue of the “Mercury” bore the date December 28th, 1830, the life of the paper extending over a period of seventy-eight years.

Part XII

AN OLD-TIME NEWSPAPER

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In dealing with the story of the early newspapers connected with the Market Place, in addition to giving the leading incidents in the career of each, it will perhaps be of interest to those of my readers, who do not possess copies of those old-time sheets, if I give a more detailed account of the actual make-up of one of those newspapers. The paper to which I should like to draw special attention is the copy of “The Manchester Magazine,” numbered 623 and bearing date Tuesday, January 19th, 1747-8. Under the title we are told that “The Printer hereof is removed

to a shop betwixt the Angel and the Bull's Head Inn." The sheet consists of four pages of three columns each. The size of each page is 15½ inches by 10¾ inches. For purposes of comparison we may note that the usual size of a page of the "Evening News" is 25 inches by 19 inches. Measured up and compared in another way, it may be noted that whereas for three-halfpence our forefathers obtained 180 inches of columns, each three inches wide, of news and advertisements; we obtain for one halfpenny 966 inches of columns, two and a half inches wide.

Having received our newspaper on that January morning a hundred and sixty years ago, let us examine its contents and note what it has to tell us. The first page is filled with items brought by Friday's "London

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Mail," and printed in the "London Gazette," issued on the 12th, or just a week ago, and other papers. The first item of news concerns "Petersburgh" (a new Town and Fortress, founded by the Muscovites in 1703, near the shore of the Finnick[sic] Gulf), and bears date December 5th, six weeks ago. There are also reports of events that occurred in Stockholm on December 22nd; Genoa, on December 17th; Turin, December 13th; Naples, December 29th; Vienna, December 23rd; Antwerp, January 4th; Brussels, January 9th; and Edinburgh, January 5th. In the cases of foreign towns, a note as to position, &c., similar to the one quoted above, is given. The foreign news contains nothing of particular interest ; but the item of Scottish news may be quoted. It says,

"Last Thursday morning, arrived in the Road of Leith, under Convoy of the Launceston man-of-war of 40 guns, 25 sail of ships from Riga, Petersburgh, Dantzick, &c. We hear the fleet consisted of about 100 when they set out from their respective ports, but were separated at sea, and suffered much in the late hurricane; one of them, we are told, perished on the English Coast, and another suddenly sunk down within the Mouth of the Firth of Forth, but the crew were happily saved by the Alliance of the other Ship's Boats, it being calm Weather."

In this, as in previous quotation, the capitals are as originally printed. On page 2 we have the items of London intelligence from various newspapers. The arrivals and departures of various vessels are reported, as also are other matters of interest to seafaring men. We are told that, "They write from New York, that two Privateers of that Province have taken a valuable Prize from the

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Havannah, and sent her into North Caroline." From the Jacobite journal are reprinted "Articles of Jacobite Faith, Invented and Spread for the use of our Party; and which every good Jacobite is either to believe or say he does." The so-called articles of faith of the Jacobites as given were five in number, the first of which may be quoted. It was to the effect, "That the Ministry are desirous of making a bad Peace, when we are able to carry on an advantageous war." At the foot is the remark, "Such things as these can never be inculcated too often, by those Jacobites who are not afraid nor ashamed to serve their Party at the trifling expense of Modesty, and of Truth." Political feeling ran high in those days, and oft-times the language used by partisans of both sides was equally strong. Foreign news monopolises the greater part of page 2 of our newspaper, and we turn to page 3 where we find some home intelligence. It consists principally of disconnected sentences of about three lines each, some of which might be of interest to the resident of our town when George the Second was King. Several may be reproduced.

"Yesterday it was reported that two French Dogger Privateers, from ten to twenty guns, were cruizing on the Yorkshire Coast, and had taken several Coasting vessels."

"It is said, that the Earl of Traquair, now a prisoner in the Tower for High Treason, has had

notice to prepare himself for his Trial, which will come on the latter end of February.”

“This morning Charle Hales, Esq., of Ashton, in Lancashire, was married to Miss Isabella Langbourne, of Tower Hill, an agreeable young lady with a large fortune.”

There is not in the whole of the sheet one item of Manchester news.

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Leaving the news columns let us now turn to the advertisements which occupy more than a third of the paper, and which are infinitely more interesting reading to us. The first item states that, “A Neat Landau and four able Horses will be at the George Inn, in Knutsford, on Tuesday, the 19th instant, and sets out for London the Thursday following. Takes in Passengers at a Guinea and a Half each, and if desired the Coachman will wait on them at Manchester.” Next below this is the announcement that certain properties are on sale. One of these is described as “Eight closes, lying betwixt Ordsall Lane and the River Irwell, called by the names of the four Oldfields, and four Barrow Brook Meadows, opposite to the field called the Rocher field, next below the Kay.” There are also for sale seven other Fields at the Upper End of Oldfield Lane with a very good House, Barn, &c. Three houses opposite to the “Spaw Stile, or Bath Stile”; and “eight good Brick Houses, all well tenanted, situate in Gravel Lane, Back Salford, with good gardens, seem to offer good means of investing surplus capital.” The merits of Daffy’s Elixir are extolled in the space of half a column, and R. Whitworth announces that he has received a fresh Parcel of Medicine which “is sold in Manchester only by him.” He is also the agent for the sale of “Imperial Golden Snuff.” Its merits are so great that one is tempted to copy one sentence from the advertisement. Referring to the snuff the advertiser says of it, “Thousands of Persons have found it to be a very effectual remedy for the Apoplexy, Drowsiness, Giddiness, Vapours, Deafness, Disorders of

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the Eyes, and Tooth-ache; for by stimulating the Fibres and Membranes within the Nostrils, it separates the viscid and mucous Substances in the Head, whereby the Function of some Parts are obstructed and great Pain produced, and thereby renders the Head brisk and lightsome.” The meaning of all this may be perfectly clear, but the mode of expression might be improved. The announcement closes with the sentence “For the Good of the Poor three papers are sold for sixpence which were formerly sold for 18d.” The last advertisement is particularly interesting, and shows the lengths to which political partizanship led men in those days. Without reproducing the whole of the announcement, the following sentences, couched in the amiable language of the day are really too good to miss : -

“Just publish’d,

(Being a proper New Year’s Gift for all Jacobites who
are not either Idiots or determined Bigots).

JACOBITE and NON-JURING PRINCIPLES, freely examined; in a Letter to the Master Tool of the Faction, at Manchester; with Remarks on some Part of a book lately publish’d, entitled, “A Christian Catechism, &c.,” said to be wrote by Dr. Deacon.

by J.. Owen.

Manchester : Printed for the Author by R. Whitworth, and sold by Mr. Higginson, in Warrington; Mr. Fleetwood, in Liverpool; and Mr. Rowley, in Chester.

At the said R. Whitworth’s may be had “ALL IS WELL; Or the Defeat of the late Rebellion, and deliverance from its dreadful Consequences, an exalted and

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illustrious blessing; A Sermon, preach’d at Rochdale, October 9th, being the Day appointed for a Public Thanksgiving on the happy occasion. This is the sermon which gave such Umbrage to

the Author of the Epistle to a Friend, that he calls it, a furious Fanatic Preacher's ranting sermon, on the Thanksgiving Day."

The thanksgiving day referred to was the day appointed by the Government on which the suppression of the 1745 movement, was to be celebrated annually. With this explanation we bid adieu to Robin Whitworth and his newspaper; feeling not at all surprised that a later generation of reformers sought to place their views on political matters before their fellow-townsmen in another news sheet more devoted to their principles.

Part XIII
ANOTHER OLD NEWSPAPER
BERRY'S "LANCASHIRE JOURNAL"

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In our review of some of the old-time newspapers that have been connected with the Market place, we cannot pass over John Berry's "Lancashire Journal," which survived for the period of three years. John Berry seems to have been an energetic individual, and during the short life of his newspaper he introduced into its columns several original features. He was a tradesman dealing in a large variety of wares which can only be fully described by using his own words as they appeared in the columns of his newspaper. Before giving the quotation I may say that the spelling and the punctuation are as originally printed; and that the word baby, was in those days used for a doll. We are told that the paper is,

"printed by John Berry, Watch-maker and Printer, at the Dial near the Cross, who makes and Mends all sorts of Pocket Watches, also makes and mends all sorts of Weather Glasses, makes all sorts of Wedding, Mourning, and other Gold Rings, and Earrings, etc., and sells all Sorts of New Fation'd Mettal Buttons for Coats and Wastcoats, and hath Great Choice of New Fation'd Mettal Buckles for Men, Women, and Children, all sorts of Knives, fine Scissors, Razors, Lancits, Variety of Japan'd Snuff Boxes, Violins, Fluts, Flagelets, and Musick Books, Box, Ivory, and Horn Combs, Silk

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Purses, Spectacles, Coffee and Chocolate Mills, Wash Balls, Sealing Wax, and Wax Balls for Pips, Correls, Tea Spoons, Fiddle Strings, Spinnet Wire, Naked and Drest Babys, Cards, Cain for Hooping, Bird Cages, etc., with several other sorts of London, Birmingham, and Sheffield, Cutler's Wares, and variety of Dutch and English Toys. He also sells (notwithstanding what is, has been, or may be advertised to the contrary), the True Daffy's Elixir, Doctor Anderson Sick Pills, Chymical Drops, being a speedy cure for coughs, colds, and Asthma's, Doctor Godfrey's Cordial for Children, Doctor Bateman's Drops, Stoughton's Elixir, Hungry Water, Spirits of Scurvy Grass, Flower of Mustard in 3d. Bottles, Oyl of Mustard, and all sorts of snuffs, at the Lowest Rates."

John Berry was evidently a sort of Universal provider. He met with little success as a newspaper publisher, and from time to time was compelled to resort to various devices for arousing public interest in his journal. The "Journal" was published on Mondays, and in the columns was printed the week's general news, foreign and domestic, lists of bankrupts, and other "Gazette" announcements, and prices of goods ruling in the town. The first number was issued on July 3rd, 1738, and in 1739 there appeared a long series of articles recounting the remarkable adventures of a Mr. Cleveland, a reputed natural son of Oliver Cromwell. The next means adopted for securing an increased circulation was the publication of a series of articles on the Geography of the World. They were announced in the style of the period as follows.

"We propose, as long as we shall find it acceptable to the public, and as often as it

can be done without leaving out any material paragraph of news to introduce our paper with a short Essay, Letter, or Discourse, on some useful subject, Art or Science. And as a newspaper is a Historical Rhapsody, or Register of Civil Political and Natural Occurrences and the present state of things; it generally lays before the reader in the Confines of a few pages the scene of the whole world, and presents him with a multitude of very distinct and very different countries and people; and on this account it is necessary for everyone who would read to any purpose and satisfaction to have a competent knowledge of geography and natural history.”

All these advantages were to be derived from a perusal of the articles thus announced. But in spite of many efforts to secure success the paper never “took on,” to use a modern phrase, and the last number was issued in 1741 To Berry we are indebted for several interesting plans of the town as it was in his day.

**“THE LANCASHIRE MAGAZINE, OR
MANCHESTER MUSEUM.”**

One remaining newspaper connected with the MarketPlace must be dealt with. Its title, as printed above, was different from that of any other local journal, and in some respects the make-up of the paper was also different. It was published by T. Anderton, at Shakespere’s Head, near the Market Place, and although no copy of the first issue seems to have survived, it was probably issued on March 15th, 1763. The following transcript of the title page of number 2, the earliest known to exist, is very curious, and in its way, interesting.

“Published according to Act of Parliament. ‘The Lancashire Magazine or Manchester Museum.’ No. 2. To be continued weekly. Containing Four Half Sheets of Letterpress in a large octavo, stitch’t in covers and digested under the following heads : I., A new and complete system of Geography. II., A new and impartial History of England, brought down to the year 1763. III., The beautiful pieces of all the Magazines selected. IV., News, Foreign and Domestic, or a Chronological History of the Present Time. N.B. - A Monthly List of Fairs in England and Wales. With other articles equally curious and entertaining. Manchester : Printed by T. Anderton at Shakespere’s Head, near the Market Cross, and may be had of all the Booksellers and Newscarrers in England. Any person willing to encourage this most useful Magazine, may have them regularly every Tuesday evening at six o’clock by enquiring for Peter Pass, or Mr. Reynolds at the Cross Keys, in Dale Street, Liverpool, where all Parcels are desired to be left by Thursday noon at farthest, and they will be delivered in Manchester on Friday. Price only two-pence.”

As stated, each number was issued in a bluish coloured cover, and on them were reproduced curious “likenesses” of King Canute, Ben Jonson, Lord Clive, George III., and other persons. The illustrations were crude in the extreme, and the whole production is equally crude. The journal is dull reading, and one marvels how it ever paid to publish it. Of the copies that have survived number 16, dated June 28th, 1763, is perhaps the most interesting of the lot. Its contents may be briefly summarised. The geographical section consists of a description of the

county of Berkshire, and that devoted to history deals with a portion of the reign of King John. The natural history of the tiger is illustrated by a curious copperplate, and further variety is furnished by the narrative of Isaac Morris, a midshipman of the Wager Store-ship, who deserted along with seven others in Patagonia. The other subjects dealt with in the number are notable for their variety. Thus we can learn the origin of the Turks, learn somewhat of the baths indulged

in by Turkish ladies, from a letter by Lady Mary Wortley Montague, read an account of a stone bridge formed from a petrifying spring in France, and also an extract from the "Memoirs of the Life and Adventures of Tsonnonuthonans, a king of the Indian nation, called Roundheads. Verse is represented by Gray's "Elegy," a new favourite song, sung at Ranleigh; an alleged poem, "The Dream," by J. B.; and some lines written for the "Lancashire Magazine" by T. C., of Queen's College, Oxford. The subject of the last-named is party faction, and the following lines are noteworthy : -

" It does not signify a pin,
Who's out of place, or who is in;
The change is only in the name,
For things we see go on the same."

This will give a fair idea of the matter supplied to the reader by Mr. Anderton. In No. 22 we have a glimpse of the trade jealousies of the day. A writer says that he had bought No. 1 of the "Christian's Complete Family Bible," published by Harrop, and says that he was "never so wretchedly imposed upon before"; and

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in the same number are some lines to Goodwife Dobbin on buying a Bible.

"Let's see, there's Anderton and Harrop,
To which of these must I apply.

.
'Harrop,' quoth he, 'Harrop I'm weary on,
Joe Harrop's turning Presbyterian.
His customers are left i' th' lurch,
His Bible batters down the Church,
But go your way to Shakespere's Head,
And there you'll both be taught and fed."

The magazine ran for about a year, and then died a perfectly natural death. The same fate had previously befallen another publishing venture of Anderton's. The first number, which bore date 13th July, 1762, was headed "Manchester Chronicle, or Anderton Universal Advertiser; to improve the judgment and taste of the readers in morals, history and politicks." About the time of the death of his publishing ventures, Anderton was declared a bankrupt. Leaving the Market Place journals we will now turn our attention in the following chapter to some well-known names that have been associated with it.

Part XIV

SOME NINETEENTH CENTURY CONNECTIONS

MOTTERSHEAD & CO.

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The opening out of Victoria-street seventy years ago, and in our time the removal of Smithy Door, and the erection in its stead of the Victoria Buildings, has completely altered the appearance of that part of the city. In the old days, prior to the alterations, the Market Place extended from the corner of St. Mary's Gate. For more than three-quarters of a century the business of chemist and druggist was carried on in an old black and white shop that stood next door but one to the corner. In 1788 George Brown made pills and plasters, and dispensed potions for his customers there, and when he ceased to do so, the work was taken up by Thomas Stains, who about 1813 took in as a partner, his assistant, John Mottershead. Later again the firm became Mottershead and Brown, and about seventy years ago Mr. Mottershead, who never married took in his nephew, Thomas Roberts, as partner. When the former died,

Roberts succeeded to the business, and about 1848 he removed his business to the next door shop, which hitherto had been occupied by Robert Barker. For nearly thirty years Mottershead & Co.'s shop at the corner of the Market Place and St. Mary's Gate, was a well-known establishment, but when the remaining portion of Smithy Door was pulled down removal was

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necessary. The shop still occupied in Exchange-street was taken by the new partners in the concern, for when the removal took place, Mr. Roberts sold the business to Messrs. Standen Paine and F. Baden Benger. Mr. Roberts was successful in business for in addition to his drug business he was principal partner in the well-known firm of Roberts, Dale & Co., manufacturing chemists, whose Works at Cornbrook were removed to make way for the Ship Canal. In addition to this he was proprietor of Parr's Life Pills and Old Moore's Almanack. In recent years the business has been notable for another development. The late Dr. (afterward Sir) William Roberts commenced a series of experiments with pepsin, and he induced Messrs. Paine and Benger to turn their attention to the matter. As an outcome of this co-operation we have the range of preparations bearing the name of Benger, the best known of which is Benger's Food. In 1893 this branch was removed to separate premises, the retail business being disposed of to Mr. A. Blackburn.

ATKINSON & BARKER.

In 1790, John Atkinson, druggist, was in business in St. Mary's Gate, but a few years later he became a partner with Robert Barker and the business was removed to the shop that formerly stood at the corner of St. Mary's Gate. About 1793, Mr. Atkinson commenced the manufacture of an Infants' Preservative, which, in later years, he disposed of to Mr. Barker, his nephew. In 1843 in consequence of Royal patronage the name of the preparation was changed to "Atkinson & Barker's Royal Infants' Preservative." When Mr.

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Baker gave up the retail business in 1848 he devoted his whole attention to the sale of the proprietary medicine which still enjoys a wide sale and popularity.

WILLIAM WILLIS .

A few doors from the corner of St. Mary's Gate, William Willis, a well-known bookseller and publisher, carried on business for several years. His life's story is well worth telling, for although the number of persons who knew him must be very small, his experiences were more varied than are most men's, and from time to time we come across books published by him, on the second-hand book-stalls in the city. He was of humble parentage, and as a boy obtained employment with Thomas Newton who had a book-stall near to Store-street, in London Road. He was afterwards employed by Jeremiah Hanmer, who combined book-selling with corn-dealing. Soon afterwards Hanmer gave up literature, and devoted himself exclusively to the sale of food for the body. He carried on business in Shudehill, and afterwards in Dale-street. When he made the change he disposed of his book-selling business to William Newton, who declined to take over young Willis along with it. This young hopeful, therefore, borrowed ten pounds from his father and opened a book-stall in his own name on a plot of land near to that of Thomas Newton. This so annoyed the latter that he bought the land on which Willis's stall stood, and removed him. Willis's second stand was made on a piece of land near to High-street, where he was fairly successful. He next became a partner with a Mr. Bowers. who brought £100 into the business.

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This enabled Willis to go to London where he purchased large quantities of remainders, and other cheap lots of books. The trade in remainders was in its infancy in those days, but Willis

saw the possibilities contained in it and acted accordingly. Under the new conditions the business was removed to a cellar in St. Ann's Square, where the partnership continued for five years. At the end of that period Mr. Bowers retired, and Willis removed his stock to another cellar, this time off Market-street. After remaining there for about a year he was persuaded to dispose of his stock, and join his father in a machine-making business in which he could not arouse any interest. As a consequence he found his way back to the second-hand book-selling business, and took the shop number 7 in the Market Place, where he remained until the nature of his business demanded a further move, when he took a larger shop in Hanging Ditch. Success smiled upon him there, and at one time his stock was valued at £5,000. He was a man of genial disposition and his shop soon became the haunt of the book-collector and the antiquarian. He did not confine himself to book-selling, but commenced publishing. In that capacity he issued several books of great local interest including Seacombe's "House of Derby," and Hollinworth's "Mancuniensis." Owing, it is said, to this change, he lost money, and was compelled to file his petition. His father purchased the stock, thereby enabling the son to resume business, but only a few months passed ere he was again in trouble. Detention at Lancaster Castle as a debtor was followed by his passage through the Insolvent Court, and then he

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made another attempt to get a business together. He purchased some old printing materials, and proceeded to print ballads and songs, broadsides, and "last dying speeches." This was the lowest class of work in the trade, and Willis soon became so disgusted with the immorality that he saw in connection with it, that he gave it up; and once again turned to book selling. In this connection a story is told that illustrates a state of affairs now passed away. In his later years Willis became a Roman Catholic, and with the enthusiasm of a new convert sought on all occasions to impress his new views upon his friends. One of these retorted on him with the remark, "With your new faith I suppose you would not do what I once saw you doing?" "What was that?" "Writing the last speech and confession of a poor fellow that was to be hung next morning at Kirkdale, and printing it to be sold under the gallows at the execution." "Yes," he replied, "and you wanted to finish the speech." He died in poverty on July 20th, 1861, in his fifty-fourth year.

JOHN KENT, WATCHMAKER.

Amongst the very few business concerns that can point to a career extending over a hundred and forty years in Manchester, that of Kent's, watchmakers, must be included. It was in 1760 that John Kent commenced business in Manchester. Where his first place of business was we cannot trace, but nine years later he was tenant of a quaint, black and white shop that stood next door to an equally quaint-looking Inn in Smithy Door. That he entered those premises in that year is

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evident from an advertisement that appeared in several issues of Harrop's "Manchester Mercury." So few of our firms can point to such a record that the announcement is worth reprinting. It ran thus :

"John Kent, Watchmaker, begs leave to acquaint his friends and the public in general that he hath open'd a shop next the Three Tuns Tavern, the Top of Smithy Door, Manchester, where he makes and mends all sorts of watches, on the most reasonable terms; and where all Persons who please to favour him with their commands may depend on the utmost care and diligence, and all favours will be gratefully acknowledg'd by their most obedient humble servant, John Kent."

There is an old-world flavour about the wording of this announcement, and that John Kent was

a capable workman is provided by the fact that some fine examples of his Work still exist, having survived for nearly a century and a half. Since then in various shops, at one time in the Market Place, at another in St. Mary's Gate, and for many years in Deansgate, members of the Kent family have continued the work commenced by John Kent so many years ago.

With this we must bring our story of the Market Place to a close. In a Work like the present, one cannot give every particle of information concerning any one of our streets. To do so in the case of our Market Place would nearly fill a volume the same size as the present one. My object rather is to give such details as may serve to give a general idea of the growth of the town, and the streets and buildings that go to form it, and in this way to arouse an interest in our local history.

to be continued

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### **From Mike Hoddy (see August newsletter for first chapters and more details)**

This manuscript was an account written by Frank Pogson of Oldham that describes his life in Oldham from the early 1920s to 1939. It was mostly around the Derker area and the 3rd Oldham Boys Brigade at Hope Congregational Church. Mike's own family members had been associated with the B.B. since 1904.

We're happy to serialise Frank's story, in the newsletter.

## **CHAPTER XIV**

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### **ENCOUNTERS AT WATERLOO**

The town was zoned into three catchment areas for the Central Schools which were situated in Glodwick (Waterloo), Hollins and Ward Street. Before the Central School system had been established, there had been certain schools designated Higher Standard Centres and Waterloo had been one of them. The curriculum at the Central Schools offered all the usual basic subjects plus French, Physics, Science and also a Commercial course of shorthand and typewriting. In the main, the teachers had good pupil material to work with for many went to the Central Schools because of social and economic reasons rather than any lack of academic ability.

Following the first privilege of Central School entrance, namely an extra week's holiday, Gordon and I walked across the town to present ourselves, rather nervously and self consciously in our brand new Waterloo School caps, at the rather ancient building (now demolished) in Hardy Street. Parked outside were only three motor cars one of which stood out, being a high, open-tourer Star. This we later found, belonged to Mr. Wonnacott. There were no parking problems. We were told to wait on the pavement outside until the older pupils had assembled and entered. Only then were the First Year pupils allowed to enter their new school. The Headmaster, Mr. G. A. Humphreys, always seemed a rather remote figure perhaps because his office was in the corridor at the other end of the school from that in which we were to spend most of our time. The teachers, however, were real people and gradually during the three years at the School, we were acknowledged by them as individuals in our own right and not just kids to be coped with in school hours. As a result, I have nothing but the warmest regard for them almost without exception.

'Paddy' Marcroft was my first Form-master as I found myself in Form 1M, the 'M' denoting a mixed class of boys and girls. He was also the Art master, doubling up at times as a swimming instructor when he piled quite a number of us into the back of his £100 Ford saloon car to take us back to school from the baths. Mrs. Morris took us for singing and while she was a poppet, she did have trouble controlling the class at times. Even the most mild of us regrettably took

advantage of her. Miss Hampshire taught French and began each lesson as she was

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entering the classroom with the command, "Vocabulary books and pens, jotters and pencils". Mr. Nedderman taught Science and he stood before us rather like the Captain of the USS Caine as he constantly turned over the coins in his trouser pocket. It, incidentally, caused some rude speculation among the boys at least. In the second year, I moved into Form 2B, the 'B' denoting an all boys class. It was, in fact to be the only all boys class I was to be in during the whole of my school career. Mr. Gregson was the Form-master who, I later learnt, lost his life at sea with the Royal Navy during the war. My final year was spent in Form CF, the 'CF denoting 'Commercial' as distinct from T5 which denoted 'Technical'. It was again a mixed class with Mr. Wonnacott as Form-master. Tall and wiry with a resounding nasal accent he might, without meaning to offend, have been described as a walking adams apple. I have the greatest regard for him despite the strokes of the strap I received from him because of my poor handwriting. For all the good it did, he may as well have conserved his energy. I have always felt that the standard of work was raised by the presence of girls in a class for it was always a girl who came out top of the class scholastically. 'Pa' Wood was in charge of the gymnasium for boys and he was the only teacher I did not like. Perhaps this came about by reason of the fact that I was not very good at gymnastics but somehow, I gained the impression that our regard for each other was mutual. I survived nonetheless.

Going to a school at a much greater distance from home provided a new experience if not an adventure every day. We discovered all kinds of devious routes through back alleys and ginnels which we deluded ourselves were short cuts. One such route led through the railway Goods Yard until threatening letters were received at School from the Railway Company when the route was put out of bounds. Greengate Street always seemed to be a long and windy street as groups of pupils passed along it on their way to either Waterloo Central School or the Municipal High School. The mills towered high and a cable across the road carried goods from [one] to the other. We fell in step with lads from Waterhead, Clarksfield and Salem and seemed to make new friends daily. Despite the distance, we walked home for lunch each day and thought nothing of it.

Later, we were to progress to cycles. I had to press hard and long on my parents before I was allowed a cycle but at last, my request prevailed. For my birthday I obtained a Rudge Whitworth safety cycle which was purchased second-hand from Mr. Fepwick's Shop at the junction of Brook Street and the main road at Mumps Bridge. It cost thirty shilling (£1.50p). The bike was my pride and joy while remaining a constant source of anxiety to my parents in view of the 'busy traffic' of those days. The greatest hazard to cyclists was without doubt, the tramlines. There were no parking restrictions and so

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cars could be left parked on the main roads which, at times, forced cyclists out into the middle of the tram tracks in order to pass them. Unless the line was crossed sufficiently obliquely, the back wheel of the bike would catch in the line and the bike would suddenly disappear from under the rider. In spite of taking the utmost care, it happened to me on more than one occasion but, fortunately, without any serious consequences.

I was allocated to Barrie House but this had little meaning for me. The House system was supposed to develop healthy competition but to me it all seemed rather pointless and I have never been inclined to partisanship in the realms of sporting activity. The House gaining the highest number of points in any year was presented with what I think must have been an original oil painting at the Speech Day. Afterwards, the painting was returned to its usual place on the wall of a particular classroom but decorated with the colours of the victorious House. It

remained covering the clean patch on the wall for another twelve months. The picture had so little meaning for me that I fail completely to recall its subject.

Life had expanded greatly as we exchanged views and tales with children from other parts of the town. We began to identify with the School as we developed both mentally and physically. I was over 13 years of age before I was allowed to wear long trousers and then for a time, only on Sundays. It was no different for anyone else. Only in our last year at School did we begin to wear long grey flannel trousers for school. Lads were every bit as self-conscious in their first long trousers as were the girls in their first pairs of lisle or artificial silk stockings.

A notable feature in the life of Waterloo Central School not experienced at either of the other two Central Schools, was its annual three-day visit to the Capital. It was so arranged that three separate itineraries were available starting with the first visit, regardless of which year the pupil happened to be in at School. The more fortunate kids who went every year saw something different each time. I went but once in my first year. For my visit I was given a fantastic amount of spending money of no less than fifteen shillings. For this, mother made me a special pocket attached to the waist band of my trousers but inside. In our simplicity, we believed that London and all cities were teeming with pickpockets. It was a fact that in many public places notices were posted proclaiming "Beware of pick-pockets".

With every good thing that came along, it seemed that there was a price to be paid. In the case of the trip to London, every child going was committed to writing and illustrating a book about it. After leaving Oldham in a single deck Corporation Bus, we entrained at Central Station, Manchester, with notebooks at the ready. The Central Line was always my favourite

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route to London until the line was eventually abandoned. Travelling via the Peak District to Derby and then on to St Pancras, we had much to see but I do not think that much went into our notebooks. Something over four hours later, we were crocodiling out of St. Pancras to one of those numerous small hotels in the surrounds of Russell Square. It was the first hotel in which most of us had ever stayed and, apart from some lads who tried to play on the lift and others who were up at the crack of dawn long before breakfast to play the gramophone in the lounge, we all were generally on our best behaviour. The girls stayed at another hotel across Russell Square.

Already advised to buy fruit from a particular barrow which was outside the hotel each morning, we proceeded to lay in fruit as for a siege. Most of us were sharing bedrooms on the top floor. The rooms were not provided with litter bins and late at night, the road outside must have been showered with apple cores raining down from a great height. No complaints were forthcoming, however, next morning some of the food was a little strange to our northern palates which were unused to smoked bacon or polony or savaloy meat for tea.

In addition to the set itinerary which took in all the 'musts', certain optional extras were arranged. Determined not to miss anything, I was up early to join a party out before breakfast to see the old Covent Garden Fruit Market and the coster-mongers with baskets piled high on their heads. Another small party visited Madame Tussaud's one evening. We went by tramcar and while the exhibition was impressive, I was much more greatly impressed with the tramcar system which permitted double-deck trams to lower their trolleys and disappear underground with the live connection then under the road.

London seemed to be a very exciting place of strange sights and busy traffic. We were highly amused to see grown men in singlet and shorts running through the streets of London long before jogging became fashionable. We thought that the locals "talked funny". From early Wednesday morning to Friday had seemed a long time for me to have been away from home and had it lasted longer, I think I would have begun to feel a little homesick. I was glad to be

back in Oldham by early Friday evening.

My literary offering failed miserably to merit any award but it was well illustrated as I had ransacked our home for old postcards of London scenes. I succeeded in illustrating many sights we had never seen. The London visit was well organised and good value. Taking place in May it cost somewhere in the region of £3. 10s (£3.50p), or £4 including rail fare and full board. I did not go again but benefitted from the fact that those who did not go to London, got three days additional holiday from school.

The First-Form Christmas Party was a new and civilising experience. Dancing, it was indicated, was a social grace. While the boys remained at first a

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little uneasy, most entered into the spirit as on occasions prior to the Party, we went into the gymnasium for lessons in the Valeta, the Barn Dance, the Palais Glide and the Waltz. The Party itself was held in the Infant School which was in the basement of the building. It was then that I asked Alma, with due ceremony, to dance with me. I was totally non-plussed when she slapped me across the face. I think that she must have been influenced by a film she perhaps had seen in which a woman slapped a man across the face and had been engineering her own repeat. I stood, not knowing whether I was accepted or rejected for I really had not done anything to offend. We danced together for the rest of the evening, going in together for refreshments at the appropriate time. O sweet but fickle woman!

Examinations in all subjects taken were sat in June and December each year and we all had a full report to take home with a slip to be endorsed by our parents. While I had always managed to be near the top of the class, that is within the first seven places, one report showed that I had once been late for School during the Term. In my father's eyes this completely detracted from the good marks I had obtained. Once examinations were over, we were allowed to do our own thing until the holidays commenced. We passed the time either reading or drawing.

Sporting or athletic activities were really not in my line but I went along and did my best without even trying to opt out. One half-day each week was spent on the sports field which was situated some distance from the School. Facilities were primitive in the extreme and I was never in a hurry to get there to play cricket in summer and football in winter. On those often cold and damp afternoons, I was miserable as I chased after a ball that I rarely got near enough to kick and which, if it by chance came my way, I invariably mis-kicked. When the final whistle blew, I showed far more alacrity in getting away than I had in going to the ground. I raced up the hill to the Ordinance Hotel and often had a half-penny ride on the Circular Route tramcar to Cross Street, greatly enjoying the comforting warmth of the tram as it rattled down Glodwick Road. In summer we also trained for the School Sports and the Inter Central School Sports. On the appointed day, we journeyed to Hollins since that School had its sports ground adjacent to the School which was much more modern than ours. There are still some enthusiasts who cannot understand that some of us have no overwhelming urge to compete in kicking or hitting balls or other objects across greens or fields in all weathers. My participation in sports events was very much on sufferance, much to my father's dismay. He had ever been a sportsman and had at one time been opening bat for Moorside'Cricket Club.

In my second year at Waterloo, someone had the bright idea of forming a choir. Interested pupils were invited to go alone for audition and I duly

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presented myself. I was disappointed when it was announced that it had been decided to form a girls only choir. Three boys, however, were selected to sing in unison at a concert to be given in the gymnasium. I had a good but untrained voice and liked singing and I was delighted to be accepted. I sang, "Forty Years On", and "Linden Lea", with Ronald, a son of the Methodist

Manse, and Frank who, although from Clarksfield, was really of farming stock. My more cultural note of distinction was short lived for the choir and the male voice trio never sang again.

Talent was around in the School but it was not always recognised. One day, our Year was introduced to a girl who was then a pupil at the Hathershaw Council School. She performed but whether she sang, danced or recited, I do not recall but I do recall that her name was Dora Broadbent and whose mother was a milliner with a shop near the Palace Theatre on Union Street. We certainly did not then appreciate that she would become a great artist as Dora Bryan. Perhaps just a little ahead but roughly round about the same time, talent must have been hidden away at the Ward Street Central School in the shape and form of Eric Sykes. Waterloo, it seems, failed to produce even one star of stage and screen although there seemed to be no shortage of comedians at the time I was there.

The girls were beginning to grow in the most delightful way and while our relationships with them were maturing slowly, most lads were unsure and a little apprehensive of them. What a lad feared was rejection but worse still was ridicule. If a girl gave any sign of encouragement, she always seemed to have at least two close friends with her to whom she could retreat and gang-up on a mere boy. Later in our school career, four of us lads arranged to meet four girls at the Odeon Cinema one Saturday afternoon. The girls paid for themselves for it was as much as we could do to pay for ourselves then in this posh town cinema. Inside, we sat alternatively boy - girl and I was pleased to be next to Alma despite feeling terribly awkward and tongue-tied. True to form, however, had retreat been sounded, Winnie and Muriel had come along without boys to watch, but not necessarily the film. Thereafter for a time, we met on Saturday afternoons and went for walks. Gordon was sweet on a girl who attended at the High School. Known to our girl friends at Waterloo, she joined us on our urban rambles. Gordon's father had become a bus driver and according to which route he happened to be on, Gordon would suddenly dart round the back of the houses for fear of being seen walking with girls by his father. The rest of us had no such inhibitions. They were exploratory forays in boy-girl relationships but the uncertainty and the unsureness of ourselves was cruel.

I remained sweet on Alma but our early romance never blossomed. Her mother taught needlework on a peripatetic basis so that on certain days when I returned to School after lunch, I passed her on her-way to teach at Derker. We exchanged knowing smiles of recognition although I shall never really know

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how we knew who each other was. At School we sometimes read one-act plays.

In one, Alma read the part of someone whose name was Felicity. I thought she was superb. Speech Days were always held in the Co-operative Hall, King Street and were well organised and well attended by parents. Each year, the whole School learnt a French song and on the night stood up and sang it with feeling even though we did not always know what it was about. The Guest of Honour was usually the Chairman of the Education Committee supported by many other Civic dignitaries. Often it was a well known public figure namely, Alderman Elisha Bardsley. He was of ample proportions and when Mayor certainly had the corporation to go with his Chain. He spoke without inhibition in a broad Oldham accent which tended to get the kids giggling right away. The story was told of a Junior School teacher at religious instruction who asked, "Who was Elisha". Quick as a flash a little boy replied, "Please Miss, Mayor of Oldham last year."

Every year, pupils went up onto the platform to receive their prizes and certificates. The main certificate was the Central Schools Leaving Certificate. We really thought that it was something but later, many of us discovered that alongside the School Certificate, it was worthless. Perhaps now when there seems to be a need for good basic education, its value would have appreciated



but, of course, the recipients are now long past the need to produce such evidence.

After leaving School I was recalled the following Autumn for my final Speech Day. I sat as an ex-pupil at the back of the hall and did not rise this time to sing the French song. This time, however, I did make my way to the platform to receive my Leaving Certificate and the Miss Marjorie Lees Prize for Handicraft. Every year, the winner of this prize had received the envious stares of all the younger boys as he carried off a jack plane and tenon saw.

I passed on to the Commercial Section and on certain days each week I travelled a little further away from home to attend at Scotfield School. There we learnt touch typing to music and I am pleased to say that the ability has never left me entirely although I do tend to get my fingers plaited at times. Shorthand theory and elementary practice seemed easy enough as we studied our Pitman's Shorthand Manuals. Later, it became much more difficult and for me, the outlines failed to flow. Shorthand remains the only subject in which I failed to satisfy my examiners. I have since regretted my inability to make shorthand notes.

My parents had contracted for me to stay on a little beyond the statutory leaving age of 14 years in order that I might complete the Commercial Course and I stayed on for a little time beyond the end of March when I attained to the age of 14 years. Our Year just disintegrated as more and

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and more left to take up employment. It seemed sad that, after three happy years of growing up through adolescence together, there was no clean cut ending. Unlike Wellington's and Napoleon's encounter at Waterloo, this Waterloo had not been a battlefield and I retain many warm feelings in relation to friendships, both male and female, made there.

In the final analysis, I did manage to distinguish myself after all by carrying off the plane and the saw. While it was not the kind of School that can be described as one's Alma Mater, our education was not neglected. Many of my contemporaries went on to gain distinction in war service followed by successful careers in industry, business and, for a few, the professions.

Of course, there is always the other Alma to remember.

## **CHAPTER XV**

### **BOTH SURE AND STEADFAST**

"March On - The Colours," commanded a firm and resonant voice after the various Companies of The Boys' Brigade from many different churches assembled on spare land at the top of West Street for the Annual Church Parade of the Oldham Battalion. Ignoring orders to keep their eyes to the front, the newest recruits craned round to see from where the voice might have come. They saw only a very little man. Once when the Battalion was on the way to Camp at Grange over Sands, the train made an unscheduled stop at Carnforth. The little man got off the train to ensure that none of the boys did likewise. The Camp Adjutant stood on the platform and faced the train but was approached from the rear by a porter who condescendingly began, "Now Sonny...", but stopped short as the little man spun around. The porter found himself fixed by a pair of fierce eyes below which was a bristling waxed moustache. He was heard to murmur, "Oh Hell", as he made off. 'Jammie' Taylor from Chadderton, despite his short stature, had authority writ large upon him. Most lads who joined The Boys' Brigade in Oldham between the wars will remember him with respect if not affection.

Founded in 1883, much has already been written and recorded of the history of the first youth organisation for boys. The 3rd Oldham Company at Hope Congregational Church was founded 17 years later in 1900. I was fortunate to join that Company which had an established tradition and a Captain who was an exceptional Christian gentleman. Eric George Claydon was a Deacon of the Church, a Sunday School Teacher and a man of unwavering faith and self-

discipline. He was a solicitor in a partnership in Oldham and the successors to the Practice retain his name in its name today. He held a Company of 80 boys with the help of a number of lieutenants, most of whom were old boys of the Company. He firmly believed in the twin pillars of faith and discipline and the priorities were Bible Class attendance and attendance on the Drill Parade. All else was secondary.

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Each Thursday evening during the winter months, we fell in by Squads in the Church Hall for the Opening Service. Later, new recruits were marched off to be taught the basic elements of foot drill. The Company remaining was then reformed to be drilled by Lt. Jack Driver in Platoon Drill in fours. It was exacting and complicated, requiring a considerable amount of concentration and team effort. There were no 'Stars' and I liked drill all the more probably because of that fact. We learned to control ourselves and to stand still without fidgeting and we believed that we belonged to the finest Company in the Battalion.

Uniform was simple but effective. It consisted of a pill-box cap with chin-strap, a white cotton haversack with the empty sack folded in three and worn across the right shoulder and with a leather belt around the waist resting on the top of the folded sack. With a dark suit or even with a lighter one, a considerable measure of uniformity was achieved at minimal expense. It cost two shilling and sixpence (12½p) but the leather belt remained the property of the Company. Leather and brass metal parts had to be cleaned and polished while the two bands of white piping around the pill box cap had to be regularly blanco-ed. As some of us progressed in the B.B., we bought additional haversacks to ensure that we always had a clean one available which was particularly desirable when the annual Camp came around.

For various reasons, I was unable to attend a camp until 1938 but, in those days, the Battalion Camps varied little from year to year except that they alternated between Penmaenmawr on the North Wales coast and Grange over Sands on the North Lancashire coast. Pen., as it was affectionately known, was always the most popular. At Oldham Wakes about 100 boys would live under canvas for a week at minimal cost. Luggage was sent in advance and an Advance Party of Officers and Boys went ahead to prepare the site and erect the tents in neat orderly rows with a Parade Ground in the middle with its inevitable flagpole. Arriving by train at either Pen. or Grange, the Battalion fell in and marched off with Bands playing and the Colours proudly flying.

Tents were allocated with up to eight lads to a bell-tent and with floor boards, it looked cosy. A senior NCO was put in charge of each tent who was usually a lad of 16 years plus. It was easy to adjust to Camp routine as the old hands were ever ready to initiate the new boys. We changed into more casual gear of shirt and shorts before filling our palliasses with straw on which we would sleep for the week. We were summoned to the Mess, which was a large marquee, when the bugle sounded "Cookhouse". We elected our tent Orderly for the day for while each lad was responsible for cleaning his own enamel dishes and mug, the cooking pots had to be cleaned after each meal. Cooking was done on a field oven which sometimes meant smoked tea or burnt custard. When the Officers' Mess call sounded we really believed the words

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we sang to the bugle call,

*"The Officers they get pudding and pie*

*The Privates they get skilly".*

We survived the simple fare and made up for what we did not like by eating jam butties since each lad usually took his own pot of jam to Camp. Afternoons and evenings were free except on

Trip Days when we visited places of our choice in parties according to our means. There was always an excursion which cost nothing for there were always some lads who were spent up by the Tuesday. Other mornings were taken up with Route Marches when, after Morning Service, the Battalion moved off leaving only the Orderly Squad and Orderly Officer to ensure that the spuds were peeled and the latrines emptied and the field made tidy. Going out of Camp in the afternoon or evening in those days meant getting dressed up in uniform and so I found myself out with a friend in Grange over Sands on my first evening in Camp. It was a miserable evening of steady drizzle with not a soul to be seen but even with better weather, Grange over Sands is hardly a swinging city. The strains of a bugle from over the field alighted on our ears and we could not imagine what it meant. We made our way back to camp fearful of being late only to find that Retreat had been sounded as, at 9pm each evening, the Camp Flag was lowered. Next morning, we marched to Grange over Sands Congregational Church and with our Bugle and Brass Bands showed off a bit in front of the natives.

Oldham Wakes then commenced on the last Saturday in August and so it was always going dark well before bedtime. Often we were already in our pyjamas when we went for our supper of cocoa and a piece of fruit cake or parkin,. We consumed it by candlelight in our tents after having unrolled our beds, lying feet to the tent pole. Our tent officer entered for evening prayers following which we lay awaiting the "Last Post" and eventually "Lights Out".

The Serjeant blew the candle out but we did not always go to sleep, especially on the first night. We told stories from under the blankets until we were told off by the Night Officer but it was often our own tent commander who called us to order if he was keen to win the pins for the best tent of the week.

Early morning Rouse Parade was usually a run round the field at 7:30am but for Band Boys it was early morning Band Practice. Often it was cold and the instruments were cold and lips just would not perform properly. Later, on parade as the week wore on, the early morning practices seemed to pay dividends. Often, we were certain that had the camp lasted longer, we would have returned home playing just like Black Dyke Mills Band.

The Camp Concert on Friday Night was an impromptu but happy affair culminating in the presentation of the tie pins with the B.B. Crest in silver and enamel to the occupants of the best kept tent. When I received mine, I was glad that Serjeant Smalley had been so strict with us.

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On the final Saturday morning we breakfasted on boiled eggs before dropping and packing the canvas, provided that it was fine. The field was cleared in time for a sandwich lunch before we fell in after cleaning ourselves up. Sadly, the Camp Flag was lowered for the last time and we marched proudly to the strains of "Marching thro' Georgia" as the Brass and Bugle Bands combined impressively. We entrained for the journey back to the grim reality that was Oldham. For many lads, Camp was the only holiday they ever had away from home. Next day, after Bible Class, the Camp Fund reopened so that we might save for another memorable camp next year.

Sports went on all the year round according to season and competitions were arranged at Battalion level. Battalion Cricket and Football Leagues existed but while the 3rd had at least three football teams, the competitive aspect was played down as the officers believed the Drill Shield to be worth more than the Football Challenge Cup. It was a fact that unless a lad had attended Bible Class on the previous Sunday he was not qualified to play regardless of his ability. Despite my long service I never managed to get promoted higher than the third team on the football field. Not being a ball man, I still miskicked or miscaught the ball with unfailing regularity.

In addition to Band Practice, winter activities included a First Aid Class and a Gymnastic Class which achieved a remarkable standard considering the limited space and facilities available. To

jump over the horse, the run up was commenced in another room across the corridor. I progressed in First Aid but not without some early anguish. At home with my father one evening he somehow managed to cut himself rather badly. My first aid knowledge at that time was useless and my father let me know it. If only he could have broken his arm or a leg or even fractured his cranium, I could have worked wonders with a triangular bandage.

Like most recruits, I was attracted to the Band with its battered old instruments which seemed to consist more of solder than of brass. The Bandmaster, Stanley Yates, had a thankless task in trying to train an endless supply of boys in a limited amount of time to gain some knowledge of music and instrumental proficiency. Only a small percentage of lads persisted when it became more difficult but then with the successful lads, they were required to leave at the age of 17 years, unless they were appointed Staff-serjeant. Summer and winter alike the Band met for practice and played at Battalion events and on

the monthly Company Church Parade as well as taking 'engagements' at local Rose Queen Festivals. Such simple but effective brass band marches as "Slaidburn" and "True & Trusty" were played lustily on many occasion. For some reason in those days, tuba players were not easily come by and an old boy of the Company regularly and loyally turned out on this bass instrument. Alwyn had a great reputation for playing 'Oomps' spot on the beat. Only once

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had he been known to slip. According to legend, while on parade, a fly had settled on his music and he played it.

There was a never ending stream of competitions and events in Drill, sports, Displays and torch light parades on special occasions, Swimming and Life-saving instruction went on to name but a few activities. One activity which was always popular but which may seem strange in this day and age, was the Battalion Route March. On a particular summer Saturday afternoon, the Battalion would fall in with Bands and Colours and march to a prearranged destination where the Battalion was fallen out and the lads found other things to do. Tea was then provided to drink and we ate our 'butties' before falling in again and marching back to Oldham. In 1938, the destination was Stamford Park, Ashton Under Lyne. Unfortunately with two other Band boys I was by then working at the local Co-op Society until 4pm. So keen were we that we paid someone to take us in a car to Ashton so that we might have the privilege of marching back to Oldham with the Band. We never noticed the miles we marched and later, many Route Marches were recalled with nostalgia. Simple pleasure but lasting joy.

Bible Class was for many lads the first corporate act of worship which had any meaning. Bible stories came alive and we sang joyfully from the B.B. Hymnal. Not all our Officers were educated men but all took their turn in giving the Bible Class Address. No matter how inarticulate they were, the message came over because of their sincerity. Our Officers were devoted Christians who believed Christ to be "the anchor of the soul, being both sure and steadfast." From that text is derived the Anchor Badge of The Boys' Brigade together with its Motto, "Sure and Steadfast".

to be continued

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From the e-Postbag

No correspondence this month.

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

since the last newsletter :

\* Long Lost Histories: 'Little Ireland', Manchester

[HERE](#)

\* Manchester University Faculty of Science and Engineering

History and heritage

Our Faculty has a proud and storied history, illuminated with famous names and groundbreaking achievements.

[HERE](#)

\* Pandemic Retrospective Part 2: The provision of health services in Manchester in 1870s

[HERE](#)

\* The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913

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\* Search for Meanings & Distribution of 31 Million Surnames

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\* Charles Tuckett Senior and the British Museum Bindery fire of 1865

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\* History of Angel Meadow

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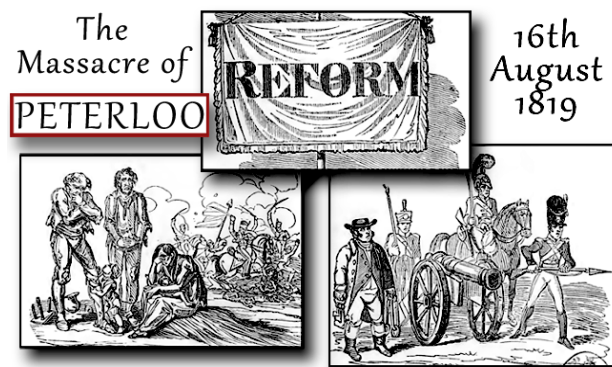
\* BBC Future : The forgotten medieval habit of 'two sleeps'

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

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## PETERLOO : the Bi-Centenary



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

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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Oldham Local Studies and Archives

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 previously, 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 archives 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](#)

Huddersfield Exposed [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)

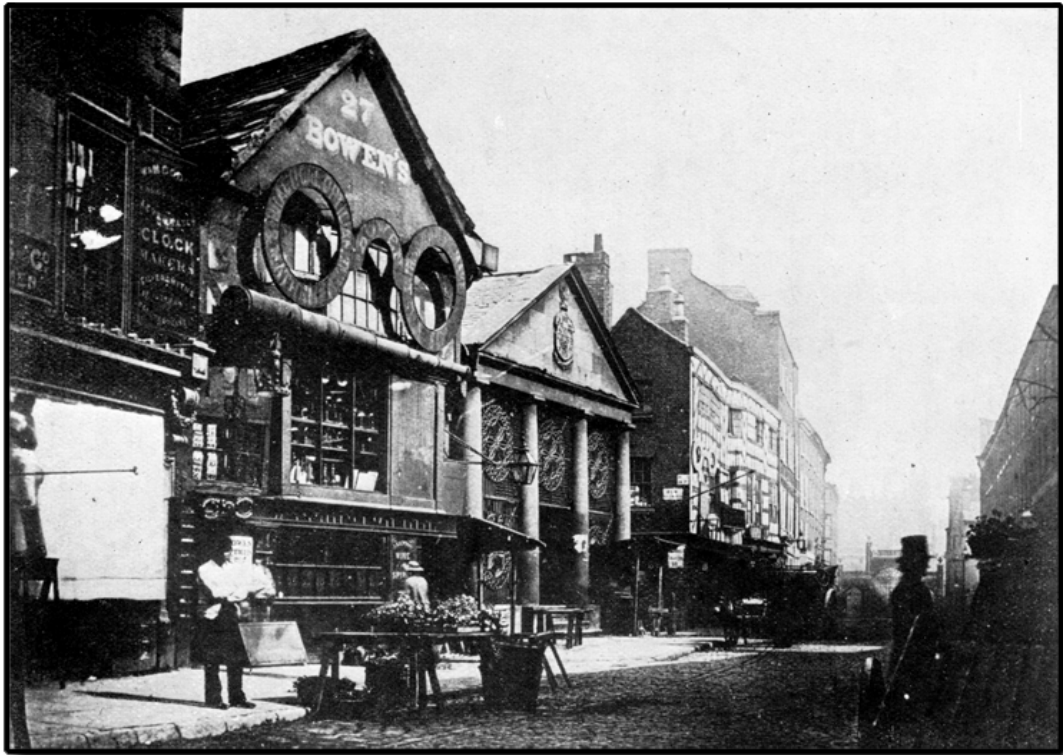
Tameside Local Studies and Archives - <https://www.tameside.gov.uk/archives>

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



**For the Gallery**

**From: *Manchester Streets and Manchester Men*, Series 3,  
by Thomas Swindells pub. 1907**



***'The Market Place, forty years ago'***

The Building with the pillars was the Fish Market, pulled down 1873. the Coal Exchange occupies the site.  
a photograph by Mr. W. Ellis

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THE MARKET PLACE OF TO-DAY.

From a Photograph by Mr. W. Ellis.

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## 'TENTERS'

These posts are situated between the Heights farmhouse and Greaves farmhouse, Thurston Clough Road, Saddleworth.

They were erected in 1840 for Robert Greaves who was a flannel manufacturer.

It is where the phrase 'on tenterhooks', meaning stretched or worried, comes from.



Photo Alex Balmforth



from 'Huddersfield Exposed'

from : *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 1938

### **STONE TENTER POSTS IN SADDLEWORTH.**

"Mr. Ammon Wrigley has recently called attention to a remarkable set of standing stones that are aligned, approximately east and west, on the hill-side between the old Austerlands road (from High Thurston Clough to Doctor Head) and the later and lower turnpike that passes through Wall Hill and Scout Head. Though the row is now interrupted by a modern field wall and a few of the stones have been broken up or removed, there are still about sixteen standing, regularly spaced over a distance of approximately 44 yards. They are massive slabs (of Highmoor stone), obviously all cut to the same shape for some purpose, but what that purpose was is not apparent. The original six-inch Ordnance map (Yorkshire, sheet 270) supplies the clue, for on the site of these stones, in the second field south of Greaves, it shows a line of "Tenters," and another shorter one in the next field towards Wall Hill. Long rows of wooden tenters for drying and stretching flannels and cloth were a familiar feature of the landscape in parts of the West Riding not so long ago. In Saddleworth timber was scarce and stone abundant, and Robert Greaves, flannel manufacturer of Wall Hill about a century ago, showed the native resource of the domestic clothier in utilising what came to his hand, when he probably set up these unique tenter posts. They stand fully six feet high and their narrow faces (to the south) are recessed at the top to carry the upper rail bolted to the slabs. The lower slot was cut deeper and considerably longer (about 13 ins.) because the lower rail had to be movable to stretch the blankets. So the rail itself was free but was held in the slot by a bar in front of it, sunk flush with the face of the stone and bolted to it top and bottom."

from : [Huddersfield Exposed](#)