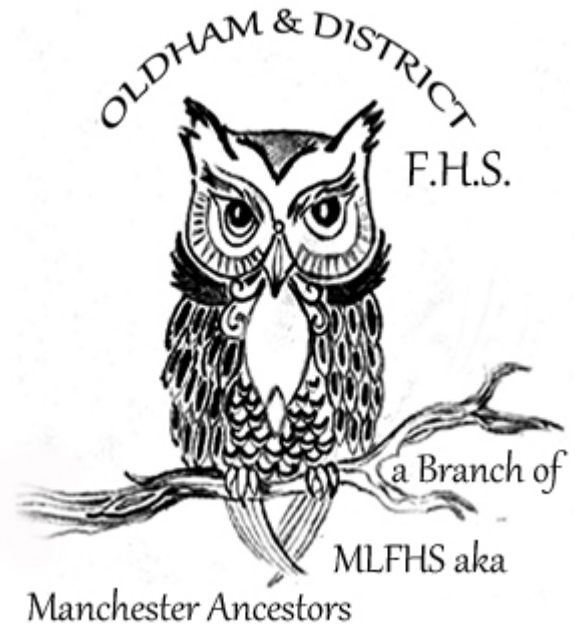


'e-Owls'



Contact us :

Branch Website page: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/oldham>

MLFHS Website homepage : <https://www.mlfhs.uk/>

Email Chairman : chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk

Emails General : oldham@mlfhs.org.uk

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](#)

March 2024

MLFHS - Oldham & District Branch Newsletter

Where to find things in the newsletter:

Oldham Branch News :	Page 3	Online Book links	Page 27
Other Branches' News :	Page 6	MLFHS Facebook picks	Page 27
MLFHS Updates :	Page 6	Peterloo Bi-Centenary :	Page 28
Societies not part of MLFHS :	Page 9	Need Help! :	Page 29
'A Mixed Bag' :	Page 10	Useful Website Links :	Page 29
From the e-Postbag :	Page 23	Gallery :	Page 31 - 33

Branch Information & News :

Branch Officers for 2023 -2024 :

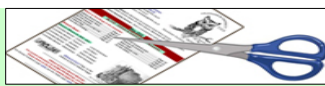
Committee Member : Chairman :	Vacant
Committee Member : Treasurer :	Gill Melton
Committee Member : Secretary :	Jan Costa
Committee Member : Newsletter :	Sheila Goodyear
Committee Member : Webmistress :	Sheila Goodyear
Committee Member : 'Country Member' :	Linda Richardson
Committee Member : Joan Harrison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

Links to the Website :



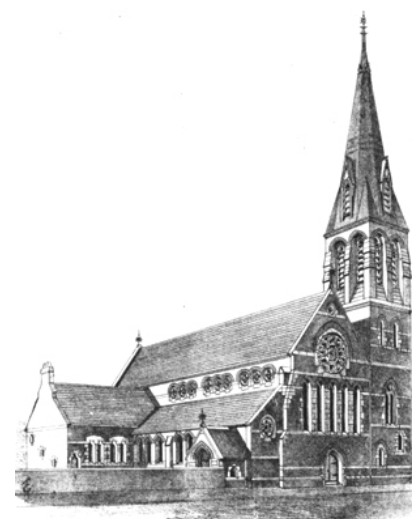
['Where to Find it'](#)

On the Oldham & District
Website Pages



Newsletter ['Snippets' Page](#)

Find Articles, Transcriptions and
Gallery Images you missed



St. Anne's R.C. Chapel

from : *History of Ashton-under-Lyne
& the Surrounding District*
Compiled by William Glover
Pub. 1884

~~~~~

**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.

~~~~~

Joint Acting Chair's remarks:

Gill Melton our Treasurer...

Hello and welcome to the March newsletter. I am pleased to say we had an exceptional number of people joining us for the February meeting on Zoom about DNA, given by Hilary Hartigan, one of our members, and everyone appeared to enjoy it. Unfortunately, we have had to put up the cost of attending meetings in the Library to £5 for non-members, from April (it will still be £3 in March) but it will remain free for non-members to join us on Zoom. This does, however, include a tea or coffee and biscuits (vegetarians/vegans catered for) and is to bring us in line with the other branches of MLFHS. I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Library for our March hybrid meeting, the subject of which is 'Made in Manchester' by Brian Groom, the story of how the people of the Manchester region shaped the emergence of the modern world from the Romans up to today. I would also like to remind you that the AGM will take place before our April meeting in the Library, starting at 1.45pm, to enable the normal meeting to commence at 2pm. If you are interested in serving on the Oldham branch committee, please speak to myself or another member of the committee at the March meeting. The Society is celebrating our 60th anniversary this year and in conjunction with that there will be an Exhibition in Manchester Central Library on Wednesday 13th March from 10.30 to 3.30pm, showcasing the 60th anniversary of our Society and our 3.4 million records.

Enjoy reading the rest of the newsletter.

Best Wishes

Gill Melton

Treasurer & Acting Joint Chair

~~~~~

**Editor's remarks.**

Hi Everyone, as always, I hope everyone is keeping well, despite the dismal weather! In the Mixed Bag we have more pages from *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men...* this month, continuing with Series 1, I have transcribed pages 38 to 56, about the Collegiate Church, a memorable Reverend, and the Old Churchyard... associated pictures from the book are in the Gallery.

We can also read the last few stories and anecdotes, from '*Short Stories about Failsworth Folk*' by Sim Schofield. These final pages brings it to a close... a new one to start next month.

In the '*Online Book Links*' section, it's not such a random selection, as one of them is referenced in Julie Schwethelm's latest '*Random Recollections*' in the e-Postbag.

As I was trawling the Internet Archive (as I do!!) I came across a page, listing the different collections on the Archive and one of them was from the National Library of Scotland. I've put a link to the page in the '*Online Book Links*' section. I hope you find something there that you enjoy either discovering or rediscovering through the links.

Also in the e-Postbag is an email from Ron Bullock with a little family memory sparked by one of Sim Schofield's stories, last month.

In the Gallery, are three pictures, illustrating the transcription, from '*Manchester Streets and Manchester Men*'

As Gill mentioned in the Chairman's Remarks, MLFHS has a big birthday in March, which is

being celebrated with an Anniversary Event at Manchester Library. The Oldham Branch will have a presence at the event with maps, photos, handouts and a potted history of how and when, in 1996, the Branch came into being 38 years ago! More details in the **Manchester Meetings & Events** on page 6 of this newsletter.

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.

~~~~~

Oldham & District Branch

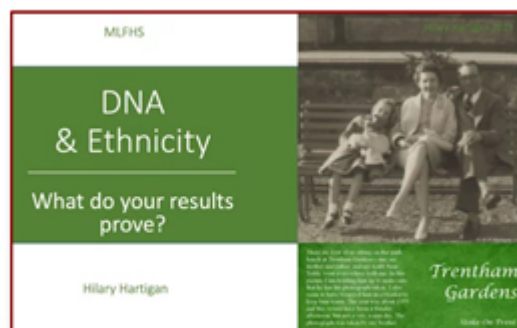
Monthly Meetings

2024

Last Month's Meeting, February - on zoom only



Saturday
10th Feb.
at
2 pm



DNA & Ethnicity - What do your results prove?

This illustrated presentation, was given by Hilary Hartigan.

Every time Hilary talks about DNA testing she updates her presentation. This talk still had the essential information we need to get the most out of our results, but it will also look at how - and if - our DNA results can tell us anything about our ethnicity. Typically our ethnicity will relate back many generations, perhaps centuries, so how relevant is it to our family history research?

This was the write-up that filled me with fear! I haven't done a DNA test of my own (yet!) and I find understanding it a minefield of possible errors. However, with some screen grabs and copious notes, I think (hope!) that I can do some justice to Hilary's talk which was interesting, entertaining and, most importantly, very informative.

The zoom meeting bookings were up to our audience limit although, disappointingly, a small number who had registered didn't sign in so there were no opportunities for later-comers to sign in. For those who did attend (76), it was, as I've just written, really good!

After welcoming us all, Hilary moved to a slide of the proverbial 'elephant in the room' (courtesy of AI !!) This was designed to illustrate what Hilary termed, the 'ethnicity elephant' and she went on to explain that sometimes it isn't always possible to find a definitive answer. Most importantly, the test results are only reflective of 5 or 6 generations to produce enough significant similarities. Results are based on geographical clusters of similar DNA results that provide geographical 'reference groups' against which your own DNA can be compared. However, other factors can impact a result resulting in differences. Firstly, the agencies analysing your DNA use databases that have been created with different geographical priorities. Some locations are not represented in any databases because few people in that area have had their DNA tested. One example that sticks out is France where, currently, it is illegal to have your DNA tested for personal reasons. The agencies will also present those results as geographical groups (circles) which also differ. The results may look as if they conflict, but it will usually be found that they still reflect the same ethnicity when broken down into smaller (or different) groupings.

Hilary went on to talk about the 22 pairs of chromosomes we inherit from our two parents. Our DNA consists of four acids, known as GATC. She then went on to show us examples of matches in common, showing a shared relationship.

The map results of ethnicity change over time as database contents increase when more and more people, from more diverse locations, are added.

We then went on to consider centimorgans and segments. Most of the DNA research by Hilary was done through an Ancestry test. Matches between a number of people could be seen on a diagram which reflected the strength or otherwise of the matches. Sometimes, there will be 3 matches on one chromosome, and this creates a 'shared match' (also known as a 'match in common' or triangulation).

Hilary then gave us some examples and stories from her own research and that of her husband's DNA. We perhaps think of our ethnicity in terms of what we would like to believe but DNA can give us a different story! I like to believe that my own ethnicity is strongly linked to north-east Scotland and south-west Ireland, with a bit of Lancashire, Derbyshire and Shropshire thrown in. Hilary believed that she was Welsh and her husband believed he was a Lancashire lad but DNA threw up results that showed that, for some of us, our fairly close ancestors moved around more than we realised and skewed what we believed was our ethnicity. She demonstrated this by creating icons to identify locations so that, using this idea, with a glance at our own tree, we could see which geographic icons were most in evidence! Not always what we would want to find!

There has always been the question of which is most influential, nature (DNA) or nurture (environment). We can accept that some traits in our DNA cannot be changed but some can be modified by nature. For example, milk intolerance is inherited.

DNA can validate our 'paper trail' of what we believe is our inheritance but, if it shows a discrepancy we have to believe the DNA rather than bmd certificates which, as we all know, can contain lies and more lies!

Hilary pointed out that, to get the most out of your tree on Ancestry, to identify and share your DNA matches, it was needful to make it public. One point that she made, and illustrated, was that because DNA results can be analysed in different ways, comparing different ethnicity results can vary by 10% each way.

Just as I thought my brain was melting, a 'Summing Up' slide popped up on screen! Summing up in brief included:

- * A chromosome chart can show matching segments with several other people. Matches are strongest over 5 or 6 generations; further back and they are less significant and more random.
- * Inheritance from parents can be random and siblings will not inherit the DNA in the same

proportions

- * For finding ethnicity, reference groups are very important.
- * Circles, and circles within circles, of ethnicity will change as databases grow in content.
- * Pictorial icons of geographical location make them more easily identifiable on your family tree.
- * Comparing Ancestry, My Heritage, and Family Tree ethnicity results can look very different because locations are grouped differently for eg., Scotland and Ireland might be in the same circle or they might be in different ones.
- * Differences occur on where the provider concentrates their reference group priorities, for eg., Ancestry databases look more closely at the areas from which Americans are more likely to have emigrated. My Heritage concentrates on Irish, Scottish and Welsh ancestry including Europe.
- * Importantly, our DNA data doesn't alter, it's just the way in which it is presented that differs.
- * Finally, *"Ethnicity results are informative, not definitive. They are statistical probabilities based on the currently available data."*

Many thanks Hilary for this talk, and for the lively and interesting Q&A which followed. It all gave us so much to think about and helped our understanding of how we should, approach our DNA results.

~~~~~

### March Meeting, hybrid in the library and on zoom



Saturday  
9th Mar.  
at  
2 pm



#### ***Made in Manchester :***

#### ***'A History of the City that Shaped the Modern World'***

An illustrated presentation given by Brian Groom,  
author of his soon-to-be published book of that title,  
and of *'Northerners - a History'*.

A hybrid meeting in the Library Performance Space & on Zoom.

Booking for zoom is essential and free to all on [Eventbrite](#)

No booking necessary in the library - members free; non-members £3

If there are severe weather warnings in place, for Oldham, on the day, please check on the website for any changes to meeting in the library.

~~~~~

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

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

~~~~~

## MLFHS Branches delivering their monthly meetings and talks

### Anglo - Scots – March

|                                               |                                        |                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MLFHS,<br>ANGLO-SCOTTISH<br>BRANCH<br>MEETING | Saturday,<br>2nd<br>March<br>at<br>2pm | Annual Meeting and<br>'Commemorating<br>service personnel<br>of WW1 &<br>previous conflicts' |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### A Zoom only Meeting

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

Booking necessary on [Eventbrite](#)

MLFHS Members free; non-members £5

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Bolton - March

MLFHS Bolton Branch Meetings - Hybrid	Wednesday 6th March at 7:30 pm	'The Bolton - Bridgeman Connection' given by Ray Jefferson
--	--	--

A Hybrid Meeting on Zoom and in the Golf Club

MLFHS Members free; non-members £5

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

& Online via Zoom for which booking on Eventbrite is necessary

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

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## MLFHS updates

### Manchester Meetings / Events... March 2024

|                                         |                                                         |                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MLFHS<br>aka<br>Manchester<br>Ancestors | Wednesday<br>13th<br>March<br>11:00 am<br>to<br>2:00 pm | 'Showcasing the 60th<br>Anniversary of our<br>Society and our<br>3.4 million records' |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### A Free, Open Event in Manchester Central Library

60 Years of working together to find, save and transcribe records for present and future generations of family researchers. Call in at Manchester Central Library to see our display of archival resources that we have used in the past or might be using now; wonder at the sheer variety of datasets that make up the 3.4 million records that can be searched on our website.

From Salford vehicle registrations to the massive sets of Catholic Parish Records, what might we know about your ancestors? Meet some of our volunteers and Branch representatives to find out more about what we do and why we always need more volunteers. Are you skilled in transcribing, publicity, helpdesk, administration, web editing, writing - just to name a few - we might have just the vacancy for you! We look forward to seeing you...

~~~~~

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.

~~~~~

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. All MLFHS 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](#)

~~~~~

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

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

\* I have added 470 records to the Great Database for the staff of Horwich Locomotive Works. These cover surnames ADAMS to CATON and MACKINWORTH to YOUNG. These are records relating to L&YR staff employed at stations.

The project is now completed with a total of 11,189 staff records indexed.

Thanks to Jim Chadwick and his team for this final contribution to a very valuable resource.

~~~~~

* I have just uploaded 9,164 index entries to the Great database. These relate to Tillotson's Mercury Newsletter November 1939 – March 1946, Tillotson's (Bolton) Ltd, publishers of the Bolton Evening News and other publications, created the in-house Mercury Newsletter to keep their staff and former colleagues informed about what was happening to everybody during the Second World War.

After the war the seventy five editions were collected and published as a single volume for which members of the Bolton Family History Society have now transcribed an index.

The index links to images of the original issues where you are likely to find more information about the person named.

Thanks to Graham Holt and the Bolton Branch volunteers for this interesting and valuable addition.

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\* I have added another 465 records to the Great Database for Manchester City Transport Staff

with surnames BEADLE to BLYTHE.

Thanks to Barry Henshall and his team (Mark Harrey, Phil Wharram and Stan Chaplin) for these.

~~~~~  
* I have just added an impressive 33,154 records to the Great Database. These consist of the admission and discharge registers of the Fletcher Street Workhouse in Bolton 1837-1861 (when it was replaced by the Fishpool Workhouse).

They marry up well with the much larger transcript of the Fishpool Workhouse Creed Books to provide a (mostly) continuous record of Bolton's poor from 1837 to 1911, a total in excess of approaching 130,000 records

The registers were transcribed by members of our Bolton Branch, to whom our thanks are gratefully recorded.

~~~~~  
\* Another useful addition to the Great Database.

This consists of the names, occupations, abodes (street names) year married and number of children for 1,169 Manchester workers obtained in a door-to-door survey taken in 1819 as part of a House of Lords committee investigation into the employment of children in cotton mills.

Thanks to Geoff Edge for transcribing these details.

This joins some further information already on the database listing employees at some Manchester mills around the same time, extracted from the same source by Julie Davey. There may still be a bit more to obtain from this source - watch this space!

~~~~~  
* I have added a small group of records to the Great Database. These are 328 records of employees at the Appleton, Ogden Cotton Mill taken from an 1819 inquiry into the employment of children in cotton mills.

Individuals may be difficult to identify since most are only identified by initial and surname (though some named in full) but ages are given, which may help, as well as years spent working in mills. Many have some sort of comment on health which run from "suffers from scrofula" to "Attributes her complaints to having borne so many as twelve children." (very probably!).

~~~~~  
\* Another substantial addition to the Great Database:

3,174 BMD announcements from Manchester Courier for 1849, transcribed by Linda Bailey, Laura Lewis, Chris Norcross and Chris Hall.

Thanks to the team for this latest batch of BMD announcements.

~~~~~  
* I have added a small, but interesting, collection of records to the Great Database.

These are 202 abstracts of correspondence, dated 1898-1900, relating to children from Salford under the care of Poor Law Guardians taken from TNA Class MH12 and transcribed by Julie Davey.

~~~~~  
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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Please note ...

Please check society/group websites or organisers for updated information

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Moorside & District Historical Society ... Monday, 18th March, at 7:30



## Moorside & District Historical Society




Monday 18th March 2024.




Times Past

### "Buckstones Double Murder"

Two Gamekeepers Killed on Marsden Moor

*Local Sholver man accused.  
Plus a Suicide.  
Your verdict on the events !*





*Repeated by request - with up-dates etc -*

Animated illustrated presentation by Ray Entwistle


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.*

*Meetings the third Monday of the month.*

Except for the summer break July & August + December. £2-50p including refreshment.  
April ~ September meeting in St Thomas' Church Hall. OL1 4SJ

Licensed Bar



Moorside Cricket Club, Turfpit Lane, OL4 2ND  
£2.50, including refreshments

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Saddleworth Historical Society ... Wednesday, 13th March at 7:30

'Some Oldham Families; Stotts, Prockters, Holdens & Hartleys amongst others'

an illustrated presentation given by William M. Hartley

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](#)

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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](#)

~~~~~

Regional Heritage Centre :

Website [HERE](#)

~~~~~

## 'A Mixed Bag'

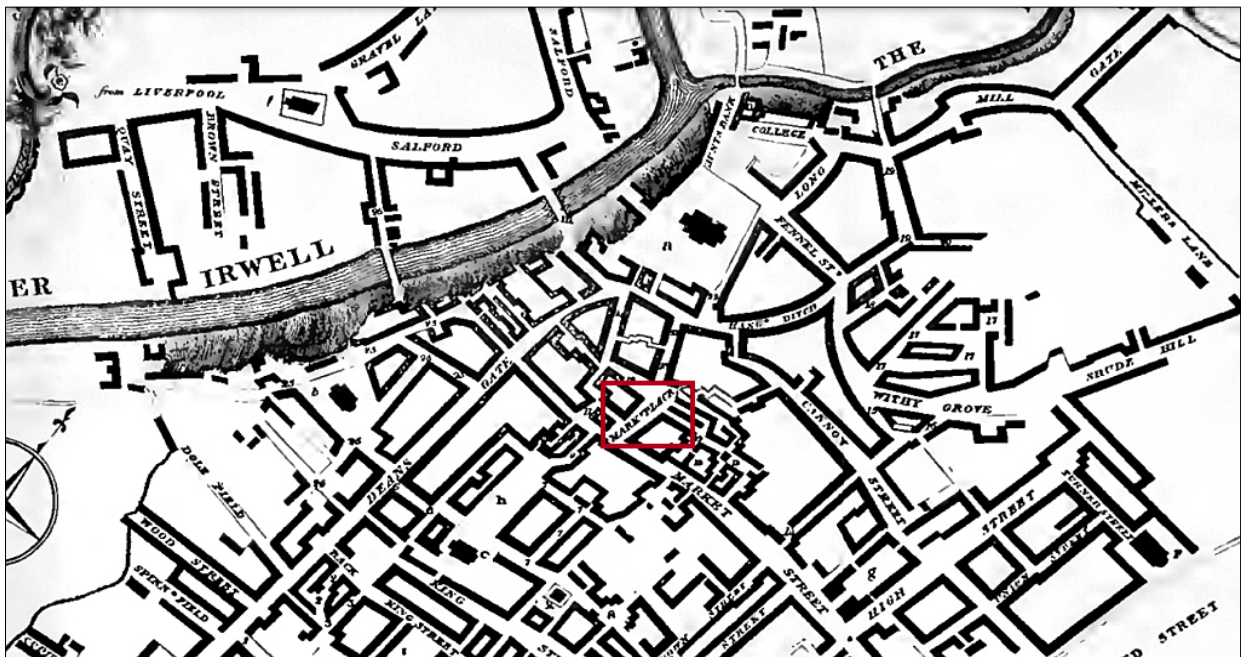
Our serialisation of *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men* Vol. 1 (1st series) by T.

Swindells, published in 1906, and started in our newsletter in 2023-08. It will continue through succeeding newsletters. This month we have pages 38 to 56. Illustrations are in the Gallery.

**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 COLLEGIATE CHURCH.

### Picture in Gallery

Since the time of Whittaker, antiquarians have been much concerned as to the actual meaning of the words to be found in Domesday Book, and which tell us that in 1080 the ecclesiastical establishment in Manchester dated back to Edward the (Confessor, that it consisted of two churches dedicated to St. Mary and St. Michael, and was endowed with one carve of land. It is extremely probable that the two churches were situated one on or near the site of the Cathedral and the other near the corner of St. Mary's Gate and the Market Place. Hollingworth records the appointment of rectors in 1299, 1301, and 1313; but beyond these bare facts we know

nothing. Harland was of opinion that from 627 to 1066 the church was of wood, afterwards replaced by stone. The present building or such portion of it as has survived the many changes and restorations dates back to the fourteenth century.

In 1371 Thomas de la Warre was presented to the living of Ashton-under-Lyne, but resigned it in 1373 in order to become rector of Manchester. In 1398 his elder brother, John, dying without issue, he succeeded him as Baron of Manchester; and in 1421 he obtained a licence from Henry V. empowering him to found a collegiate church. Warre devoted to the endowment of the church certain lands, part of which are now in the possession of the dean and canons, and dedicated it to St. George and St. Denis, those being the patron saints

#### **p.39**

of England and France, and to the Virgin Mary. Hollingworth says that "the said Thomas de la Warre" was "partly a Frenchman and partly an Englishman." Hence the dedication. In the following year John Huntingdon was appointed first warden, the foundation providing a warden, eight fellows, or chaplains, four clerks, and six choristers. Huntingdon was warden for 40 years, and built the chancel and chapter-house. Some authorities are inclined to attribute the lower arch of the Lady Chapel to an earlier date, probably about 1350. John Booth of Barton, second warden, was deprived after two years occupation, and was succeeded by Sir Ralph Langley, a younger son of the house of Agecroft, who completed much of the work commenced by Huntingdon. In this he was assisted by the Sir James Stanley, the Wests, the Radcliffes, and the Byrons. It is however, to Sir James Stanley, who was warden from 1485 to 1509, that we owe the best work in the building. Stanley, who was brother to the Earl of Derby, who married the mother of Henry VIII., was also Bishop of Ely. He built the clerestory of nave and choir, the Derby Chapel, and the stalls and beautiful carving on the south side of the choir; the stalls on the north side being erected by Richard Beck, a merchant in Manchester. These comprise some of the best work of their kind in the country, whilst the misereres are as quaint as any to be seen anywhere.

Whilst not mentioning the whole of those who at one time or another acted as warden several names cannot be passed over without note. Sir Lawrence Vaux, a strenuous Catholic, appointed by Queen Mary and

#### **p.40**

deposed by Elizabeth, was succeeded by Thomas Earle, who misappropriated much property belonging to the church, but being a favourite of the Queen he was granted a pension when he resigned the living in 1578. At this period the Queen dissolved the foundation, giving the college a new charter of foundation which provided for the appointment of a warden, four fellows, two chaplains, four musicians, two clerks, and four choristers. The payment of each was stipulated, and the salaries to be paid are somewhat interesting reading no-day. The warden was to receive four shillings per day, each fellow sixteen pence, each chorister four-pence halfpenny, and each singing boy twopence halfpenny. Absenteeism was to be guarded against by the infliction of a fine of half-a-crown per day in the case of the warden, and eightpence in the case of the fellows. In 1594 the learned Doctor Dee was appointed to the position of Warden. A student of mathematics and natural history, he was reputed by the ignorant populace to be a conjurer, and to be in league with the evil one, with the result that his library was seized and he was compelled to leave the country. Dr. Dee was succeeded by Dr. Murray, to whom and to whose misdeeds reference was made in the article on the Deanery. Another change in the foundation was made in 1635, when the Rev. Richard Heyrick was appointed Warden. This latest charter was drawn up by Archbishop Laud, and by it provision was made for the repair of the fabric, which had suffered much from neglect. These provisions were duly observed, and included in the work done was the new roofing of the

**p.41**

choir and side aisles. Fortunate for the building it was that such was the case, for during the period of the Civil War no party devoted attention to the maintenance of the church buildings. On the other hand much wilful damage was done in many parts of the country by the parliamentarians. Our old church seems to have escaped such attentions for it is doubtful whether the injury in the woodwork at the Lady Chapel was caused by them. However, if the building escaped, not so its warden, for we are told that Mr. Heyrick having been deprived was taken prisoner to London. At the restoration, however, he was reinstated, and dying in 1667 was buried near the altar. A colleague of Heyrick's for a period, but ejected for refusing to read the Act of Uniformity, the Rev. Henry Newcome, who afterwards was the first preacher in the Cross-street meeting house opened in 1693. About the same time [1654] the feoffees of Humphrey Chetham's charity purchased the College from the celebrated Charlotte de la Tremouille, widow of the ill-fated Earl of Derby, executed at Bolton. After the stormy period just referred to, the peace of the Church was undisturbed for many years, until the appearance of Charles Stuart in the town in 1745 heralded a time when strong views were loudly proclaimed. and when not to be a "Church and King" man was tantamount to be a traitor to the State. When John Wainwright, author of the tune to which "Christians Awake" is sung, was appointed organist, the payment of an old-time demand was successfully resisted. This was the annual payment of fourpence

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for each loom in the parish to the Warden and Fellows. This curious payment dated back to the time when persecuted and driven from their country by the cruelties of the Duke of Alva, many ingenious artisans of Flanders settled in Manchester. In consideration of their establishing manufactures of woollen and linen, and introducing the arts of dyeing and silk throwstering, the Warden and Fellows allowed the refugees to cut such timber as they required from the extensive woods then in possession of the church; a. payment of four-pence per loom to be made annually. However, in course of time the woods disappeared, and after much discussion the continued payment of the tax was resisted.

The most popular, for popular he was in spite of his peculiarities, member of the preaching staff a century ago was the Rev. Joshua Brookes. He was so closely associated with the buildings and its services for a long period of years that it would be a mistake to dismiss him in a few words. I shall therefore devote my next article to Joshua and his friends. A few tangled threads remain to be dealt with. On Whit Monday, May 6, 1801, the first Whit Monday procession of school children made its way to the collegiate Church; and a year later the colours of the disbanded Regiment of Manchester and Salford Volunteers were hung in the church.

The nineteenth century was, however, principally noteworthy for the alterations and restorations of the buildings, and the formation of the Bishopric, which amongst other changes caused the Warden and Fellows to be replaced by the Dean and Canons. With the mention of a few of the earlier changes we must close.

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From 1814 to 1828 something like £16,000 was spent by the parish, in addition to large sums by owners of various chapels in so called restorations. One of these consisted in covering the fine stone mouldings in the nave, and dating back four hundred years, with Roman cement, another was the building of the galleries on the north and south sides, and a third was the hiding away of the fine ancient crockets and trefoil embattled ornaments on the northern side by a nameless piece of alleged sculpture. Since the early forties better taste has prevailed, and although many interesting items have disappeared, a large amount of good work has been done; and to-day the building, whilst disappointing as a Cathedral for which it was not intended, is a fine specimen of the ancient Parish Church for which it was intended.

## REV. JOSHUA BROOKES.

### Picture in Gallery

Although more than 80 years have passed since Joshua Brookes was buried within the church he loved so well, his name is still familiar to Manchester people. It is right that such should be the case, for there never was associated with the building a clergyman who was more deserving of respect and remembrance than the eccentric chaplain of the opening of the nineteenth century. Mrs. Banks, in her delightful novel "The Manchester Man," deals with him in a kindly manner, and enables us to realise how it was that Brookes, in spite of his eccentricities won the hearts of all who knew him. For many years he was so closely connected with the Collegiate Church that the church and parson are indissolubly associated in the minds of thousands of persons. Let us endeavour to trace in brief manner his life and character, in order that we may form a true estimate of the man.

Born at Cheadle Hulme of humble parentage, his father being a shoemaker, he was baptised on May 19, 1754. His father, Thomas Brookes, was a cripple, uncouth in appearance, eccentric in manner, and troubled with an ungovernable temper. These facts earned for him the sobriquet of "Pontius Pilate," a name called after him by lads whenever he appeared in the streets. When Joshua was quite a child his father removed from Cheadle to Manchester. and took up his quarters at a place called "Sot's Hole," situated near

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Ridgefield, Deansgate. He did not stay there very long, removing to a room over a gateway near the Three Arrows Inn, and, later still, to a room in a court off Long Millgate, opposite the residence of the high master of the Grammar School. As a free scholar under Hugh Oldham's foundation, Joshua received his early education. Being a youth of some ability, he attracted the attention of the Rev. Thomas Aynsough, M.A., one of the Fellows of the Collegiate Church, and, assisted by him and other benevolent fellow townsmen, and aided further by a school exhibition which he won in 1777, his father was enabled to send him to Brazenose College. Oxford. There he graduated B.A. in 1778 and M.A. in 1781. In 1782 he was ordained to the stipendiary curacy of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, then a small hamlet of cottages clustered round the ancient church and village green. In 1783 Joshua was admitted to priest's orders, and on August 10, 1789 he was nominated by the Warden and Fellows of the Collegiate Church to the perpetual curacy of Chorlton. He only remained there till the following year, when he obtained the appointment of chaplain in the Collegiate Church, a position which he held for over 30 years. For a portion of this time he was an assistant-master at the Grammar School, where he was very unpopular with the boys. He waged open warfare with them, and on several occasions pitched battles were fought which resulted once in his forcible ejection from the schoolroom. On another occasion the timely appearance of the head-master saved him from being pitched over

parapet into the River Irk. The elder scholars lampooned

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him, and many were the skits in prose and verse written at his expense. But Joshua, or Jotty, quarrelled not only with the schoolboys, but with anybody who crossed his temper. All were treated impartially in this respect, even the warden and fellows of the church on more than one occasion feeling the full force of his wrath. Many are the stories told of the eccentric chaplain, in some of which he got as good as he gave. Speaking one day to a very old townsman, he often used the words "We old men." At last Mr. Johnson said to him, "How owd art tha?" "Sixty-foive," said Jotty. "Sixty-foive?" said his friend, "why, tha'rt only a lad yet; here's a penny. Go an' buy thysel a penny pie." Another instance was one day when Jemmy Watson, popularly known as "Th' Doctor" who edited a theatrical paper called "The Townsman," and was the first librarian at the Portico, made the chaplain the victim of a pun. Brookes, in reply, said "Tha'rt a blackguard,



Jimmy." to which Watson retorted, "If I be not a blackguard, Jotty, I'm next to one."

A well-known weakness was his fondness for sweets. He had a running account at a shop in Half-street, and not infrequently he would leave the graveside, proceed to the shop, secure a supply of horehound drops, and return to conclude the service. In his private life he appears to have been free from the vices so general in those days. Frugal in his house-keeping, he is said on one occasion, having invited a friend to dine with him, to have entertained him with a black pudding. His saving habits enabled him to purchase the house in

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which he lived in Long Millgate. It was No. 11, and adjoined the old Grammar School and stood nearly opposite to "Poet's Corner." Where the Cathedral Hotel stands was the house of the headmaster of the Grammar School, in Fennel-street was the Apple Market, and the churchyard extended down almost to the river. In .Brookes' time the churchyard was not surrounded by railings, and when the chaplain suggested to Watson that some should be erected, he received, by way of reply, the intimation that there was railing enough inside the church. The boundary in those days was marked by a low wall, on which a chimney-sweep one day took up his position to watch a funeral service that Joshua was conducting. The chaplain had just read the words, "I heard a voice from Heaven saying," when he spied the imp of blackness, and to the surprise of the mourners immediately interjected the sentence, "Knock that little black rascal off th' wall," and then proceeded with the service. Many of the stories of Brookes are connected with the old parts of the town, Thus. when passing down Cockpit Hall, famous in past days for its toothsome pies, he saw a placard announcing a sale at a place called Bethany. Reading the notice aloud, he asked himself, "Bethany, Bethany! Where's Bethany?" A bystander replied, "Fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, Joshua," to which he retorted, "Right, Tom, right." Many other stories could be told, but space will only permit of a few references to several associated with the services in the church. It is said that whilst Tom Seddon, the sexton, was digging a grave, Brookes, passing by, stopped, and, referring to a

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vacancy that had occurred among the Fellows, asked Seddon whom he thought would be promoted. Seddon looked up and said, "Why, sir, I cannot tell precisely who may be raised to that dignity but I'm pretty certain of one thing; you and I have got as high as ever we shall get in the church." On another occasion a youth, who afterwards became a well-known Manchester solicitor, seated himself in the minister's pew in the church. Brookes saw him and sharply told him that the pew was for parsons and clerks only. "Well, sir," responded the youth, "I'm a clerk!" "Eh, what clerk are you?" "Oh, I'm an attorneys clerk." "Oh, well, tha' may sit theer."

In his time Brookes christened, married, and buried more persons than has ever been done by any other parson in the church. His conduct on many of those occasions was amusing. To be married at "th' owd church" was a great feature in those days, and on holidays such as Easter Monday and Whit Monday large numbers of wedding parties made their way to the Collegiate Church. It was impossible to marry each couple separately, consequently they were arranged in batches. Confusion often ensued, and it was not an unusual thing to hear men and women declare that they were being married to the wrong partners. "Never mind," would be the reply, "sort yourselves after." One groom, thinking to steal the first kiss from a friend's wife, received a sounding box on the ears, with the intimation, "Dip in thi' own porridge!" For a graphic and correct description of Easter Monday at the Collegiate Church I would refer readers to Chapter 18 in "The Manchester Man."

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Having said this much respecting the humorous side of Joshua, let us consider him in another light. Joseph Aston, writing in the "Exchange Herald," said that his character had been seldom correctly appreciated, and that his manner often obscured the goodness of his motive. As one

who knew him, he said that "he did certainly want the delicate sensations which induce, nay, force their possessor to appear amiable; but if an undeviating love of truth, a grateful recollection of acts of kindness; if the spirit of forgiveness, which was never dead in him; if a devoted attachment to the Church of England, and a constant and an undeviating assiduity in the discharge of his professional duties be praiseworthy, we ought to target that he was deficient in some of those qualities which are too often apologies for the absence of more substantial virtues." Another worker said: "He was a man deeply versed in the lore of the Church, and held its sacred institutions in reverence and awe. His enunciation, though extremely rapid, was clear and emphatic; to the reading of the sacred scriptures he imparted a delightful pathos, and the most discriminating euphony; and although his manners and cast of features did not challenge a very favourable estimate of the sensibilities of his heart, there were particular parts of the Bible, through which the conflict of his feeling invariably prevented him from proceeding." "Enemies he had none; for though the old smiled and the young jeered; both old and young were ready to serve him with alacrity. His usefulness and kindness of heart were generally acknowledged. His characteristic style of repartee remained with him

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to the last. As he lay ill the parish clerk called in to see him. He had lost the sight of one eye, and had remained motionless during the greater part of the day apparently taking no notice of anything that was passing on around him. Joshua's house-keeper having taken the clerk into the room said, "Robert. we think he has lost the sight of the other eye." Robert took up the candle, and after duly scrutinising the other eye, expressed his concurrence in the housekeeper's opinion; when, to their no small astonishment, the dying man, in his usual hard tones and testy manner, exclaimed, "Thou art a liar, Bob; thou art a liar." A few days later both eyes were closed in death. He died on November 11, 1821, and on the 16th was buried under the west cross aisle of the church. The attendance at the funeral was one of the largest known in those days in the town, many leading townsmen being present. The pallbearers were Dr. Blackburne, warden of the church, the Rev. C. D. Wray, and four Fellows (Revs. J. Mallory, John Gatcliffe, John Clowes, and C. W. Ethelstone). It does not reflect credit upon the present authorities that we can say that neither by stone, mark, nor inscription can we identify the place of his interment.

### **ROUND THE OLD CHURCHYARD.**

The Manchester churchyard a century ago! How different then and now. Entering the churchyard by the stile that stood near to Salford Bridge at the beginning of the nineteenth century, we should pass on our left a number of buildings, built upon the rocky bank of the river. These were approached from the footpath across the yard, and were divided from the yard by a low sandstone wall varying in height from two to four feet. This wall extended round the yard a century ago. A portion of it was capped by a rounded coping. The remainder being finished off with a sharp ridging which in course of time by the action of the weather became somewhat flattened. This was the case on the river side, where the boys amused themselves running along the wall to the annoyance of the Rev. Joshua Brookes. It was there too, at a spot near to the Ring-o'-Bells public house, which stood opposite the church steeple that the chimney sweep originated the story referred to in connection with the eccentric chaplain. The Ring-o'-Bells was not the only licensed house that overlooked the river, the Black-a-Moor's Head and the Flying Horse standing at a short distance away on either side. Amongst the occupiers of the cottages was a cabinet-maker who was accustomed to hang baited lines into the river from his yard wall. This was done overnight, and next morning he would draw in the catch, such eels as were not required for the family dinner being kept for future use in a tub in the

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yard. Near to the Ring-o'-Bells was a refuse tip known as Tin Brow. This consisted of a portion

of the river bank that was there sloped down to the water, and offered a favourable means for the disposal of refuse of all kinds. At length a climax was reached, and public indignation was aroused. It arose in this way. About 1811 the graveyard being filled, and a demand for graves still continuing, the sexton hit upon a novel device to suit all parties. Many of the graves were very old, often without stones, and having no mark whereby to identify the occupants. These he proceeded to dig up, disposing of any pieces of wood or bones by throwing them down Tin Brow into the river. By this means grave space was obtained, but public decency was outraged, and the yard was closed for burials. This took place in 1819, and is noted by Aston in his "Metrical History of Manchester."

This year, so defac'd by a Radical storm,\*  
Gave birth to a permanent, real Reform;  
A faculty asked for (it long had been wanted)  
A thirty years fallow, the Bishop now granted,  
To inclose the old Churchyard - no grave to be broke.  
Till time has, has for thirty times, worn Winter's cloak.  
Till that time is o'er, adieu to Infections!  
Till that time is o'er, adieu 'Resurrections!  
Till that time is o'er, no more will Tin Brow  
Sights shocking humanity, bring to our view;  
Till then will no bodies be dragged from their graves,  
And, to make room for others, be thrown to the waves!  
No more will the fish of the Irwell be fed  
With wreck of the grave, with the flesh of the dead.

\* Reference to Peterloo

Having passed out of the churchyard on the north side we turn to the right, up Fennel-street, formerly

### **p.53 Picture in the Gallery**

held the apple market, On Saturdays the street was thickly studded with barrels of apples and pears sent into town principally by the farmers of the neighbourhood, but occasionally coming from the orchards of Worcestershire and Herefordshire. In later years, in consequence of the great increase in the trade done and of the number of stands taken, the market was removed to Shudehill. In the apple market, as the bottom part of Fennel-street was called, stood a public house known as the Three Tuns. In a view of the old black and white building still existing, the front of the place is ornamented with a number of curiously carved heads said to have been taken from the Collegiate Church during alterations.

At the corner of Fennel-street and Half-street there formerly stood the Black Boy Tavern, which, together with its orchards and gardens, belonged in 1711 to Sarah Broster. After her death the property passed to Elizabeth Bennion, who in 1731 devised it for the benefit of the charity school, then standing in the Old Churchyard. Two years later the property was sold by the Rev. Robert Kenyon for the sum of £420, which money was invested, the income being devoted as devised. The old Charity School was supported by subscriptions and by offerings in the church. In addition to the Bennion bequest, the school benefited by the will of Elizabeth Kirkham, whose will dated August 20, 1762, left £400 in the interest of which should go to the education of poor children. Again, in 1773, Elizabeth Bent bequeathed the sum of £300, the interest of which should be applied to the support

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of a teacher in the said school; or for clothing the children educated there. The school itself had an income of £28 14s. 3d. from chief rents. In 1808 the old school in the churchyard was blown down and destroyed. It was never rebuilt, and it would be interesting to know where it stood,

and how the charity is distributed now.

A well-known confectioner in Half-street a century ago was Jane Clowes, whose shop, next door to the Crown and Thistle, was a regular resort of Joshua Brookes. The shop with its large bow window, afterwards kept by a man named Thorpe, will be remembered by those whose memories take them back half a century. Mistress Clowes and Joshua were great friends, and he had a standing contract to take all her stale bread, cakes, &c., for feeding his pigeons, which he kept at the top of his house, in a cote. The price paid was three halfpence per pound. Mrs. Clowes did a very large sugar boiling business, and at her death left not only a flourishing business, but a fortune of nearly £20,000. She belonged to the old school of tradespeople, as the following story will show. She went frequently to Liverpool to buy sugar, her costume being characteristically peculiar. Her usual head dress was an old-fashioned mob-cap, over which she tied a silk handkerchief on going out. When going to Liverpool she oft wore over these an old black bonnet. So attired she called one morning on a new firm of Liverpool sugar dealers, and asked to see some samples. Judging her by her dress they showed her only a limited number, and treated her with scant respect. On the following

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morning she again appeared, dressed in a silk gown and a more fashionable head dress, which she had borrowed from her landlady. The change worked wonders, and she was treated with the greatest respect. But even then, so large was the order that she placed that some inquiry was made as to payment. Without demur, however, she paid cash for the whole quantity; and ever afterward Mrs. Clowes was a welcome customer, even though she appeared attired in the old gown and curious head dress. It is said that she frequently used eight or nine tons of sugar per week.

One more reference and we must close. At the corner of Hanging Bridge, near to the church gate, was, for many years, the shop where the Swindells family carried on business as printers, and from whose press were issued chapbooks in an almost endless variety. The business was commenced by George Swindells, a native of Disley, who died in 1796; and was continued by his widow Alice, in conjunction with their eldest son, John. The family retained possession of the shop until 1846. A younger son, Henry, conducted business as a printer in Deansgate for many years. I have before me a collection of a dozen of the chapbooks issued from Hanging Bridge, which, although comparing unfavourably with the children's books of to-day, are exceedingly interesting. The subjects dealt with are Jane Shore, Robinson Crusoe, with a woodcut representing the adventurer fully equipped; Robin Hood, with nine illustrations; the Happy Cottagers, one of the illustrations representing a wheel standing as high as the cottage; Blue Beard,

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illustrated, and a number garland. With their poor paper, old type, and crude illustrations they take us back to the days when books were scarce and dear. To prevent any possibility of confusion, I may say that I am in no way related to the family of printers.

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Continuing the serialisation, we come now to the last few pages of the 'Stories', and I hope you've found them as entertaining and insightful as I have done over the years.

'Short Stories about Failsworth Folk '

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AN EGG SELLING STORY.

Old Robin at one time kept a lot of poultry, and supplied the good housewives of Failsworth with new-laid eggs. It has long been a custom in, the district to charge twopence each for new-laid eggs up to Shrovetide, and afterwards sell them at a reduced rate. A few years ago Robin took fifteen eggs to the house of a well-known lady, and on her asking him how much they were, answered, "Why, a hawve-a-creawn, of course." As it was after Shrovetide she demurred paying the price, and asked him how it was he wanted twopence each for his eggs. Robin was equal to the emergency. "Well, yo' see, missus," he replied, "these eggs wur o' laid afore Poncake Tuesday, an' that acceawnts for 'em bein' twopence each."

HOW ROBIN SERVED THE BATER.

In another part of this book I have referred to the heartless way some of the poor hand-loom weavers were treated by a few of their masters, or cloth-lookers. These servants of the masters were ever on the alert to try and find some real or imaginary flaw in the woven work of the weavers, in order that they might deduct something from their scanty earnings. This was known as "bateing." Frequently did it happen that a weaver would have a great portion of what he had honestly earned deducted from his wages by some of these tyrants of the masters. Old Robin told me a story of an experience he once had with one of these "putter-outs." He said. "Aw'd takun mi woven wark whoam to a warehouse i' Manchester, an' th' putter-eawt kept turnin' it o'er to

see if he could find ony flaw in it. At last he feaund what he said. were a spot o' tallow, abeaut th' size uv a pea. He towed me he should ha' to tak' twelve shillin' off my wages for this. Well, this geet my monkey up, an' aw fairly let fly at him. He were a lung, lanky sort uv a chap. Aw said to him, 'If theaw bates me twelve shillin', aw'll come through this clap dur, an' wring thy neck for thee, theaw lung, slomokin' sceandrel. Whoever towed thee theaw art fit for a cut-looker? Theaw't fit for nowt but swarmin' in trees, an' fearin' th' brids as a scarecrow.' But he stuck to it he would have to bate me, so aw axt him to let me have th' cut back, an' aw'd mak' it reet in a few minutes. He gave me my cut, an' aw wrapped it up, an' took it in a public-heause close by. Aw geet a bit o' breawn paper, put th' cloth under a plate, an' warmed a fire potter nob, an' geet this grease spot eawt as cleon as a whistle. Yet, aw knew th' owd divvule would stick to it ther' were still a flaw i' th' cut. So aw ruffled my cloth a few plates apart fro' where this little spot ud bin, then took th' cut back. When th' putter-eawt geet howd o' th' cut, he began a howdin' it up to th' leet where it were ruffled, lookin' for th' grease spot. As he could no' find ony, he axt me heaw aw'd gettun it eawt. 'Eh,' aw said, 'aw would no' tellthee, theaw scamp, for five peaunds.' But it did no' end here, for aw're sick an' tired o' weavin' to this shop; so aw towed th' putter-eawt, when aw'd gotten howd o' my wages, 'at, he could fotch my warp eawt o' th' loom, for aw would no' weave another inch to sich a divvule as him. He did no' like this, for he knew it would cost summut to do it. I' th' lung run he promised me five shillin' extra if aw'd finish my warp, an' say no moore abeawt it. That were th' way aw geet o'er that tyrant."

ROBIN AND THE HUNTSMAN.

"Owd Robin," who also resided for some time in Hollinwood, became, in later life, a keen sportsman. He was an excellent shot, and, like "Sloper," was at one time a sparrow catcher. When I went with "Sloper" "a sparrow catching," I was under a promise not to tell Robin of the places where we had caught our sparrows. Evidently my friend "Sloper" did not want Robin to know of his favourite sparrow-catching spots, nor to deprive him of his custom and birds. So it would appear that in those times there was even competition in sparrow catching. As I have said, Robin was a good shot. I remember he once shot a hare in front of the hounds, in a field

belonging to a farmer, in Chadderton. The leader of the Chadderton hunt was one of the foremost hunters at that time. He was greatly exasperated at Robin shooting this hare, and thus spoiling their sport. He went up to Robin, and remonstrated with him in strong terms for shooting this hare, which led to a wordy warfare, in the midst of which he hit Robin with his riding whip. Robin well knew he was within his rights, for he had a licence, and also the permission of the farmer to shoot over his land. He accordingly summoned the huntsman before the Royton Bench, for assault. The huntsman, knowing he was in the wrong, and afraid of losing the case, offered Robin five pounds to square the matter, but he would not listen to the proposal. "Nawe, nawe," said Robin, "aw'll tak' thee afore thi betters, an' let thee know theaw conno' do what theaw's a mind wi' poor folk." Robin took him before the Royton Bench, and got him fined, and so he proved himself one too many for the noted hunter. I have heard

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of another good story about Robin. He was once shooting over some land farmed by a man about Littlemoss, and it seems he had not got permission to shoot over this land. The farmer told him, if he ever caught him on his land again, he would set his dog at him. "Thee try that on," said Robin, "an' aw'll mak' thee remember it." Some time after, Robin was on the land again, and the farmer, true to his warning, set his dog at Robin. It appears the dog did not bite Robin, but the farmer was not aware of this. In telling the story, Robin, in his own words, says: "Aw went whoam, an' geet a stockin' needle, an' made two or three o' th' nicest bites as ever ony mon saw. Aw summoned the divvule, an' showed these bites i' th' cauves o' my legs, an' aw geet five peawnds damages eawt of him. It tow't him a lesson he never forgeet." Robin delights to tell this story, even at the present day. I question if there are any finer and quainter characters now living than he is. It is quite a treat to get in his company, and listen to his yarns.

A CURIOUSLY NAMED CLUB.

Now let me relate a story or two from my own experience as a lecturer. A short time since I promised a friend of mine to deliver, for the Bacup Natural History Society, my illustrated lecture on "Recollections and Stories of Waugh, Brierley, and Laycock." My friend had informed me of the kind of audience I should meet. He had further told me that the lecture would have to be given in the room where the Society held its regular meetings. The room, he said, served as a museum, and was filled with various specimens of birds, reptiles, and insects. On arriving

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at the Bacup Station, on the night of the lecture, I inquired of a man near the station, if he could direct me to the rooms of the Natural History Society? He seemed somewhat puzzled at the question, and, repeating it to me, he said, "Aw dunnot know wheere that place is, mesthur." "Surely, you will know the place," I said, "for they have all sorts of birds, reptiles, and insects in the room. In fact, it is a kind of a museum." The man suddenly brightened up, and exclaimed, in his broad dialect - "Oh! It's the Muck-Flea Club yo' want." I thought I should have fallen with laughing at his quaint description. It seemed that the members of the Society had dabbled so much with insect, and other forms of life, that they had earned for themselves, among a certain class, the curious title of "Muck-Flea Club." There was, in this description, a fine sense of droll humour, which fairly tickled my fancy. My guide kindly conducted me to the place, and on arriving at the room I had a little fun out of my friends, when I told them of the difficulty I had experienced in finding their room, all through them not sending me the proper description of their Society. I further said it was the first time I had had the honour of lecturing before such a distinguished body as the "Muck-Fleaites."

This story brings to my mind another amusing experience, I once had, in connection with this same lecture. I was billed to give the lecture at Royton, near Oldham. On arriving at the room, I was told by the doorkeeper that I could not go in, as the place was crowded. As I did not leave

the door when told, the doorkeeper said -“ Neaw, it’s nouse yo’ botherin’; yo’ conno’ goo in. So be towed, an’ goo away.” Desiring to have a little fun out of the man, I said, “It’ll be rather awkward if I cannot get in;

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for you’ll have no lecture if you don’t let me in.” “ Why, yo’ dunno’ mean to say ut yo’ are Sim Schofield?” inquired the doorkeeper. “I suppose I am,” was my answer. “Well,” he said, that caps o’. I expected meetin’ a chap wi’ a lung, flowin’ beard, an’ a grey yed. Coom in, an’ a theausand apologies for what aw’ve said.” Of course, I went in and gave the lecture, and during my delivery of it I was showing on the screen a picture illustrating Waugh’s well-known poem - “Toddlin’ Whoam.” In the picture, there is an old weaver carrying over his shoulder a wallet, containing material to weave. I happened to make the remark that I did not think there was a person in the room who could tell what the old man was carrying. An old lady, at the back, sang out “Aw con tell yo’. He’s carryin’ a wallet.” I had to admit she was right. “Aye,” she continued, “aw’ve carried one mysel’, mony a time, an’ aw know what they are.” After the lecture the old lady came up to the platform, and she turned out to be a relative of mine, and one I did not know resided in Royton. She said, “Theaw would no’ ha’ made that remark, if theaw’d known aw’re i’ th’ room, Sim.” She was quite right in what she said.

THE WRESTLER AND THE HIGHWAY ROBBERS.

I have heard a good story told about Swann, the champion heavy-weight wrestler, who at one time kept the Black Horse Inn, Watch-cote, Failsworth. I knew Swann well. He was a giant in size and strength, and it was said that he had such a terrible grip that when he got hold of a man's muscles he could, if he chose to exercise his power,

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leave his mark in the shape of a black place on the arms of his opponent. I have also heard it said he could actually squeeze a potato to a pulp by sheer strength of the grip of his hand. Such was the man as I knew him, and I should think his wrestling weight would be about eleven score. The Black Horse stood at the bottom of what was then known as “Walmsley Brow,” now changed in name to Oldharn Road. The Brow was then a lonely length of the highway. I can well. remember it being lined with trees on each side, from the Canal Bridge to Watch-cote. In the old days this lonely length was quite a terror to the Failsworth people, and many have been attacked there, and relieved of their money by highway robbers. Swann was once returning home about midnight, down this Brow, when two men sprang out from behind the hedge, and demanded his money. But they had mistaken their man, for Swann seized each of his assailants by the muscles, and went marching down the Brow squeezing their arms almost to a pulp. The robbers cried out most piteously for mercy, but Swann’s only reply was, “Aw’ll taich yo’ two scamps a lesson for stoppin’ a mon to rob him on th’ King’s highway.” When he got them down the Brow, he released them, and they both took off as fast as they could. I have no doubt they would remember their punishment for years afterwards. Swann’s strength and skill in wrestling served him well on that occasion. Would that all robbers could be treated in a. similar way!

STORIES OF AN OLD HAND-LOOM WEAVER.

A short time since I had a surprise visit paid to me at my house, by Fred Kenyon, a veteran hand-loom

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weaver, from the village of Woodhouses. I never spent a more enjoyable hour. He is one of the soundest politicians, and best-read men I ever met. In his native and pure dialect he said to me, “Aw’ve bin readin’ thy articles i’ th’ ‘City News,’ an’ aw’ve come to tell thi a skit or two.” I expressed surprise that he should take in the paper, for I knew Kenyon was only earning a few

shillings a week with weaving. But he further opened my eyes when he said, "Aw tak' three o' th' best pappers in i' th' country-the 'Manchester Guardian,' - 'City News,' an' owd 'Reynolds.'" Turning to my library, he said, "May I just have a look at thy books, an' see what theaw reads?" I was simply astonished to hear him talk about the works of the various authors. I could not have believed that a poor hand-loom weaver could have been so well-informed in the works of so many authors, especially seeing he had never earned more than a mere labourer. I am told Kenyon is also a linguist of no mean order, having mastered a language or two whilst weaving at his loom.

THE HOLE IN A WEAVER'S CUT.

My friend said: "While readin' thy sketches abeaut hond-loom weavers, an incident coom to my mind uv a weaver once takin' his cut to th' warehouse. By some mistake he'd made a little hole in it, one he expected to be 'bated' badly for. Th' putter-eawt got howd uv his cut, an', flourishin' a yard stick, he began a-measurin' it. Puttin' th' stick i' th' cut in a swaggerin' sort uv a way, he sent it straight through this little hole. Th' weaver, on seein' this, exclaimed, 'Well, theaw has made a job o' that, but aw' dunno' wonder at it, for th' silk i' that piece were

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so rotten it would hardly howd together while aw wove it.' Th' putter-eawt thowt he'd made th' hole hissel', an' so th' weaver was no' 'bated.'"

ANOTHER WEAVING INCIDENT.

My friend, Kenyon, told me another story, of a weaver taking home his woven work. Those who have any knowledge of weaving will know that at the end of a cut there is a dyed mark, and anything beyond this mark the weaver is not expected to weave and take back. This remainder is what is called a "fent," and is frequently mentioned by both Brierley and Waugh in their writings. In my days of weaving, I have known many nice ties woven by the weavers for themselves out of these "fents." "Well," said Mr. Kenyon, "this weaver, when he had honded in his wark, had it measured wi' th' putter-eawt, an' he said when he'd done, 'Why, this cut is too lung. Heaw's that?' The weaver, on lookin' at his cut, exclaimed, 'Well, aw'rn blessed if I hav' nur browt th' fent an' o' in. That is a divvule uv a mistake aw've made, an' aw disarve a good cleawtin' for doin' it. Heawever, it'll ha' to go neaw.'"

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

LOVE AND INDEPENDENCE IN POVERTY.

And now let me relate a really touching story which came under my own observation. In these days of distress and unemployed, it is well to recall how heroically some people have battled with poverty. One Christmas Eve, some few years ago, I was passing through my native village of

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Failsworth. Coming to an old house, where a hand-loom weaver resided with his wife, I thought I would just have a few words of chat with the worthy old couple. It had just gone dusk when I knocked at the door of this cottage. A feeble voice called out, "Come in." I entered, and there sat the aged couple in the dark, the only light coming from a small handful of fire in the grate. When the old man found out who I was, he was quite pleased to see me, for, as a weaver lad, in my early days, I had walked with him scores of times to Manchester, taking our woven work to the warehouses together. I remember him to have been a good old soul in those days. "Well," I said to him, "and how are you getting on?" My friend replied, "But poorly, lad, very poorly. For this last twelve months my wife an' me together have nur earned five shillin' a week, an' three o' this we've had to pay for rent. Theaw sees weavin' 'as bin so slack. What a good thing it were for thee, lad, ut theaw geet eawt of it!" Turning to the old man, I said, "And

however have you lived?" "Eh, God alone knows, lad, it's bin thin porritch, weak tea, an' dry bread, an' not o'er mich o' that, lad." "But why don't you ask the parish to help you?" I said. "Aw con hardly do that, lad," he replied. "Well, but you will only be asking for a little of what you have paid," I said, "for you've been paying poor rates for over fifty years." With a voice almost choked with emotion, the old man said, "Aye, aye, that seaunds o' reet, but if aw went to th' Guardians they'd want us booath to goo inside, an' aw canno' neaw be parted fro' my owd mate, after livin' together for fifty years. It would break booath uv eaur hearts. Aw'd sooner dee o' th' hearth-stone than we should be parted i' eaur owd age. As for gettin' eawt-door relief, they tell me aw shall lose my vote if aw

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accept o' that. As theawr't a registration agent, theaw con tell rne if that's true." I told him I was sorry to say it was true.

"Then," replied the old man, "that sattles it. Apply for relief aw never will; aw'll clem to deoth first. Aw've fowt for my vote for nearly fifty years, an' neaw aw have it i' my possession, aw conno' afford to give it up." I found it was no use arguing, so I said, "I'm very sorry indeed to find you in such a poor condition. It's a very dark outlook for you this Christmas. What have you for to-rnorrow's Christmas dinner?" "A mess o' thin porritch, lad," he replied. "Yes," I said, "but I'll see you have something better than that. I'll buy you a turkey, and you shall have a good 'blow-out' for once again." I was moved to tears with what my aged friend next said. He inquired, in his own honest and quaint way, "Con theaw afford it, lad?" There was more force in those words than appears on the surface. Here was the old man pining away in his poverty, and yet would not have accepted my help if he thought I could not have afforded it. Honest, and true as steel to the last, and showing a sterling integrity worthy of a hero. Such is a picture of the sturdy independence of the Failsworth hand-loom weaver.

As I left his dwelling, I wondered how many there were at the present day who would stop to inquire whether a person could "afford" to give what he was offering to relieve a needy neighbour. I took the worthy couple a turkey, and if ever mortal man had pleasure in doing a kindly deed of mercy, it was myself in presenting that turkey to my aged friends. As I returned home, I thanked God that I had been able to shed a little ray of sunshine into one poor man's cottage. Never before had I so fully realised

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the truth of the sentence, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is in the hope that the relating of this touching incident may tend to open and soften the hearts of others that I have penned this short Christmas sketch.

With the telling of this story, my task is done. I have tried to be faithful and impartial in my pictures of past village life; so much so, that I have even related some stories about my own family and relations, which an over-sensitive writer would probably have omitted. Still, I have thought a good story ought to be told, whoever was the central figure in it. My object has been not only to write for amusement, but also to instruct, and to show the progress and good manners made even in humble country life. It is in the hope that what I have written may tend to enliven the dull moments of my fellow men that I send forth these stories. If I have succeeded in a small degree, I shall feel amply repaid for my humble efforts, and shall not then have written entirely in vain.

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**From the e-Postbag**

An email from a reader, Ron Bullock ... a story from Sim Schofield that sparked a memory of his own.

Hi Sheila

I was struck by Sim Schofield's piece about Failsworth shopping in your recent Mixed Bag (Shopping Stories) which carried this nice piece about shopping in Failsworth in 1905:

*"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."*

My father (b. 1908) told a story of visiting a grocer's shop when he was a boy. He said it was his Grandpa's, but census evidence does not support this and I have not found another good related candidate. Actually, his great grandpa, James Morley, was a grocer, so perhaps his business in North Porter Street passed, unrecorded, down the line. Anyway, while Dad was there, a great slab of butter was delivered. "Grandpa" cut it in two and placed the pieces on display, one in each of his two windows. One was labelled 1/3 a pound (so verifying Schofield's recollection), the other 1/9. "But it's the same butter!" exclaimed my father. "Yes," said Grandpa, probably in dialect, "but some folks like to pay more for it!"

Caveat emptor! Today too!

Thanks for all your hard work. I really enjoy the Newsletter and so does my wife.

Ron

Many thanks, Ron, for your own little story and also for your kind words of appreciation. Editor

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Another very welcome contribution to our e-postbag from Julie Schwethelm, in Germany.

Ameliorating the Social Condition of the Village

As in most places in the North West, the population in Droylsden increased rapidly due to the Industrial Revolution. During the 1830's and 1840's large factories and cotton mills were constructed, bringing an influx of labour from the surrounding areas. By 1861 the population had risen to 8,000 compared with 3,000 in 1831. Schools were built, a parish church opened and there were recreation activities. By 1850 the local population was moving from cottage and farm work to factory employment. Five cotton mills were established by 1850. By 1875 there were eight.

William Miller Christy developed a hat-making business, W.M. Christy and Sons, during the nineteenth century, later expanding into the textile field, with Droylsden being one of the main centres. The Droylsden branch opened in 1837 for the manufacture of shirtings at Fairfield Mills. The firm contributed towards the construction of workers' cottages nearby, a school and gas works. A total of 960 employees worked in the mill at this time. James Christy, one of William's sons, bought back a looped towel from a visit to Turkey in the 1840's, inspiring the development of the world's first terry towel, a machine woven towel produced in Droylsden by Christy's in a specially adapted loom, and made of a fabric with loops that can absorb large amounts of water. The famous Royal Turkish towels, ordered regularly by Queen Victoria, were produced in Droylsden from 1851 by Christy and Sons.

By 1891, the company's Fairfield Mill in Droylsden had 310 looms and 30,000 spindles, according to *Worrall's Cotton Spinners Directory*.

Christy's belonged for many years to the Courtauld group and produced towels with the famous Christy label. Each time they had a factory sale my mother would be near the front of the queue and stock up with "seconds" towels in all shapes and colours. Mostly you couldn't detect any

flaws and frequently it was just the pattern that was not quite right, the quality was never to be faulted. We never used any other brands. She built up such an incredible supply that we are still using them and even still have some new ones on stock. Christy's stopped producing towels in Droylsden in the late nineteen eighties, the factory stood empty and derelict until it was demolished and replaced by a Tesco supermarket which opened in 1997. Tesco's has never quite assumed the charisma of Christy's mill.

Fairfield House next to Fairfield Mill was originally owned by the Christy family but known to the locals for years as Dr. Pratt's house. Dr. Pratt was a general practitioner who held her surgery in her large house. When she died, the house was empty for a long time and gave rise to much speculation as to its future use. Unfortunately it never got one, since it was demolished long before the mill to make way for flats for senior citizens. Although Fairfield Court has attempted to reflect some of the idiosyncratic architecture of its predecessor, many Droylsden people who remember Dr. Pratt's house still find it rather a pity that this little jewel with its characteristic gables, tall chimneys and ivy clad walls was reduced to a pile of rubble.

Droylsden was originally a chapelry in the parish of Manchester, within the historic county boundaries of Lancashire. It became an urban district of the administrative county of Lancashire under the Local Government Act 1894, and was granted its arms on 16 October 1950. The motto, "By Concord and Industry" inspired the name of the new town hall built in the late sixties on the site of the former Council Offices, originally the Droylsden Educational Institute built as a school in 1858, which stood at the corner of Market Street and Manchester Road opposite the Toll Bar. The Council Offices as I remember them were tall soot-blackened buildings towering in front of the cramped terraced houses in Queen Street. My memories of that particular part of Droylsden are of dark foreboding buildings, overcrowded dwellings and grey skies.

It was the period when old buildings were being torn down right, left and centre and being substituted by new modern ones, many of which have themselves already been demolished. The fact that the present day Droylsden Centre with its array of cheap shops boasts an open area called Villemoble Square, named after the French town with which Droylsden is, at least officially, twinned, does not make it more attractive. The former Droylsden Educational Institute, known to us as the Council Offices when Droylsden had an Urban District Council, may have been dismal but the architecture had style and character. Fortunately many other buildings built by the same architect, Alfred Waterhouse, such as Manchester Town Hall, have not been knocked down to make way for concrete blocks, but instead have become Listed Buildings. John Higson, a local historian, notes in his "Historical and Descriptive Notices of Droylsden", published in 1859, that the foundation stone of the Droylsden Institute was laid on 5 June 1858 by Richard Christy. He goes on to say

"This elegant and attractive building, which stands on the site of the old Day School, at the bisection of Market-street by the Ashton New-road, proves useful to the inhabitants, as well as a graceful ornament to the centre of the village. It is built in the Gothic style, from the design of Mr. Alfred Waterhouse, architect, of Manchester, who also superintended the erection, the contractors being Messrs. Thomas Bates and Co., of Droylsden. The edifice is a rectangular structure, faced externally with the local red stock bricks, relieved with stone dressings and fire brick bands, and stands on a basement of stone. The white bricks are also introduced alternately with the red ones in the arches over the windows.[...] There are two storeys to the building. On the ground floor the window openings are four feet wide; on the upper floor they are smaller, and arranged in groups of three. The roof is acute in pitch, covered with alternate stripes of blue and green slates, and on the south receives a broken and varied outline from the chimney stacks at the ends, the octagonal ventilating turret in the centre of the ridge, and a range of five dormer windows, The interior is commodious and well adapted for educational

purposes. On the ground floor, to the left of the entrance lobby from the south, or principal front, is the library, used also as a committee room and a class room, lighted by a triplet window, and occupied by the females. On the opposite side is a convenient and well furnished news room, measuring 28 feet by 18 feet, fitted up with tables, &c., of pitch pine; and beyond are two class rooms, supplied with desks and other requisites for male members.

The whole of the upper storey forms a spacious hall, 60 feet by 28 feet, and 31 feet 6 inches high; is used for lectures, concerts, and public assemblies; and has a permanent, raised, and graduated platform at one end, to which a separate staircase from the library affords private access from below.[.]

As an eye witness, Higson tells us about the inauguration ceremony which lasted two days, beginning with a procession, tea party and concert. *"On the Saturday afternoon, the village was the scene of unwonted festivity and rejoicing; banners and flags being displayed from the mills, workshops, dwellings, and across the streets. A large and well organised procession, consisting of several bands of music, the trustees, Building Committee, directors, members, and friends of the Educational Institution, and the members of various friendly societies, in their holiday paraphernalia, moved from the Recreation Grounds, round by Edge-lane and Fairfield, and terminated at the new building. Richard Christy, Esq., chairman of the Building Committee, and secretary to the trustees, then declared the institute to be publicly opened, after which 660 persons took tea in the large room, which was tastefully decorated. The remainder of the evening was devoted to a vocal and instrumental concert."*

He concludes *"This institution, under vigorous management, by administering to the mental and intellectual requirements of such as choose to avail themselves of its privileges, and by otherwise advancing literary, scientific, and useful knowledge, is capable of doing much in ameliorating the social condition of the village."*

How great would John Higson's disappointment have been, had he known what was to become of this building and the multitude of good intentions it harboured?

I cannot remember any protests when the time came to tear down this part of Droylsden in the late sixties' spirit of modernization. But I can remember there was a lot of fuss when Nutt's hardware store, which was on Market Street just around the corner from the Council Offices, erected a modern extension, so people said, without planning permission. I can imagine that the problem was that the extension looked too modern. It must have been just one or two years before all the demolition work began because I can recall that people muttered what a waste of time and effort it had been on behalf of Mr. Nutt, as it was "all coming down anyway". It did. Queen Street, all of it, council offices, Nutt's. Demolished to make way for the Concord Suite and the "precinct". The very sound of the word "precinct" is full of concrete slabs and cold, impersonal soulless flat buildings.

The opposite side of Market Street somehow managed to resist the changes for a considerably longer period. One of the shops more or less opposite Nutt's was a grocer's called Hugh Fay's, where my mother used to take me when I was very small. It was probably the last of its kind to sell loose flour and sugar from big sacks on the floor. Hugh Fay's had a characteristic grocer's smell that no longer exists, a mixture of flour, sugar, coffee and Fairy Soap. Inside everything seemed dark brown. I have memories of the friendly man who served in the shop wearing a long brown apron. Or was it an overall? I was always given a biscuit, probably a Royal Scot, crumbly and with that slight musty but somehow comforting taste that loose biscuits have, especially when they are stored on the floor in big sacks.

On the other side of Manchester Road, Market Street stretched with more little shops towards Fairfield Road. Greenup's the printers was one of the oldest, established in 1869. On the opposite side of Market Street was Nicholl's Pet shop where we bought Trill for our budgie. He was green and answered to the name of Billy. I remember the evening my mother and father

and I went to collect the tiny bird and brought him home in a cardboard box with holes poked in the lid so he could breathe. It was only a short distance on foot, it must have been a house in Windsor Road or nearby. I must have been barely eight years old.

Billy was quite a character and learnt to talk very quickly. He could imitate all of us but because my Gran spent the longest amount of time alone with the bird, Billy picked up almost everything she said. It was uncanny. He seemed not only to imitate but also to understand what he was saying. He would sit on the iodine block in his cage and shout "D'you want to come out?" until we finally relented and gave him the freedom of the living room.

Billy would tear up and down the length of the room. He brought games of Monopoly to abrupt endings by fluttering at great speed and low altitude over the dining table and dispersing our banknotes in all directions, before landing contentedly on the window ledges. He nibbled everything. The small panes at the top of the windows were leaded. Billy would sit gnawing at the pattern and we would try to move him. It was a constant battle. Billy insisted on nibbling the leaded windows and the only way to prevent this was to keep him locked in his cage. But he would cry and shout out so pitifully that we would have to let him out again.

On the first day of the Easter holidays, according to my Enid Blyton diary it was the 23rd March 1967, I went to Droylsden Pool with three or four friends. We felt quite grown up and had been looking forward to going, so we were very disappointed to arrive there and discover that the pool was closed. We trudged back home half-heartedly and went our separate ways. When I walked in, there was a strange atmosphere and I knew something was wrong. There, lying in state on one of our yellow and black scatter cushions, was Billy, looking very dead. My Gran was distraught. Apparently Billy had just keeled over and fallen off his perch. A heart attack? Lead poisoning? Who knows. My Gran had tried to revive him with brandy but to no avail. He was a very dead budgie. My father buried him later in the garden in the same little cardboard box in which we'd collected him just two years previously.

That afternoon my mother took me into town to see *The Sound of Music* at the Gaumont. We had already seen it, but she wanted to take my mind off the sad departing of my first and last pet. At the cinema I cried a lot, but not because of the film. I was weeping for the talkative cheeky little green bird that had lived with us so intensely, but for such a short time. We never had another pet.

Many thanks, Julie, for another great trip down 'memory lane'.

If you want to read *Historical and Descriptive Notices of Droylsden, Past and Present* by John Higson, (1825-1871) Published in 1859, and find out more about the history of Droylsden as referenced by Julie, I've included a download link to it in the section below.

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### Internet links for freely available books/texts

A monthly selection of links to mainly 19th century publications at the Internet Archive of Books & Texts website and on some occasions Google books or other free websites. Those included 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 online but not download.

\* *Historical and Descriptive Notices of Droylsden, Past and Present* by John Higson, (1825-1871) Published in 1859

[HERE](#)

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* *Lancashire; Brief Historical and Descriptive Notes* by Leo H. (Leo Hartley Grindon, 1818-1904, Publication date 1892

[HERE](#)

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\* *County families of Lancashire and Cheshire* by James Croston, 1830-1893, Publication date 1887

[HERE](#)  
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* National Library of Scotland

"This is a selection of items from the National Library of Scotland , which is an information treasure trove of Scotland's knowledge, history and culture, with millions of books, manuscripts and maps covering every subject."

They are free to read online or download to your own computer.

[HERE](#)
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## MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE

A short selection of entries from the MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE ...  
since the last newsletter :

\* Tithe applotment books: A guide to finding your Irish ancestors' land

[HERE](#)  
~~~~~

* Parliament and the Elizabethan energy crisis

[HERE](#)
~~~~~

\* The pearl divers of the black River Lrk.

In the grey dawn, he saw them. From beneath the slimy waters a head bobbed up — and then another

[HERE](#)  
~~~~~

* Genealogy Jude

In my new blog, learn about how your ancestors might have celebrated Valentine's Day. In addition, there is information about a new exhibition on POWs, a website for freeman records, Ellis Island & a delightful video of Victorian ladies chatting

[HERE](#)
~~~~~

\* Did you know that jigsaw puzzles were first invented as a map teaching aid?

Originally, the pieces were cut along outlines of countries, or counties. Children could then piece together a complete map.

[HERE](#)  
~~~~~

* Ancoats was one of the world's first industrial suburbs - it wasn't very sanitary - and by all accounts it was a real dump

[HERE](#)
~~~~~

\* Finding William: An Irish family history story

How a 30 year search across the Irish Sea taught me about a man I could never hope to meet

[HERE](#)  
~~~~~

* The Canary Girls: The workers the war turned yellow

[HERE](#)
~~~~~

\* Manchester Local Image Collection  
Over 80,000 pictures and prints of old Manchester

[HERE](#)

~~~~~  
* WW2 Prisoner of War Records from the Archives of the Red Cross

[HERE](#)

~~~~~  
\* See the Face of a Woman Who Died in a Shipwreck in 1628

A new facial reconstruction vividly resurrects Gertrude, one of 30 people killed during the sinking of the Swedish warship "Vasa"

[HERE](#)

~~~~~  
* How to find Royal Navy service records

Simon Wills reveals how family historians can find their ancestors' Royal Navy service records – from the Napoleonic Wars to the First and Second World Wars

[HERE](#)

~~~~~  
\* Moving Manchester's 'Tudor' Shambles

[HERE](#)

~~~~~  
* As monasteries in the Middle Ages grew in size and wealth, their organizations would become increasingly complex. Here is a quick guide for understanding the hierarchy and various roles monks and nuns would have in a medieval monastery.

[HERE](#)

~~~~~  
\* How to find name change records in the UK

Paul Blake looks at the records for tracing someone who legally changed their name

[HERE](#)

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

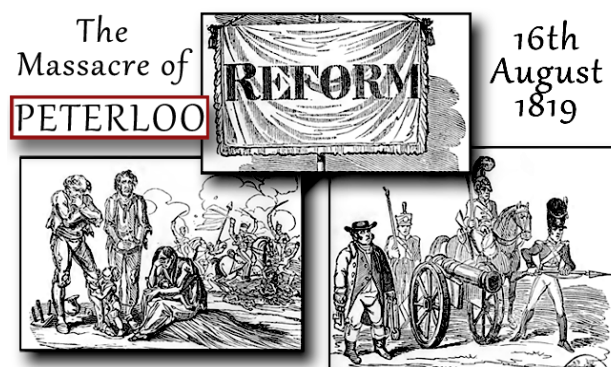
And [HERE](#) is the link to the MLFHS Twitter page.

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## 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 :



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

~~~~~  
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](#)
~~~~~

***The Website of Oldham Historical Research [Group]***



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For more local articles, images and information, please visit the website [HERE](#)
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**Need Help!**

**Oldham Local Studies and Archives  
CLOSED on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

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.mrias.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

Three images from :

Manchester Streets & Manchester Men Vol. 1 (1st series) by T. Swindells
published in 1906



THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH, MANCHESTER.

(As it appeared in 1830.)

The Collegiate Church, Manchester (as it appeared in 1830)

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***The Reverend Joshua Brookes***

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"THREE TUNS" BEERHOUSE.
(Formerly standing in the Apple Market.)

The 'Three Tuns' Beerhouse
(Formerly standing in the Apple Market)

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