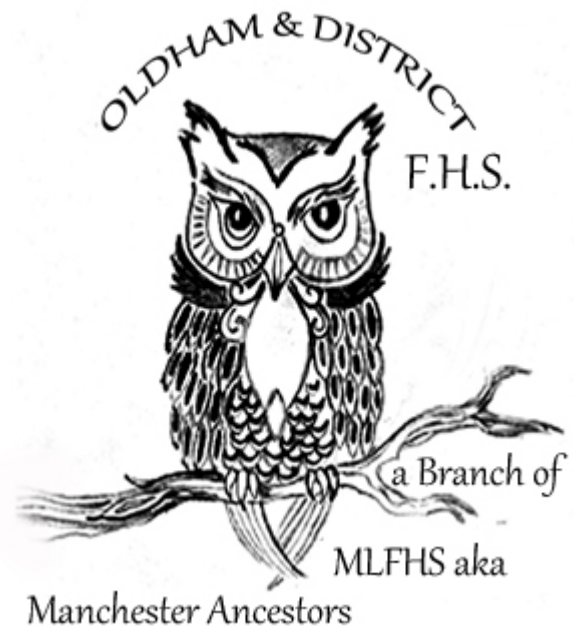


'e-Owls'



Contact us :

Branch Website page: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/oldham>
MLFHS Website homepage : <https://www.mlfhs.uk/>
Email Chairman : chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk
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Email Newsletter Ed : Oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk
Email Website Ed : Oldham_webmaster@mlfhs.org.uk

MLFHS mailing address is: Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society,
3rd Floor, Manchester Central Library, St. Peter's Square, Manchester, M2 5PD, United Kingdom

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

January 2024

MLFHS - Oldham & District Branch Newsletter

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Branch Information & News :

Branch Officers for 2023 -2024 :

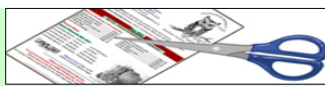
Committee Member : Chairman :	Vacant
Committee Member : Treasurer :	Gill Melton
Committee Member : Secretary :	Jan Costa
Committee Member : Newsletter :	Sheila Goodyear
Committee Member : Webmistress :	Sheila Goodyear
Committee Member : 'Country Member' :	Linda Richardson
Committee Member : Joan Harrison	
Committee Member : Patricia Etchells	
Committee Member : Hilary Hartigan	

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



'PEACE & GOODWILL'

for Christmas & the New Year
from the Oldham & District Committee

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**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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Joint Acting Chair's remarks:

Gill Melton our Treasurer...

As I write this, I have sent all my Christmas cards and wrapped all the presents, they just need to be delivered now and that is in hand. Yes, I am one of those people who likes to be organised. I hope you have or have had a Happy Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

We have a full programme booked for next year both on zoom and hybrid meetings. Details can be found on the Oldham pages of the MLFHS website. For our January meeting we welcome Dr. Michael Winstanley who is going to talk to us about "*Life and Work in Cotton Lancashire c1813 - 1914*". Because of the likelihood of bad weather, our January and February meetings will be Zoom only. So, our first "in person (hybrid) " meeting will be in March, and we hope to see old friends (and new) then.

Another matter that I need to mention is the election of the Committee for 2024/25 and some willing volunteers to help out. It doesn't matter if you don't live in the local area as our committee meetings are usually held on Zoom. Our Annual General Meeting will be held before the April Meeting in 2024, as it usually only takes around 5 or 10 minutes.

The Committee comprises:-

Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Webmistress, General Committee members with no specific roles

Anybody interested in joining the Committee should make themselves known to us at chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk by the end of February so that we can discuss with you what is involved in the workings of the Committee.

Gill Melton

Treasurer & Joint Chair

If you are interested in finding out more about the position of Chairman or wish to put yourself forward please contact us through the email address chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk

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**Editor's remarks.**

Hi Everyone,

I hope everyone is keeping well. As I begin writing this month's editorial remarks, Christmas begins to feel very close as we have completed our programme of talks for 2023 and we have rounded off our year with the annual volunteers' get together in Manchester pictures from the day are on the Facebook page. As a committee, we feel happy with the programme that we have enjoyed over 2023 and, hopefully can offer an equally interesting one for 2024.

In the Mixed Bag we have more pages from *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men...* this month, continuing with Series 1, I have returned to the earlier chapters and transcribed pages 1-18: *Manchester in 1804*, which include *Reminiscences of Quay Street*, *Manchester's Ancient Deanery*, *Place Names*, *The Charter of Charles I*, *Deansgate* and *Parsonage Well*.

We can also read more stories and anecdotes, from '*Short Stories about Failsworth Folk*' by Sim Schofield.

In the new '*Online Book Links*' section, it's another random selection: one from WW1, one

about County Family names and the third is a collection of short biographies of Lancashire authors. I hope you find something there that you enjoy either discovering or rediscovering. In the e-Postbag we have a couple of welcome emails, one concerning the AVRO centenary and one about the cotton industry in Shaw & Crompton.

In the Gallery, we have an image from *Short Stories about Failsworth Folk*, one from *Manchester Streets and Manchester Men* and a montage of postcard images depicting *Poet's Corner, Long Millgate*.

There are no new additions on the Branch website pages but the 2024 programme is now complete [HERE](#). And can be downloaded for reference, from the Miscellany page of downloads, [HERE](#).

And, to catch up on anything you have missed, you can visit the '[Snippets](#)' page which has links to all transcriptions, articles and Gallery images in previous newsletters.

Sheila

I am always very happy to receive articles, pictures etc., for the 'Mixed Bag' or 'e-Postbag' 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, the new site opens in the same window so the 'back button' would have to be used to return to the newsletter. For more options, including 'open in a new tab', right-click on the link for a drop-down menu of choices.

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Oldham & District Branch

Monthly Meetings

Oldham & District Branch

There was no Meeting in December

We wish all our Readers,

Members and Visitors,

A Very Happy &

Peaceful New Year .



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**2024**

***January Meeting - on zoom only***



Saturday  
13th Jan.  
at  
2 pm



### ***Life and Work in Cotton Lancashire, c1830-1914***

*'What were the major changes in the Lancashire cotton towns during the 19th century and did they affect the roles of men, women and children?*

*Is it possible to generalise about life and work in them or were they all distinctive?*

*And how different were these towns from elsewhere in Lancashire or the rest of the country?'*

This illustrated presentation, given by Dr. Michael Winstanley,  
seeks to provide answers to these questions.

A free, zoom only meeting... all are very welcome

Booking for zoom is on [Eventbrite](#)

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Details, of the 2024 programme of talks, are on the 'Meetings' page of the Branch website
[HERE](#)

A .pdf copy of the 2024 programme is available [HERE](#) to download from the 'Miscellany' page.

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### **MLFHS Branches delivering their monthly meetings and talks**

#### **Anglo - Scots – No Meeting in January**

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

Booking necessary on [Eventbrite](#)

MLFHS Members free; non members £3

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Bolton – January 10th (please note, 2nd Wednesday)

<p>MLFHS Bolton Branch Meetings - Hybrid</p>	<p>Wednesday 10th January at 7:30 pm</p>	<p>'Tom & Fanny have gone to Russia, and liked it so much, they stayed for 40 years' given by Wayne Ashton</p>
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at Bolton Golf Club, Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL6 4AJ, and on zoom.

Booking, on Eventbrite, is only necessary if attending on zoom.

members free; non-members £3.

Please note this is the second Wednesday of the month

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

Manchester Meetings... January 2024
Two Quarterly Meetings

MLFHS aka Manchester Ancestors	Wednesday 17th January at 10:30 am	Urmston, Flixton and Davyhulme: A Postcard Heritage given by Michael Billington
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In Manchester Central library only

Bookings on [Eventbrite](#) : members free; non-members £3.
~~~~~

|                                                              |                                               |                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MLFHS</b><br>aka<br><b>Manchester</b><br><b>Ancestors</b> | Wednesday<br>17th<br>January<br>at<br>1:00 pm | <b>'The</b><br><b>Deansgate Story'</b><br>given by<br>Keith Warrender |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|

**In Manchester Central library only**

Bookings on [Eventbrite](#) : members free; non-members £3.  
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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.

\* Hi All

Another 832 records have been added to the Great Database for staff record cards from Horwich Locomotive Works covering surnames SUDDLELL-WARD.

Thanks to Jim Chadwick and his team for these.

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* Hi All

A further 4,830 records have been added to the Great Database consisting of BMD announcements from the Manchester Courier for 1848.

Thanks to Linda Bailey, Laura Lewis, Chris Norcross and Chris Hall for this latest addition.

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\* Hi All

Another 768 records have been added to the Great Database. These are the Horwich Locomotive Works staff records for surnames PILKINGTON to TABERNER.

Thanks to Jim Chadwick and his team for the latest additions to this data.

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* Hi All

Another addition to the Great Database. This time 469 records of Manchester Transport Staff covering surnames BABCOCK to BAZELEY.

Thanks to Barry Henshall, Phil Wharram and Stan Chaplin for these.

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All MLFHS publications previously issued as CDs/DVDs have now been converted into downloadable files with consequent reductions in price and saving the ever-increasing costs of postage - particularly to purchasers outside the UK.

The full catalogue can be found at :

<https://www.mlfhs-shop.co.uk/collections/downloads>

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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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**Saddleworth Historical Society ... Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7.30pm**

‘The Roads of Saddleworth & their traffic from 1900 to 1930’

an illustrated presentation given by xx

Society members are free, but a £3 charge to non-members is applicable at the door.

All are welcome to attend meetings. Refreshments are available.

The venue is the Saddleworth Museum Gallery, High Street, Uppermill.

Website [HERE](#)

**Saddleworth Civic Trust** has no meeting or event planned at the present time.

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](#)

~~~~~  
Moorside & District Historical Society ... 15th January, 2024.

xxr

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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](#)

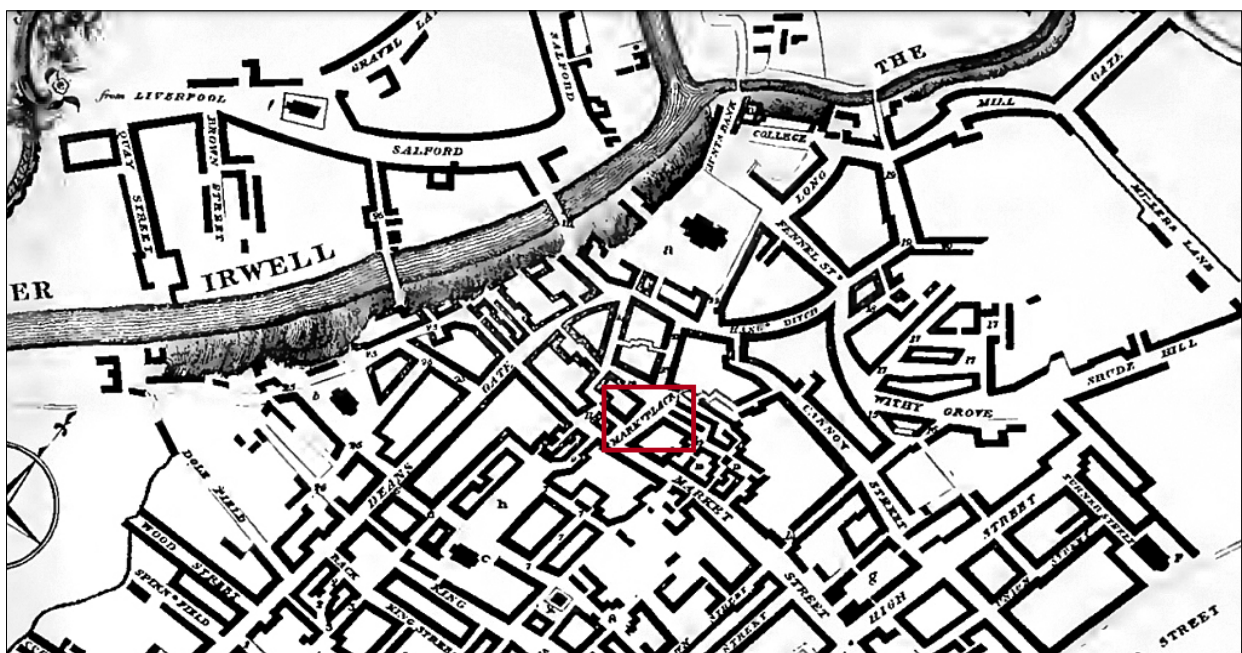
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**'A Mixed Bag'**

**Our serialisation of *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men* Vol. 1 (1st series) published in 1906 and started in our newsletter in 2023-08. It will continue through succeeding newsletters. This month we have the opening chapter, 'Manchester in 1804' followed by 'The Theatre Royal'.**

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

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

Introduction by James Croston, Pub 1875



## MANCHESTER IN 1804.

### p. 1

A century ago Joseph Aston published the first edition of his book describing Manchester and Salford under the title of "*The Manchester Guide*." As this was the first attempt ever made to comprise within one small volume a historical description of the towns, together with an account of them as they appeared to the writer, the anniversary should not be allowed to pass unnoticed.

The Manchester of 1804, as it appeared to Joseph Aston, was a very different town from the city as we know it in 1904. In extent it was limited to a small area. Not only was Ardwick Green a rural spot, but beyond where Ducie-street is to-day only a fringe of houses extended to Ardwick; the ground occupied by London Road Station and beyond that right away to Ancoats Lane being open fields. Turning along Great Ancoats-street, then better known as Ancoats Lane, and resembling a lane in most respects, the fields still stretched almost to the street. Shudehill pits stood on one side of Swan-street, with gardens opposite. Most of the land between Hanover-street and Miller-street was unbuilt upon, and the new burial ground adjacent to St. Michael's Church, now known as St. Michael's Flagg, was away in the fields. Where Victoria Station is now, there were fine houses

### p.2

with gardens and fields; a country lane leading to Strangeways Hall. In Salford the fields were reached at New Bailey-street, the outlook from the prison being extremely rural. Much of the land in the neighbourhood of Quay-street was formed into garden allotments, and in Oxford-street only four buildings were to be seen after passing St. Peter's Church. Picturesque Garratt Hall stood on the banks of Shooters Brook, which then ran open, and Granby's Row fields were entirely unbuilt upon. Within the area thus roughly sketched was clustered together the Manchester of 1804, the town described by Aston in his "Guide." Reverting now to the volume itself, we will briefly note some striking features presented by it. One chapter is devoted to the streets, squares, &c., in which he tells us that "the number of streets, squares, courts, yards, and other inhabited places in Manchester are now over eight hundred in number." "Mosley-street," we are told "contains many capital houses, and if it had fortunately been a few yards wider it would have been one of the best streets in the north of England." Lever's Row [now Piccadilly] was "the most pleasant situation in the town," The infirmary gardens serving to "enliven the prospect from the windows of the houses." Peel-street, which some years before formed portion of the land rented by a dyer who paid for it together with a house, a dye house, &c., a rental of £14 a year; had then become the centre of the warehouse district. Pool-fold was the site of "many handsome lofty warehouses," although previous to 1781 it had been covered. By "gardens, barns, and cottages." Grosvenor Square

### p.3

(All Saints) had just been laid out, and when finished "would rival the finest squares in other large towns." "A large and flourishing plantation and pleasure ground form the centre, which is guarded all round with iron palisades." The site is now covered by the church and churchyard. Ardwick Green was "one of the best built and most pleasant suburbs in the kingdom," and the present resident of Salford Crescent will rub his eyes with wonderment when he reads the following description of it: - It stands upon a spot almost unrivalled for a beautiful and commanding prospect, which from the nature of the situation can never be interrupted by buildings; and the inhabitants of the charming elevation will always be sure of rich country scenery, in view of their front windows, however crowded and confined the back part of their buildings may become. The fertile valley – the meandering of the River Irwell, approaching to and receding from the Crescent, the rural cots, the pleasant villas, the rising hills, and the distant mountains, form a landscape which never fails to create an admiration that will reiterate



as often as the eye looks over the fascinating picture." As we see the pall of smoke that hangs over the valley to-day we realise the tremendous change that a century has produced. In the centre of the town, Market-street, still untouched by the improver's hand, was a narrow tortuous thoroughfare leading to the Market Place, where still were to be seen. the cross, stocks, and pillory. Smithy Door and Smithy Bank, with their picturesque buildings, were in startling contrast to the Victoria-street and hotel as we see them. Victoria-street was not dreamed of, and

#### **p.4**

from the corner of Salford Bridge a footpath led across the churchyard, which then stretched down almost to the river. On the river bank itself stood a number of old houses, several of which were licensed for the sale of liquor. Deansgate was only built up to a point a little beyond St. John-street, and where the Free Library and Market stand was Humfrey's Garden, where the housewives of the period used to resort for their savoy, spring salads, and potatoes. At the corner of Priestnor-street [now Liverpool Road] was Dolly Phillip's bread shop, which was sacked by the rioters in 1812. Five of the rioters, including a woman, were afterwards executed at Lancaster. From Priestnor-street to where the railway arch crosses the road was a pleasant walk, shaded by trees, and locally known as Lady's Walks; while from a point a few yards away a footpath through the fields and overshadowed by many fine trees provided a favourite promenade as far as Cornbrook Bridge. Markets for the sale of different varieties of produce were scattered over the town, that for fish being at the Old Shambles and in Poor-fold; for meat in the Market Place, at New Cross, Bank Top, and in Turner-street; for corn in Fennel-street, for potatoes at Campfield, for fruit in Fennel-street, for cattle at Hyde's Cross, and for cheese in Hanging Ditch.

The town was governed by a boroughreeve and two constables, who were chosen annually at a meeting of the Court Leet. These officials were assisted in the performance of their duties by a number of special constables. Forty five watchmen or "Charlies," nightly paraded the streets from nine in the evening to

#### **p.5**

six in the morning in winter, and from nine to five in summer; and the comfortable sleepers would periodically hear the hour and the state of the weather proclaimed. It was very encouraging as the hours of daylight approached to hear the words called under your bedroom window, "Past four, and a fine frosty morning."

The streets were lighted by means of two thousand oil lamps, and were swept twice a week. The police authorities were located in a house in King-street, the site of which is denoted by the street name of Police-street. From thence the watchmen issued forth in their nightly patrols, and the runners who tracked down evil-doers and reformers also used it as a centre. It was here that a few years Mister Joseph, or Joe Nadin ruled supreme.

#### **p.6**

### **REMINISCENCES OF QUAY STREET.**

Despite its present depressing surroundings the name of Quay-street reminds us of many incidents and associations which in their day had an important bearing upon the life of the town. It serves to call back to the mind the fact that it had its origin in Manchester's first attempt to get nearer to the sea, or if that failed to bring the sea nearer to the town. For many generations the Mersey had been navigable as far as Bank Quay, Warrington, but in 1720 an Act of Parliament was obtained to make the Mersey and Irwell navigable as far as Manchester. This was done by means of weirs, locks, and cuts across the principal bends of the river, communication being made thereby with the Mersey at Runcorn. The company was styled, "The proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation," but for many years the popular appellation was the Old Quay Company. This was to distinguish it from the New Quay Company, which was formed in 1822, and which entered into carrying competition with the old company.

It was in connection with the launching of a new flat at the wharf of the new company at New Bailey Bridge on February 29th, 1828, that there occurred a disaster that appalled our grandfathers. The new vessel, fully rigged, was christened the "Emma" by two young ladies, the daughters of Mr. W. B. Grime, the agent of the company, amidst the cheers of assembled crowds,

**p.7**

and the strains of music from the band of the 9<sup>th</sup> Regiment stationed in the yard, and the process of launching was just completed when she heeled. over on her side throwing those who were on board into the river. The greatest confusion ensued, but the work of rescue was immediately commenced. In all thirty-eight lives were lost. Amongst the rescued were the two young ladies who had taken so prominent a part in the ceremony; and in later years the elder one took a leading part in philanthropic and other work in the city. The standing memorials to her memory to~day are the Albert Memorial in Albert Square, presented by her to the city in 1867, and the Cromwell Monument in Victoria-street, another gift to the city.

Reverting to the old company, when it commenced business it had a quay at the bottom of a country lane known as Quay-street, and in its advertisements it stated that "there are convenient warehouses at both keys (Manchester and Warrington), and great care would be taken of all goods that come up or go down the river." Aston tells us that about 1750 a number of rooks, which had occupied some tall trees in Shudehill, migrated to trees that grew in Quay-street; but that as their new homes were cut down about 1770, the birds were driven entirely out of town.

The thoroughfare did not lose its rural character, however, for many years after this, as is shown by the story oi the present recreation ground. On the site of Messrs. Gratrix's building stood Byrom House, the town residence for a. long period of the members of the Byrom family. Edward Byrom was residing here in 1768,

**p.8**

when he built St. John's Church. In a diary of the period we read under date April 28, "Went to the quay to Cousin Byrom's to see the first stone laid of a church that he is building in the field behind his house." Later entries tell us of great doings in November, when the rearing was celebrated, the workmen dining at Byrom House, flags flying, bells ringing, cannon and music; and of the consecration by the Bishop of Chester in July, 1769. Edward Byrom died in 1773, and his daughter Eleanor remained in residence at 23, Quay-street until her death in 1838. As a child she was very delicate, and it was often thought that she would not live to womanhood. However the child spent much of her time playing among the grass and under the trees in the field opposite the house, which fact was believed by the family to have so benefitted her health that she became stronger, and survived till her eighty-second year.

When she died, the estate passed to her niece, Miss Eleanora. Atherton, who to the time of her death in 1870, lived some portion of every year at the "house at the Quay." Not only so, but recognising the benefit her aunt had derived from it, she carefully tended the field opposite the house and it was at one time generally believed in the neighbourhood that in her will or in some other way she had left instructions that it should never be built upon. It is a recreation ground today, and although its surroundings and appearance have changed since the days when little Eleanor Byrom played amongst the daisies there, it still serves the purpose of a playground for the children of the present day.

**p.9**

When Casson and Berry's map was published in 1741 there was only another house in Quay-street, and that stood nearer the top, where Messrs. Ralli Brothers' warehouse now stands. This was, a. century ago, the handsomest and largest house in the town. As a proof of its extent it is stated that on one occasion Sir Watts Horton, Bart, of Chadderton Park, Middleton,

passing through Manchester on his way to the Earl of Grosvenor's residence at Eaton Hall, rested one night there; and that forty-two beds were prepared for the occasion. The house was long occupied by Lady Egerton, whose son Thomas was raised to the peerage as the Earl of Wilton by George III. After her death it was tenanted by Mr. Lloyd, barrister-at-law, and later still was divided into three residences, one of which was long known as Pitt's dancing academy. After these two houses, one of the next to be erected was the one referred to recently as having been tenanted by Mr. Cobden. The house which stood next door to Byrom House was built by William Allen, who was the son of John Allen, lord of the manor of Urmston, and who lived at Davyhulme Hull, Flixton, and Mayfield, Moss Side. William Allen afterwards failed in business, and the house was purchased by Mr. William Hardman, a gentleman of artistic and musical tastes. He was a skilled musician, and he built at the back of the house a splendid music-room which was often used for rehearsals in connection with the Gentlemen's concerts. His collection of paintings at Quay-street was said to have cost him over £30,000; in addition to which he had a valuable cabinet filled with rare gold, silver, and copper coins.

#### **p.10**

A century ago many wealthy families resided in the town, but Thomas Barritt has left it on record that not one of them "could cope with the studio in Quay-street for literature, science, and the arts." Mr. Hardman left two sons; John, who married Miss Tipping, of Crumpsall Hall, and Thomas, who inherited his father's tastes; and three daughters, the eldest of whom commanded £30,000, an immense dower in those days. Thomas Hardman died unmarried in 1838, at Richmond House, Higher Broughton. Mr. Cobden appears to have been the first tenant of No. 21 after the death of William Hardman, and later it was owned by George Falkner (the friend of John Owens), who acted as chairman of the Owens Trustees, who let the house to them for the sum of £200 year, and soon afterwards presented it to them. It was opened as the Owens College on March 12, 1851, and continued to be used as such until the erection of the new College in Oxford street in 1873. The building, much extended and altered from what it was when Cobden lived there, is now used as the County Court.

One other resident of Quay-street should be named. Peter Clare lived for many years at number 50. His father was, a century ago, a clock, watch, and smokejack maker in Deansgate, the son succeeding him as a clock maker. More [HERE](#). As such he became famous, and several of his productions, including one in the rooms of the Literary and Philosophical Society, George-street, and another in the entrance hall of the reference Library, King-street, are keeping good time to-day. As the close friend of Dr. Dalton he was an active member of

#### **p.11**

the learned society just named, and was for some time one of its secretaries. One who knew him well, after referring to the neatness of Clare's attire at all times, describes how he and his friend "the greater Ajax" appeared in the streets of Manchester seventy years ago. He says: "They both wore the garb of a Quaker in cut, not drab, but black, and there was a primness and finish about their broadcloth and spotless linen that one seldom saw. Clare was erect and dignified, and seemingly proud of the burden on his right arm which Dalton's left hand pressed upon it. Dalton's short body, on the other hand, was very much bent, and while Peter Clare was his prop on one side, a short stick assisted him on the other; but in spite of the stoop he turned up to heaven a countenance from which beamed a combination of kindness, happiness, and sincerity, such as, once witnessed, can never be forgotten."

Quay-street is with us, very different from what it appeared to Eleanor Byrom or even to Richard Cobden or Peter Clare. The trees have gone, and little in its surroundings betoken cheerfulness or happiness. It is therefore sincerely to be hoped that at least Eleanor Byrom's playground may remain an open space for ever.

#### **p.12**

## **MANCHESTER'S ANCIENT DEANERY.**

As we pass along the Deansgate of to-day the attention is fully occupied by the stirring scenes presented to the eye. There is so much to be seen that it is almost impossible on the spot to carry the mind back to the days long before the advent of tramcars, or even railways, before stage coaches had appeared on our roads, and where what is now a bustling centre of industry was a quiet country lane. And still there is standing in our thoroughfare to-day, devoted, like its neighbours, to commercial purposes, a building which takes us back to those early days of our city's history. It is a far cry to 1320, nearly six hundred years ago. In our national history the battle of Bannockburn had been fought six years before, but Edward, the Black Prince, was not yet born; and sixty years were to elapse before John Wycliffe issued his translation of the Bible. When, therefore, modern England was in its infancy, when John Deeverdeu was rector of the Church of Manchester, a survey of the land in the Manor of Manchester was taken. In it we read that the Church owned as endowment eight burgages in Manchester and the villages of Newton and Kirkmanshulme, with park woods, and pastures.

### **SOME PLACE-NAMES.**

Mention is made of "two acres of land, and a place of pasture without the gate, between the waters of Irk and Irwell; also of the wood of Allport, which might be

#### **p.13**

enclosed and made a park at the will of the Lord. joyned to the rectory of Manchester, saying that a place called Blenorchard or Walleyreems, was between them"; and we read also that the "Parsonage House was near to a field called the Parsonage, in or near the street called Deansgate." This field called the Parsonage gave the names to several thoroughfares in the neighbourhood of St. Mary's Churchyard. The land hereabouts, consisting of three large fields lying between the Parsonage House in Deansgate and the river had been given as an endowment of the ancient rectory of Mamecestre. It comprised four oxgangs of glebe land, and was granted to the Church by Albert Greslet, third Baron of Mamecestre. We thus find that the street names referred to are amongst the oldest and most interesting in the city. There is no evidence as to what extent the Parsonage House was used for residential purposes by the various rectors, but it is believed Thomas de la Warre, first warden under his own foundation, resided there for many years. The dissolution of the College in 1547 wrought many changes, but the charter of Elizabeth, granted in 1578 "provided one College House for the Warden, it he be present"; and a further charter of the next century [Charles 1., 1635] granted to the warden "one parcel of land with the appurtenances in Manchester aforesaid, which is called the Parsonage Croft, containing by estimation two acres." In the same charter an attempt was made to prevent absenteeism on the part of the Warden and Fellows, an evil then on the increase. That the parsons of those days were capable of roguery was proved by the findings

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against Thomas Earle, who seems to have resided at the Parsonage House from 1570 to 1578. He made a number of "long leases of the tythes and some of the lands," and "alienated several houses and tenements in Deansgate." He was finally dispossessed by Queen Elizabeth, and was succeeded by William Chadderton, who "was a learned man and liberal, given to hospitality."

### **THE CHARTER OF CHARLES I**

Whilst in residence at Deansgate, Chadderton received an address signed by Henry, fourteenth Earl of Derby, and other notables, in which it was set forth that "the maintenance of preaching and hospitality were two things most needful in this county." The Charter of Charles I. was the result of the conduct of Warden Murray, who being a favourite at the Court of James I, refused, when appointed to take the oaths which bound him to residence. It is said of him that after preaching before James I. from the words "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," he

kissed the King's hand, and was greeted with "Thou art not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, but by \_\_\_ the Gospel of Christ may be ashamed of thee." He only preached twice at the Collegiate Church, neglecting every duty pertaining to his office, and in the end was punished by order of Charles I. In 1635 "he was fined £2,000 to the King's use, suspended from his ministerial functions, excommunicated, deprived of the wardenship, condemned in costs, and committed to the Gatehouse," a punishment sufficiently all-embracing. A very different character was that of "silver-tongued Wroe," the "Lancashire

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Chrysostom, "who was warden from 1634 to 1718. So great was his personal popularity that the Chapter voted him a sum of money "to be expended in rebuilding and repairing the Deansgate House." Whittaker, who knew the house well, described it as it would appear when Wroe was in residence there, and said that many of the rooms were "ornamented in the style of magnificence that was universally adopted by the higher rank of gentlemen three or four centuries ago, with embossed and figured stucco on the walls; and the general aspect and architecture of the whole still carried an appearance of considerable antiquity with it." In the building as we know it, although forming only portion of the original, there are a few features that take us back to those days. The arched roof, with the pavement below composed of bluish-grey diamond-shaped stones, now covered by floor boards, was the "hall or portico of the dignified structure" described by Whittaker. There are also several pieces of old stained glass, an ancient-dated spout head, and a room wainscotted with solid oak panelling; whilst in the cellars is a room cut out of the solid rock and containing a number of recesses evidently intended to serve the purposes of wine bins. When alterations have been made in recent times fine massive beams of oak, black with age and hard enough to defy any but the best tempered of tools, have been revealed, showing how well our forefathers built. We thus get a glimpse of the house as it was when Warden Wroe resided there. Wroe died on January 1, 1718, and was succeeded by Samuel Peploe, who only seems to have resided there until 1723, when he was appointed

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to the See of Chester. After this he resided at Chester, being an absentee from Manchester; and his son who succeeded him proved to be very little better than his father in this respect. However, the Rev. Mr. Oldfield resided there at a later period; and in the Poor Rate Book for 1770 the Deanery and adjacent land was assessed at a rate representing a rental value of £200.

#### **A PICTURE OF DEANSGATE.**

It is to be regretted that no view of the old building as it appeared before the alterations that were made in the succeeding half century is known to exist. As showing the rural character of the Parsonage surroundings when Mr. Oldfield lived there the following advertisement, which appeared in "Harrop's Mercury" of August 22, 1769, may be quoted: "To be let, and entered on immediately, a large garden, situated at the west end of St. Mary's Church, Manchester, reaching down from the wall to the river, wherein is contained a Flower Garden, Orchard, and Shrubbery, with a large quantity of Gooseberries and Currant-berry Trees, Strawberries, Fruit Trees round the Walls, a Neat Summer House, with two rooms papered, and Grates fixed up in each room which goes alongside the River, lying open to the Fields on that side, which makes the Air good, and the Garden pleasant. There is likewise, planted a regular succession of Bulbous and Fibrous rooted Perennials, some of which are in Flower most of the year." Such would be the outlook from the back windows of the Deanery, the view being pleasant and rural, hedgerows and fields stretching as far as the eye could reach.

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#### **THE PARSONAGE WELL**



Another interesting feature was the Parsonage well, to which reference is made in a lease of the period, the tenants of certain lands thereabouts being entitled to resort thither for water. A few years ago, when the premises adjoining those of Messrs. Armstrong were removed to make way for the new Deansgate Arcade. among several interesting discoveries was one of a well, well built, circular, and about fifteen feet deep. It had been flagged over and forgotten but was in former days probably the well referred to. Warden Oldfield was the last clerical resident, and before the close of the century the building appears to have been divided into several tenements. One of these was for many years occupied by Henry Barrowclough, who removed thither from the back of the churchyard, where he carried on business as an ale and porter dealer. In Deansgate he followed the vocation of a sheriff's officer, transforming the house into what was known as a "sponging-house." It is said that on one occasion Barrowclough shot a debtor who was making an attempt to escape through one of the windows. After Barrowclough's death the premises were occupied for some little time by William Cowdroy, junior, who published there the " Manchester Gazette," which had been commenced by his father in St. Mary's Gate. In 1825, or nearly eighty years ago, Joseph Armstrong, watch and clock maker, took over the premises, and still the family are tenants, and take a justifiable pride in their interesting building. But what great changes have taken place in that period of time. When the founder of the business took the

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premises he lived there, and the sons who assisted him in the conduct of the business, and who afterwards succeeded him, were born. Deansgate itself, a tortuous thoroughfare of varying width, was only eight yards wide at the corner of St. Mary's Gate; and many of the buildings were mean in the extreme; whilst in walking from Salford Bridge at the foot of Smithy Bank to Great Bridgewater-street the pedestrian passed thirty-two taverns and public-houses. The Parsonage green furnished the site for St. Mary's Church, and it is quite in order with the usual fitness of things that the green of a century and a half ago should now be a place for public rest and recreation. Everything else has changed except that the street names remain to remind us of the days of fields and gardens, flowers and fruit trees.

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THE THEATRE ROYAL SOME NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS IN ITS HISTORY

THE OPENING

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On May 7, 1844, the old Theatre Royal in Fountain-street was burnt down. It was insured in three offices for £15,000, but as the insurance companies refused to rebuild the theatre but preferred making a cash payment, the proprietors decided to abandon the theatrical venture. They sold their patent to John Knowles, who purchased the Wellington Hotel and Brogden's Horse Bazaar in Peter-street. These buildings were pulled down and the present Theatre Royal erected on the site. The architect was Francis Chester, and the cost of the building was £23,000. It was a bold speculation for one man to make, and a writer said at the time "the great perseverance, known business ability, spirited enterprise, and large expenditure of the proprietor, are, as far as we know, unexampled in the annals of theatres."

The opening performance took place on September 29, 1845, in the presence of nearly 2,500 persons, who filled the building. The play bill for the evening is very interesting, and well repays perusal. After the performance of Weber's "Oberon" overture, a prize opening address was read by Mr. J.H. Wallack, the stage manager. The proprietor had offered a premium of £5 for the best address submitted. Sixty-four addresses were sent in, the judges awarding the prize

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to Mark Barry. The Lancashire poet, John Critchley Prince, was a competitor, and was awarded

a sovereign for the lines he submitted. After the reading of the address, the drop scene rose, disclosing the whole of the stock company grouped upon the stage. Novello's arrangement of "God save the Queen" was sung, the solos being taken by Miss Isaacs, Mrs. Hoskins, Mr. Hime, and Mr. M'Mahon. The play produced was Douglas Jerrold's comedy, "Time Works Wonders," the cast including many Manchester favourites of sixty years ago. Miss Emmeline Montague's rendering of Florentine appears to have been particularly fine, and amongst the players who gave general satisfaction were Mrs. Horseman, Mrs. Weston, Mr. Davidge, and Mr. J. Saunders. A presentation to Mr. Chester and Mr. Irwin, who had assisted him, was followed by a representation of "The Court Ball in 1740," said to have been the most elaborate ballet spectacle hitherto produced out of London. The "Manchester Guardian" report of the performance closed with the following sentences : - "Several of the dancers were loudly applauded, and the curtain fell at midnight on the most brilliant scene, as a whole, ever exhibited within the walls of a Manchester theatre.

SIX MONTHS' REPRESENTATIONS.

Those were the palmy days of the stock company, when, with the exception of occasional visits from travelling "stars," stages were occupied week after week by the same actors and actresses, some of whom secured a large amount of versatility. In these days of travelling

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companies, when no players are attached to most theatres, and where fresh faces are seen on the boards weekly, it is interesting to note how a manager catered for the enjoyment and support of his patrons 60 years ago. From September 29, 1845, to April 4, 1846, there were 157 performances. Two plays, and sometimes three, were produced at each performance, and the Christmas pantomime, "Guy Fawkes," was produced nightly for a month after the production of some other play. We are not surprised therefore to find that on 157 nights no fewer than 354 productions were recorded. These comprised 59 representations of tragedies, 78 of comedies, 33 of dramas, 44 of interludes and farces, 49 of musical pieces, 66 of ballets, and 25 of pantomime. Shakespeare was represented by the following performances. "Hamlet" was produced eleven times, "Othello" five, "King Lear" five, "Merchant of Venice" seven, "Richard III" six, "Taming of the Shrew," produced as "Katherine and Petruchio," five; "Twelfth Night" six, "Two Gentlemen of Verona" two, and "Measure for Measure" one. Other tragedies produced included "The Gamester," "The Stranger," "Venice Preserved," "Werner and Douglas"; and included amongst the comedies and plays were "Time Works Wonders" (eleven), "Heir-at-Law," "Old Heads and Young Hearts," "The Rivals," "Money," "Lady of Lyons," "Charles XII.," "Richelieu," and "Road to Ruin." This will give some idea of the season's bill of fare produced by Mr. Knowles' stock company during the winter of 1845-46.

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A FEW NOTABLE PERFORMANCES.

On Monday, July 26, 1847, a performance was given for the benefit of Leigh Hunt. The bill included Ben Jonson's comedy "Every Man in his Humour," preceded by an address written by Mr. Serjeant Talfourd, and spoken by Mr. Charles Dickens; and followed by an interlude called "A Good Night's Rest," and a farce "Turning the Tables." The cast included some of the best known characters in the literary and art circles, amongst whom were John Forster, G.H. Lewes, Charles Dickens, Douglas Jerrold, John Leech, George Cruikshank and Mark Lemon; and the receipts were £440. In June of the following year many of the gentlemen named again appeared on the Royal stage in a performance in aid of a fund for the endowment of a perpetual curatorship of Shakespeare's house. The comedy, "The Merry Wives of Windsor," was followed by Mrs. Inchbald's farce, "Animal Magnetism." Later in the year Miss Glyn, afterwards known as Mrs. Dallas-Glyn, made her first appearance on any stage at the Royal as Lady Constance in "King John," with G.V. Brooke as the King. Prince Arthur was played by a

little girl, Marie Wilton, known to the present generation as Lady Bancroft. The same season saw the first appearance of Barry Sullivan, who played "Stukeley" in "The Gamester" Mr. and Mrs. Kead were included in the cast; and when, on October 28, Sullivan gave his first rendering of "Hamlet," he more than justified the hopes raised by his earlier performances. As showing the composition of the company, it may be noted that when on March 10, 1849, they produced the

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"Merchant of Venice," Shylock was played by G.H. Lewes, Gratiano by H. Beverley, Bassanio by Barry Sullivan, Launcelot Gobbo by W. Davidge, Portia by Miss Anderton, Nerissa by Mrs. Bickerstaff, and Jessica by Miss Eliza Travers.

In September of the same year Macready gave a series of seven farewell appearances, on successive nights playing Macbeth, Iago, Werner, King John, Richelieu, King Lear, and Hamlet. These were a few of the many notable incidents of Mr. Knowles' management of the theatre, and among the star actors that appeared during his regime may also be noted Rachel, Jenny Lind, Madame Vestris, Charles Mathews, Fanny Kemble, Ben Webster, Helen Faucit, Macready, and Yandenhoff, whilst among the members of the stock company were many first class players. In June, 1852, Mr. Knowles gave a series of six performances for the benefit of local charities, and on that occasion received the assistance of Helen Faucit, Miss Glyn, Miss Vandenhoff, and Messrs. Vandenhoff, Barry Sullivan, E.L. Davenport, Charles Dillon, Charles Hallé, and a host of other distinguished artistes. On September 29, 1860, a young player named H. Irving joined the stock company playing Adolphe in "The Spy." Charles Calvert was at the time stage manager. On March 27, 1875, Mr. Knowles bade his adieu to the theatre, having disposed of it to a limited company. During the preceding week a number of special attractions had been produced, the proceeds being devoted to charitable objects.

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UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.

On August 28, after being beautified, the house reopened with "As You Like It," performed by a newly organised stock company, followed shortly afterwards by "Twelfth Night" and "All's Well that Ends Well." To attempt to even summarise the appearances of leading actors during the last thirty years would be beyond the limitations of space, but an exception may be made in the case of the celebrated Calvert memorial performances that took place on October 1 and 2, 1879. The play produced was "As You Like It," Rosalind being played on the first night by Miss Wallis, and on the second night by Miss Helen Faucit. The Duke was played by B. Lee, Jacques by Alfred Darbyshire, Adam by Tom Taylor, First Forester by Edwin Waugh; and John Hollingshead, G. du Maurier, Lewis Wingfield, Herman Merivale and other well known gentlemen appeared in the cast. The occasion was historic, particularly on the Thursday when Helen Faucit, emerging from her privacy, made her last appearance on any stage. As the curtain rose the whole audience stood and accorded to the veteran a magnificent reception, the warmth of which seemed for a moment to almost paralyse her. The performance of the play was in some respects not entirely satisfactory, but the wonderful manner in which Helen Faucit pitched her voice so that every word could be distinctly heard in all parts of the house was a great triumph, and formed a fitting close to a great career.

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Continuing the serialisation of:

**'Short Stories about Failsworth Folk '**

Reprinted, with additions, from the 'Oldham Chronicle' & 'Manchester City News'

**by Sim Schofield pub. 1905**

**SHOPPING STORIES.**

I can recall the time when there were only a few grocers' shops in Failsworth. At the higher end of the district, the noted badgers' shops (a term used in those days for grocers' shops) were Joe Walmsley's, Luke Clegg's, Jim Wood's, Beswick's, Donty Walmsley's, and Jonathan Booth's. In those days most of the business was done on the credit system, and almost every house had its "shop book," in which the provisions purchased were entered. So prevalent did this practice or custom become, that I remember a companion of mine once running away from home and taking the shop book with him. Evidently he was under the impression that he could procure all he wanted with the shop book wherever he went. But he found out, to his sorrow, that the shop book was not the kind of passport he contemplated. When he came home, I asked him where he had been. He answered me by saying, "Aw've bin eaut o' th' country, as far as Stalybridge, but they would no' have eaur shop-book, an' so aw've had to come back again." I well recollect myself going with one of these books a-shopping, and I can recall once going for some butter. I think it was being sold at about one shilling and threepence per pound at the time. The grocer weighed me a pound in a great lump of brown paper. After weighing the butter, he said, "Aw think aw've gan thi too mich pappur. Aw'll tak' a bit off; it ull come in for som'dy else." "Aye," I replied, "but yo'll ha' to weigh that butter again. We're noan goin' to pay one shilling and threepence a peound for pappur." Such were the dodges resorted to in those days by some of the grocers.

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Harry Walmsley, who owned and worked the largest mill in Failsworth, used to pay his hands with slips of paper, with the amount of wages they had earned. His brother, Donty, kept a badger's shop, opposite to the mill, and the workpeople were compelled to go there with these slips to purchase their provisions. And so the "truck system" prevailed to this extent in Failsworth at one time.

Harry Walmsley, or "Lord Harry," as he was better known, was a great swell and magnate in his time. He was the leader of the Church and King party in his day, and he practically controlled the people, body and soul. I could relate incidents connected with his doings, and the way he treated his workpeople, which would open the eyes of people of the present generation. Those who know anything of Failsworth must ever feel thankful to the bold spirits connected with "The Old School" for the way they fought and put down this local magnate.

Ben Brierley was the poet of the Old School Party, and played no mean part in the overthrow of "Lord Harry." He wrote a song lampooning him, and which was very popular at the time. It was written when Brierley was a mere youth, but nowhere is it to be found in his works. The song was more remarkable for its vigour than elegance, as the following sample will show:-

"My name is Lord Harry the Slasher,  
And I live at the Pinch-Beggars Hall;  
At the doors I'm a regular smasher,  
And a banditti I have at my call.  
I'm a dread to the lads, I assure you,  
And oft their brave spirits I quell;  
They will take to their heels in a fury,  
When they hear of Lord Harry the Swell.

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CHORUS.

Then hurrah for Lord Harry the Swell,  
I'm a foe to all that the lads do,  
While my name is Lord Harry the Swell."

"Pinch-Beggars Hall" is the house known as Firs Hall, and is now occupied by Mr. Samuel Johnson and Mr. John Dugdill. It was built by the Walmsley family. The reference to the prowess of Walmsley as a smasher of doors applies to the violence used by him and his party on those of "The Old School," whilst "The Lads" were "the Weaver lads," his doughtiest opponents. Those were stirring times, and I am pleased to record that, in the long run, victory rested with the reform party of the old school.

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"Lord Harry" took an action against Brierley for what he did and wrote, and the libel case should have been tried at the Liverpool Assizes, but it was eventually settled without a trial, and so Walmsley's power was for ever broken.

#### **THE HISTORY OF A SOLDIER'S JACKET.**

Since I commenced to write these stories, I have been reminded of an amusing episode connected with a soldier's jacket, and in which I figured very prominently. Those who are familiar with Manchester life will remember that Shudehill Market was once noted for its many stalls, where second-hand clothes were sold at a cheap rate. Anyone purchasing clothes from these stalls was said to have "had them off the Pegs." Occasionally good bargains were to be made. One Saturday, five of us Failsworth lads went to the city, and, going through the market, we saw a soldier's red jacket hanging up on the pegs for sale. After some bargaining, we purchased it for half a crown, each one of us contributing sixpence towards the article. We decided to have some fun out of it, for in those days we had to provide our own amusement, and in the best way possible. Such places as the music hall were out of our reach. It so happened that one of our companions, a bit of a spoiled lad, had frequently told his parents he would enlist in the army. His aged mother and father were in daily dread he would carry out this threat. On our reaching Failsworth, we went and tried to capture a horse out of a field, with the object of going to the home of our companion, with one of our party mounted on the horse, and attired in the soldier's jacket. We wanted to make the parents of our

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companion believe their son had 'listed, and had deserted, and, that the house must be searched for him. Unfortunately, we were unable to catch a horse, and so we had to make shift with a foot soldier. One of our party was selected to play the role of the soldier, for he had a somewhat commanding voice and appearance. Two of us held our companion, whilst the sham soldier went up to the house in the jacket. The old folks had gone to bed, and, on hearing a loud knock at the door, they opened the bedroom window. They were told their son had enlisted and deserted, and that they must come down and allow the house to be searched for him. The aged couple were in a terrible state of fright. The mother of the lad, in her distress, called out, "Aw towd thee he'd do it. We han no bin good enough to him. Whatever mun we do for eawr poor lad neaw? We shall ha' to buy him off, whatever it costs." Eventually they came down, and let the "soldier" in to search the house, all the while lamenting the loss of their poor lad. When we had carried the hoax as far as we durst, we restored the lad to their arms, and there was great rejoicing when he exclaimed, "It's noan true, mother. I have nur 'listed." We all deserved a sound thrashing for the hoax we had played on the simple and unsuspecting couple. For some days the affair was the talk of the village, and the general comment was, " It's just one o' Sim Schofield's tricks, a mischievous little whelp us he is." I can now see it was a great shame to act as we did, and if the old couple were now living, I would publicly apologise to them for the part I played in the affair. Let me add that this soldier's jacket became a valuable asset, for it figured for years in amateur theatricals in connection with the school we attended. I believe it is used even at this day for such

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purposes. There are few people connected with the school who know the full and true history of



this soldier's jacket, but I have now given the correct story of it, and so the secret has at last been revealed.

### **A STORY OF SILK HATS.**

Whilst dealing with matters of dress, let me tell another story relating to the tall silk hats. As I have said in a previous story, felt hat-making was at one time a most flourishing industry in Failsworth. The sons of these hatters used to swagger about with fine felt hats, whilst us lads, whose parents were weavers, had to be content with the common fourpenny cap. Naturally, we were a little jealous of the hatter lads. Determined to go one better than the felt-hat lads, a number of us cap lads went one Saturday to Shudehill for the purpose of purchasing silk hats. There were about six of us, and I recollect that we went into a cellar off Shudehill, and each bought a silk hat. One of our number bought a tall drab hat, paying tenpence for it. For the silk hats we paid from one shilling to two shillings and sixpence each. The one I got was a regular shiner at two shillings and sixpence. It was arranged that on the following morning, Sunday, we should all go in the school together displaying our headgear. When we marched in, there was quite a sensation caused among the felt-hat lads. They were greatly overawed at our swell appearance. At that time there were no hat pegs in this school, so we had to put our top hats under the form. During the absence of the teachers, whilst fetching books, the lads in the next class had hooked our hats from under the form, and were

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kicking them about like so many footballs. Our swell hats, especially the tall drab one, presented a woeful appearance. Had we not been in the school, there would have been a battle between the felt-hat and the ex-cap lads. I remember one of my companions took his home, and his mother washed it, and a "bonnie beggar" it looked afterwards. I believe he never wore it again. For years after, it was used as a bobbin-hat at his father's loom, and the last time I saw this drab hat it was in the garden, on the top of a mop-stail, doing duty as a scarecrow. The one I had, had a curious ending. Some of my readers will remember my friend Mr. James Barnes, who at one time was a correspondent of the "Oldham Chronicle" for the Hollinwood district, and also a contributor of verse to the poets' corner of the same paper. My friend, Mr. Joseph Burgess, and I, were also contributors to this corner. Burgess, and I, were the best men at Barnes' Wedding at Blackpool. Not desiring to purchase a new silk hat for this Wedding, I had the Shudehill one got up for the occasion, and fairly well it looked after being ironed. Burgess had bought a new guinea hat for the event. After the marriage, Burgess and I were walking on the sands with our tall toppers on, but we had caps in our pockets. The shiners were an encumbrance to us, and I remember Burgess saying to me, "Aw'll tell thee what, Sim, aw'll jump on my hat if theaw will." I fell in with the proposal, and as Burgess flung his into the sea, after jumping on it, he said, "There goes a guinea hat." On sending mine after it, I exclaimed, "There goes a Shudehill heauve-creawn hat." Burgess, on hearing this, exclaimed, "By gum, Sim, theaw's done me one; aw thowt theaw'd given a guinea for thine, like me." That was the last I saw of my Shudehill shiner.

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### **HOW MY UNCLE JOE RAISED THE WIND**

My cousin has told me a good story of my uncle Joe, and how he and a few others once raised the wind for fourpenny ale. He, and some other kindred characters, got a notice posted up over the stable door of the lower Wagon and Horses Inn, Hollinwood, with the announcement :

"A most wonderful sight to be seen,

A horse's head where its tail should have been"

The people gathered round, and paid a penny each to see this sight. When they got inside the stable, they found a horse with its tail tacked to the manger. Of course, they all came out laughing at the way they had been hoaxed, and at the same time cracking up the wonderful

sight they had seen. Those thus taken in did not want to be the only ones "sold," and so the game was carried on for some time, until they had got sufficient funds for a "spree." Such is an instance of the way people had of enjoying themselves in the "good old times."

### **NEW MOSTON CHARACTERS**

The growing district of Moston has a most interesting local history, and there are few places in Lancashire so rich in quaint and original characters as Moston. But Moston has a wide area. The New Moston part of the district is detached from the old, and is practically a part of Failsworth, being connected by ties of industry, schools, and other institutions. During the past twenty years there has been a great development in New Moston, for at the present time there are nearly 300 houses in New Moston

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proper. I have been a resident in it for more than seventeen years, and before coming into the district was a resident on the borders, in Failsworth. I am, therefore, fairly familiar with its growth, local history, and characters.

### **A FAILSWORTH OPINION OF NEW MOSTON.**

Let me here relate an incident which will show how the district has developed. When I was married, and emigrated to New Moston from Failsworth, my old father was then living. He was between eighty and ninety years of age, and was a life resident of Failsworth. I asked him to come and see me, but, like many Failsworth folk, he had a strong prejudice against Moston people. He used to say: "New Moston folk were gettin' too preawd for Failsworth weavers, wi' their parlours an' fal-the-dal ways." At last I succeeded in persuading him to pay me a visit by promising him a big packet of his favourite weed of tobacco. I shall never forget the remarks he made when he got to my house. In his pure native dialect he said: "Eh, lad, what a job aw've had in findin' thi heause. There's bin some changes sin' I were here afore. Th' last time I were in New Moston ther were nobbut Owd Gimp's, Robin o' Billy's, James o' th' Yebby's, Johnny Whitehead's, Owd Carr's, and Jacob Scholes's farms". He further told me that most of those farmers were hand-loom weavers as well, bearing out what others have written. Such was the change which had come over the district since he last visited it. And now for a few stories about some of its old residents.

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### **STORIES ABOUT "OWD GIMP."**

Owd Gimp was perhaps as noted for his eccentricities as any in the district. He lived at an old farmstead, since pulled down, which stood in what was then known as Broad Lane, near to where I now reside, the name of which has now been changed to Moston Lane.

So bad was the condition of this lane when Owd Gimp lived in it that it used to be a common saying in Failsworth. that "Jack Frost was the best road mender they had in Moston. Another saying in vogue, in Failsworth, at the present day is that of bread with few currants in it :- "This bread is like Moston heauses; th' currants are few an' far between."

But regarding this lane, there was a length. which Gimp should have kept in repair. This he greatly neglected to do, and the lane came to be known as "Dirty Lone." One day a carter got stuck fast in the lane. He went to Gimp for a chain horse to help him out. When they had got. "out of the hole" he began to rernonstrate with Gimp for the state the lane had been allowed to get in. In his quaint way, Gimp replied: "It's no use tryin' to mend this lone; it's completely done." Evidently, Gimp looked at the lane in the light he would look at a pair of worn out clogs. Gimp had. two sons, Joel and Tummy, and I remember: them very well. They worked on the highway, in Hollinwood and Failsworth, at the time of toll bars, when the main. road was under a Trust. People of the present day will be loth to believe me when I relate how they were dressed, but what I am writing is quite true, as many can. testify to. They each wore tall silk hats, swallow-tail coats,

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and knee breeches. In my mind's eye I can see them now, returning from their work in this quaint dress. It was a custom of Owd Gimp's to get his horses from the tannery at Newton Heath. It is said he used to give about 2s. 9d. and a truss of hay for a horse. Coming home from town one day with a horse of this description, the animal stopped in Morris Lane, at the brook, and refused to stir an inch further. Inside the cart Owd Gimp had, among other things, a sack of flour. Gimp, being a fine, strong fellow, took all of the articles out of the cart except the flour; then, jumping inside, he put the sack of flour on his back, calling out to the old tit, "Neaw, then, see if theaw con draw th' empty cart." At one time he had one of these "tan-yard horses" which was fairly good in the shafts, but the great failure of the horse was that when it got down in the stable it had to be lifted bodily up. This horse had no tail, and eventually Gimp and his sons got tired of lifting it up. Speaking to one of his sons, he said: "Here, Tummy, tak' this horse back to th' tan-yard, an' swap it for a better one." The son had gone some distance on his way when Gimp called him back, remarking: "Neaw, Tummy, there's eighteenpence here, an' see theaw brings a 'good un' this time." The son took the horse, and the tanner, known, I think, as Johnny Dean, told him to leave it, and he would send word when he had a "good one" in. In a few days he sent a lad to Gimp to tell him he had a first-rate horse waiting for him. The tanner, desiring to play a trick on Gimp, had neatly fastened a tail on the old horse, and titivated it up a little. On Gimp going to fetch the new horse he said to the tanner, "It -looks very much like th' owd mare." The tanner replied, "Aye, but it's a lot better than th' owd mare, and besides, theaw sees, this us gotten

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a goodtail on it." "Aye, it has," said Gimp, "an' that's one thing in its favour." The old farmer put the horse in the shafts, and started off home. On reaching a certain hostelry, where Gimp was accustomed to call, the horse stopped without being told. "Well," said Gimp, "this is a corker. This new horse is as fawse as th' owd mare. It actually knows my coein' place." On getting a little nearer home the horse stopped again, without being told, at another wayside inn at which Gimp was accustomed to call. "By gum! this caps o'," said Gimp. "Aw do believe ut horses con talk neaw. This beggar us bin havin' a chat wi' th' owd mare, an' it's bin tow'd wheer aw coe at." On reaching home the horse, on being loosed out of the cart, marched off to the stable, and to its old stall. "Well," said Gimp, "whoever see'd th' like? This new horse is as tractable as th' owd mare." On the following morning the horse was down, and would not get up. Gimp called his sons, saying, "Here, lads, yon' new horse is deawn, an' wants liftin' up." The old farmer and his sons gathered round the horse. Speaking to one of his lads, he said, "Neaw, Joel, thee poo up ut its tail." The son seized hold of the tail, and, pulling it on one side, gave a "long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether," and went spinning to the other side of the stable with the tail in his hand. "See yo', feythur," he sang out, "Aw've poo'd its tail off." Gimp, looking first at his son, who lay on the wet floor with the tail in his hands, and then at the horse, found out he had been sold. In his rage he exclaimed, "Damn thee, Johnny Dean, theau'll never dee in thi bed." Gimp was much given to the habit of swearing, not that he was wicked, bad-tempered, or even irreverent, but simply because he had acquired the

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habit, and, to use his own words, "Aw cannot help it." There is a good story told about him, while lying on his death-bed, which is quite characteristic of the old farmer, and of his habit of swearing, which clung to him even in death. When it was thought his sickness would prove fatal an old Scripture reader in Failsworth was sent for, to console him in his dying moments. On reaching Gimp's dwelling, this old Scripture reader was sitting in the house having a pipe of tobacco. Gimp, who lay in bed in a room upstairs, heard the voice of the reader. To the person who was attending him he said, "Tell owd John to come upsteers an' be damned sharp, or else

aw'st be starkdeod." The Scripture reader accordingly went upstairs, and, on entering the bedroom, said to the sick man, "Well, James, an' heaw are yo'?" Gimp replied, "Aw'm damned ill, John." "Yo' should no' swear like that," said the Scripture reader. "Mon, aw cannot help it?" answered Gimp. Thinking he would commence at the beginning, the Scripture reader said, "Do yo' know who made yo', Jarnes?" "Nawe," answered Gimp, "aw dunnot." Turning to a girl who was in the room, the spiritual adviser inquired if she knew who made her. The little girl answered the question rightly, and so old John, addressing Gimp, said, "See yo', James, this little lass knows who made her." "Aye, aye," replied Gimp, "but hoo'll ha' forgotten bi hoo's as owd as me."

There is an old saying in Failsworth, even at the present day, which had its origin with Gimp, and I have often heard my father repeat it. On one occasion Gimp had made a purchase of a quantity of oak bark. It turned out to be an unfortunate speculation, as he could not sell it to advantage. On the man from whom Gimp had purchased the bark coming to be paid for it, the old farmer

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said to him, "Nay, nay, awst pay nowt for that bark, aw'm damned if aw do; aw've lost by it." Even to-day some of "the old residents will say to anyone having lost by a speculation, "Theaw'rt like owd Gimp an' th' bark; theaw's lost by it." There was a spice of selfishness in Gimp, as the following incident will show. One of his sons was, on one occasion, using a rattle to frighten birds out of a wheat field. Gimp went up to him, and said, "Fear um into owd Carr's fields." Carr was an adjoining farmer whose fields had been scarcely touched by the birds. There was evidently a touch of human nature in this remark, and reminds one of the farmer who, on being told that a lot of his wheat had been eaten by sparrows, replied, "Well, never mind, they've served Farmer Whitehead as badly as me." It was a source of consolation to the farmer to know that other people were suffering from the ravages of the birds as well as himself. I remember two of Gimp's sons quite well, Joel and Tummy. In their latter days they were road menders, and I have a distinct recollection of seeing them returning from their work. I rarely ever saw them together. There was always a space of ten or twenty yards between them, and they used to converse at this distance. Tummy had a most peculiar gait in his walk. He used to almost cross his legs as he lifted them up, as if he was walking over ploughed ground and sowing seeds. This gait he had acquired through his work in the fields. Meeting him on one occasion, I inquired the time of the day. He replied, "it's dinner time ony minute." One of Gimp's sons, Joel, in his younger days, was said to be a "fine feighter." He gloried in fighting; not that he bore any ill-will to the person he fought, but simply because he loved fighting. I have heard of him fighting a Failsworth

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man until both were blind, and they were striking at each other in their darkness, both being wide of the mark. It was a custom of Joel's to go to the various Wakes, to see if he could find someone to fight him. Once he went to Ashton-under-Lyne, and sought out a man who was said to be a "good feighter." On meeting his man he said, "Theau'll hav' to feight me." "Nay," said the man, "aw shall feight noan; theau's done nowt at me to feight for" Joel at once gave him a box in the ears. "Neaw, then," said the man, "aw shall feight thi neaw." They set to and fought, and Joel was beaten. The defeated fighter returned home, a distance of about four miles. On getting near his house he met a friend, to whom he related his experience, remarking, "It's no use; aw cannot go whoam an' sleep, havin' bin britten." Joel started off back to Ashton, found his opponent, fought him again, and this time beat him. "Neaw, then," he said, "aw con go whoam an' sleep."

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AVRO centenary:

Those of you who are able to attend our meetings in the library will no doubt remember the most interesting talk that we had, earlier this year, in April, about the history of AVRO. The speaker, Frank Pleszak, has contacted us regarding the centenary:

“Hi,

I'm currently working on a project with the Avro Heritage Museum to commemorate the centenary next year of Avro at Woodford.

This significant exhibition will also include a celebration of aviation around Manchester, and we plan to have an information board for each of the ten Greater Manchester Boroughs, which will include maps of all the aviation related locations within the boundaries of each borough.

I'm wondering do you have anyone with a specialist knowledge whom I could contact or know of any information or photos that may be relevant?

If anyone has any personal stories or anecdotes to share they would be so interesting to hear and great to use.”

If anyone is able to help, please contact Frank directly, at < frankby@gmail.com >

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A second email came in from Michael Wafer, in which he shared his thesis, *The Development of the Cotton Industry in Shaw & Crompton, 1790 – 1850*. He was kind enough to include an abstract for the newsletter, with the offer that, if you wish to read the full document, you can email him at < [mikewafer53@gmail.com](mailto:mikewafer53@gmail.com) >.

### **The Early Cotton Industry in Shaw and Crompton**

Shaw and Crompton was once notably described as the richest place on earth having more millionaires per square mile than anywhere else on earth – that wealth being generated by the cotton industry.

As part of a project supervised by Lancaster University, I sought to understand the transformation of Shaw and Crompton from a rural area to an area dominated by cotton mills – the period focused on was 1790 to 1850.

To understand the change in this period I examined the baptismal registers online of Holy Trinity Church in Shaw which documented fathers' occupations for each child baptised. Sample years were analysed in 1790, 1820 and 1850.

The first two cotton mills are described by Edwin Butterworth the Oldham historian as being in 1776 and 1778. By 1829 twenty mills are recorded, and by 1850 the area had become dominated by the cotton industry – with an associated increase in population of the town and diversity of occupations.

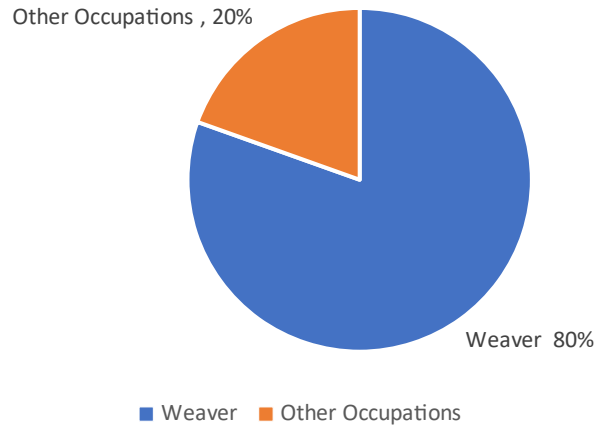
In 1790 80% of fathers were recorded as being handweavers, in 1820 64% were weavers and by 1850 only 12% were recorded as weavers. Ultimately the baptismal registers illustrate the demise of the hand weaver as an occupation over a period of 60 years and the rise of a diverse range of occupations in the developing cotton mills and supporting services.

The charts below illustrates the reduction of weavers over the period examined.

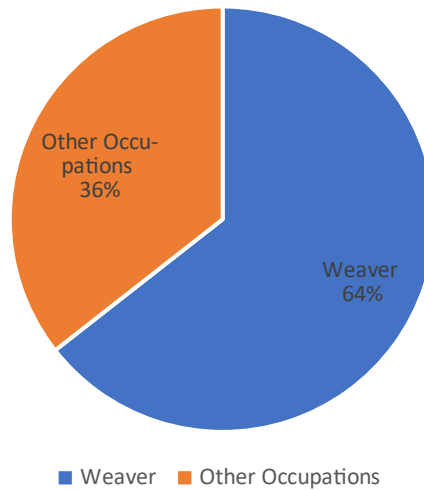
This newsletter article is an edited summary of a longer document and with key resources referred to – if anyone is interested in receiving the full document, please email [mikewafer53@gmail.com](mailto:mikewafer53@gmail.com).



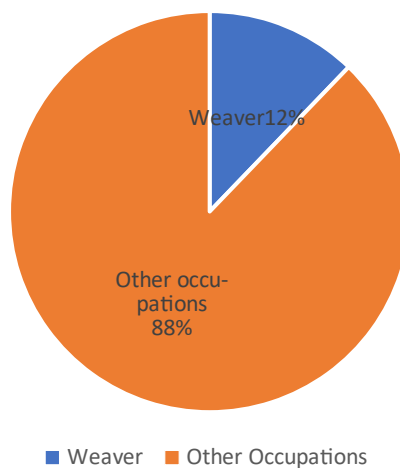
Baptisms Holy Trinity Shaw 1790 fathers  
occupation(n=174)



Baptisms Holy Trinity Shaw 1820 fathers  
occupation n=163



Baptisms Holy Trinity Shaw 1850 fa-  
thers occupation n= 137



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Internet links for freely available books/texts

Each month I will add a few more links to publications at the Internet Archive of Books & Texts website and on some occasions Google books or other free websites. As mentioned before, the ones I include will be mostly out of copyright and available, as a .pdf, to read online or download to your own device. There is no need to sign up unless you want to 'borrow' the more recent, copyrighted publications which are available to read on line but not download.

As always, I really hope you can get the enjoyment that I do from just browsing through the chapters and hearing authentic voices from over 100 years ago.

This month another random selection ...

* ***The 42nd (East Lancashire) Division 1914-1918 [British Army]***

by Frederick P. Gibbon,

pub. 1920

[HERE](#)

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\* ***County Families of Lancashire and Cheshire***

James Croston,

pub. 1887

[HERE](#)

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* ***Lancashire authors and orators : a series of literary sketches***

John Evans,

Pub. 1850

[HERE](#)

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## MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE

A short selection of entries from the MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE...

since the last newsletter :

\* How were conscientious objectors treated in WW1?

[HERE](#)

More [HERE](#) ' on the Oldham HRG website, about Conscientious Objection and Oldhamers.

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* The price of sending your child to school in the early 1800s

[HERE](#)

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\* The 'Great Flood' 1872 : The River Medlock rises in the hills above Oldham and empties into the River Irwell in central Manchester.

[HERE](#)

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* How do you trace your Scottish family history beyond 1800?

[HERE](#)

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\* A permanent tribute to Vimto, which was first produced here on Granby Row in 1908.

It was initially registered as a health tonic and a medicine, but in 1912 was downgraded a touch to cordial status. do you take yours hot or cold?

[HERE](#)

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* National Archives : Discover 15th-century cures for headaches and congestion

[HERE](#)

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\* Chethams : A BLUESTOCKING INFLUENCER – LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU  
[HERE](#)

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* The lost Sioux tribe of Salford - burial ground rumours and call to find descendants
[HERE](#)

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\* WDYTYA? Magazine : Do you have Irish ancestors? Did you know you can find out where they lived using the surviving tithe applotment books?  
[HERE](#)

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* Beneath the sticky dance floors and the occasional scuffles, Rotters was a piece of Manchester's nightlife history. Before Rotters took over the venue, it was home to the prestigious Gaumont Cinema, a grand establishment that first opened its doors in the mid-1930s.
[HERE](#)

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\* 101 TREASURES OF CHETHAM'S  
A series in which we highlight some of the Library's most interesting stuff, which as well as famous books and manuscripts includes furniture, paintings, and objects from the museum collection.  
[HERE](#)

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* From family to factory: women's lives during the Industrial Revolution
[HERE](#)

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\* A Barrister in Disguise: the Trial of Counsellor Tucker, 1840  
After an amorous encounter resulted in the theft of his clothes, Irish barrister Richard Tucker had to think quickly if he was to arrive in court in time to represent his client. The course of action adopted got him there all right - as the accused!  
[HERE](#)

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* No Place Like Home: The Story of the Foundling Hospital is a new documentary revealing fascinating details of the lives of some of the 27,000 children who grew up at the Foundling Hospital between 1741-1954.
[HERE](#)

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\* The Body under the Bed, 1864  
[HERE](#)

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* For many more, visit the MLFHS Facebook Page : [HERE](#)
And [HERE](#) is the link to the MLFHS Twitter page.

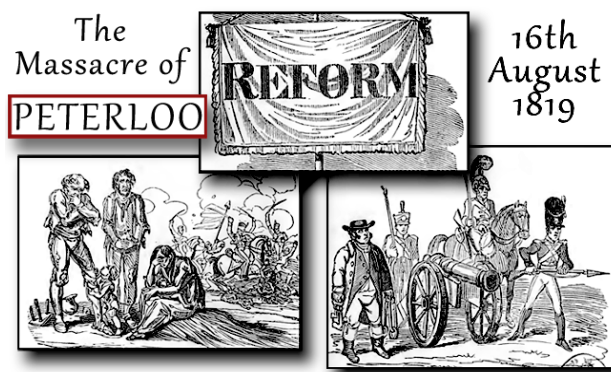
PETERLOO : the Bi-Centenary

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](#)



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

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## Need Help!

**Oldham Local Studies and Archives**  
**was CLOSED on the 30<sup>th</sup> November for an unspecified period of time**

From their website:

*In preparation for our new home at Spindles the service will close at 84 Union Street on 30 November 2023. A temporary service will operate from Oldham Library in 2024 until the Spindles site is ready. We will not be able to accept new donations or provide access to physical archives during this time. Our digital resources will be available as usual.*

*Opening hours:*

*We are open Mondays and Wednesdays to Fridays, 10am–5pm, Tuesdays 10am–2pm, and Saturdays 10am–4pm.*

[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

Cheshire Local History Association – www.cheshirehistory.org.uk

Chadderton Historical Society (archived website) – 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

Liverpool and South West Lancashire FHS – www.lswlfhs.org.uk

Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society – www.mriah.co.uk

Oldham Historical Research Group – 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

Saddleworth Historical Society – www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk

Tameside Local History Forum - 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

Birkenhead – [Local & Family History](#)

Bury – 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

Stockport – www.stockport.gov.uk/heritage-library-archives

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

York – www.york.ac.uk/borthwick



For the Gallery

'Failsworth Nook' from Sim Schofield's, *'Short Stories about Failsworth Folk'* pub, 1905



FIRS HALL.

Built by the Walmsley family, and nicknamed "Pinch-Beggar's Hall."

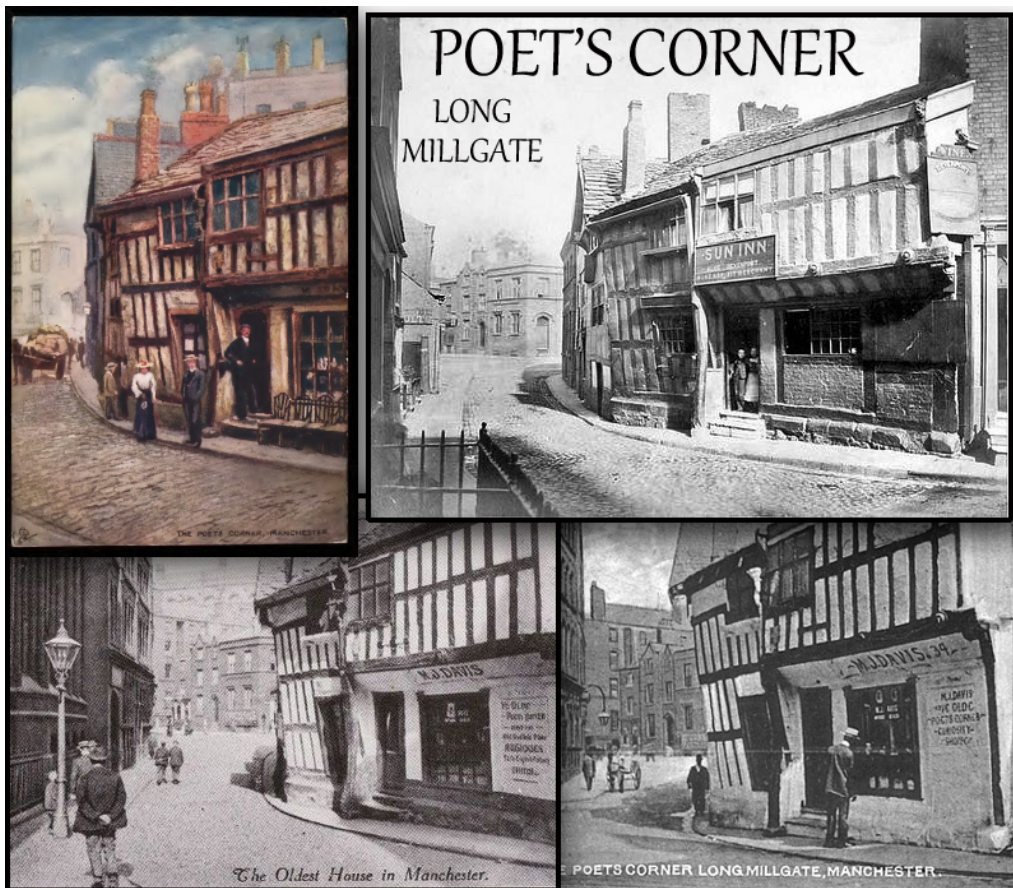


A BIT OF OLD DEANSGATE.

(The low buildings were removed when St. Mary's Street was made. The building to the left was the Golden Lion now the Regent Hotel.)

p. 7 **A Bit of Old Deansgate**

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Postcard Montage, **Poet's Corner, Long Millgate, Manchester**

See more about Long Millgate and its buildings [HERE](#), from Chetham's Library.