



# Bolton's Genies



**The Monthly Newsletter of the Bolton Family History Society:**

<http://www.bolton.mlfhs.org.uk/>

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**Newsletter Comments and Speaker Queries to:** [boltongenies@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:boltongenies@mlfhs.org.uk)

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**Secretary: Barbara Owen**

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**January 2017**

Bolton Family History Society is a branch of The Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society.

Contents of the Member Area. Note various Bolton databases <https://goo.gl/QW1jWb>

Other benefits and how to join <https://goo.gl/tjStxw>

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Hello and a Happy New Year to all. We do hope you have enjoyed the festivities and over indulgence which might compensate a little for the short days and long dark nights of this time of the year, and hopefully you might even have discovered a few more family stories. I know a few, including myself, have recently met new cousins so that is always helpful. Now we start off with a new year.

Some of you will already know, that we received a few comments last year about the varying quality of some of the transcriptions of some popular databases covering both local, national, and international BMD records. This stimulated a bit of brain storming here at Bolton, and we decided that to the average researcher much of this activity is a complete "grey area". For maybe many years now most of us have been using the facilities of free resources such as Lancs BMD, Lancs OPC, Free BMD, and Familysearch, and now the GRO Index, or the subscription sites such as Ancestry.com, Findmypast, and The Genealogist, with very little thought about how the process of accessing, reading, and accurate transcribing and indexing, has taken place.

\*Who initiated it?

\*How was the raw data accessed and where from?

\*What did it look like and what condition was it in? (disintegrating, "dog eared", partially chewed, burnt, water stained, smudged, faded, poor legibility, etc.) All possibilities.

\*Where did they do the work, at a centre or at home?

\*How did they record it; did they have a type writer or computer then or was it on paper and handwritten? \*Did they have to have any qualifications or were they just ordinary people like us?

\*What was their checking and validating procedure?

So many questions and more. We decided that the best way of finding out would be to invite those who we know have done it to tell us about it, in effect to create a record of what they have achieved and how they did it. Please find below our first contribution from John Marsden, our MLFHS Chairman, and one of the creators and senior members of the Lancs BMD team. But before that, just to remind you



- Where do we meet?

Bolton Old Links Golf Club, Montserrat Brow, Chorley Old Road BL1 5SU. Buses 5SU <http://goo.gl/3llsRd> .

All MLFHS members free. £2.00 to non-members unless joining on the night.

- When do we meet?

7pm beverages available for 7.30pm start, on the first Wednesday of each month. Extras always include a Help Desk for personal research, and extras such as a Stationery Table for discounted equipment, a genealogical book stall, and recycle service for your used Family History Magazines



## COMING EVENTS

**\*Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January, Dave Burnham <https://goo.gl/BLVrcg> “Bolton Workhouse Records, 1900-1930 & the Poor Law Guardians who ran the workhouse”**

Dave came to meet us on Nov 30<sup>th</sup> of course, and to also show us his delightful 2017 Bolton Worktown calendar. He will now give us his promised talk about the pioneer social workers who made the above happen, not all eligible for halos!!!



Just a reminder also that, rather than our usual stationery stall, this time we have invited **Terry Walsh from the Family History Partnership**

<https://goo.gl/XXLULW> to come and show us a selection of his wares. Watch

out for the much in demand “My Family History”, with its 10-

generation chart. The last I heard it was now on its second print but we have made a point of asking for copies. This meeting is intended to welcome new members and ease us gently

into the new year, (when new courses are also starting as shown below).



**\*Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017 Manchester Branch Quarterly Meeting <https://goo.gl/lqZPY8> To be held in the**



Performance Space at Manchester Central Library

**10.30 am Probate Records for Family Historians Speaker: David Lambert**

Wills, administrations, inventories, intestacy laws and their use in family history research.

12.00 Lunch

**1.00 pm John Ellis: the Rochdale Hangman Speaker: Ian Etchells**

John Ellis was a hangman at Strangeways Prison. The talk relates to three murderers he hung

Registration is essential by the link above.

Free to all MLFHS members, (and we have David Lambert coming to visit us in Bolton in September anyway, so don't panic if you can't make this one.

**\*Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January, 9.45am to 2pm “War Memorials Condition Survey Workshop” Bolton Central**



**Library and Museum** As part of the centenary commemorations for the First World War, we have been recording and researching the war memorials in the borough as part of the ‘Bolton War Memorials Project’. This workshop, hosted by Civic Voice,

<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/> will train volunteers how to assess the condition of memorials and take steps to preserve them in the proper way. Julie Lamara from Bolton Archives has asked me to pass on this message.

*“As we reflect on the events of the First World War that saw so many people make the ultimate sacrifice, we believe it is vital that we ensure our memorials are fitting tributes to the fallen.*

*Our project, as part of the national commemorative events, will help conserve and protect the nation's war memorials for the long term as well as ensuring there are skilled volunteers available to assess their*

condition and take steps to preserve them in the proper way. This workshop will train volunteers how to do this"

She adds that "Condition checking is what we do when we handle a book or object and before we produce the item we mechanically ask ourselves questions such as is the spine loose or cracked, are there any loose pages, is the item supported properly, is it clean and free from dust/mites/mould etc? Minor damage can be reported and possibly repaired before it becomes a bigger problem and is too late to save. Condition checking is important, so it is an interesting workshop for all not only those interested in war memorials." This looks like a wonderful opportunity to meet some "treasures" face to face. Please follow the link above to book a place ASAP. Book your free ticket, which includes refreshments, via Eventbrite: <https://goo.gl/GGe5TU> The subject of our next meeting then takes us a few generations further back when on

**\*Wednesday, 1st February, 7.30pm, Dr Alan Crosby, Historian & University Lecturer,** returns to give us a talk about **"Sex and Sin in 17th C Lancashire"**. Alan asks us "What did your ancestors get up to on those dark nights?"



And more dates for your diary include

**\*Saturday 11th February, 10am to 4pm Bolton Family History Day Central Library's History Centre**

The blurb says "If you would like to start tracing your family tree? Have you hit a brick wall in your research, not sure how to overcome it? You are invited to



visit our new History Centre and talk to the Archives staff along with members of Bolton Family History Society for advice on how to trace your family tree.

Event programme:

10am to 11.20am - Talks for beginners and advanced family historians.

11.30am to 2pm - Explore the Strong Room with our Archivist. Book your free place on the tour (11.30am, 12pm, 1.30pm and 2pm) by calling 01204 332185.

10am to 4pm - Bolton Family History Society will be in the library foyer to help with genealogy supplies, stationery and maps for sale.

10am to 4pm - Members of the society will be on hand to help solve family tree queries in the History Centre."



Our first booked visit of the new year will be on

**\*Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March Visit to Deane Church. 2.00pm** The trip includes Tea /Coffee/Biscuits and there is a £2 charge. The speaker taking the trip is Revd. Dr Terry Clark the vicar at St Marys. <https://goo.gl/Mog0WR>

We are also pencilling in plans to visit Media City, the WDYTyr show, and the British Newspaper Archives at Boston Spa, depending on what help we get. Watch this space, and if you think you can assist in the administration of these events please get in touch.



### **GENIE'S TIPS for January**

**Understanding What Is Meant By "Second Cousin Once Removed"** <https://goo.gl/tCxRDs> **FamilyTreeTips** **September 20, 2016**. This is a little American in terminology but does explain the relationships quite nicely.

**"How to use death certificates in family history"** <https://goo.gl/CYkL40> **Family Tree** 01/11/2016 accessed 18.12.16 Nowadays, unless the name is particularly common, it's usually possible to find our ancestors' deaths quite easily, using an online database such as FreeBMD. Initially, the GRO indexes recorded just the name of the



(By authority of the Registrar-General)  
**CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF DEATH**  
 Pursuant to the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953

Registration District: **London**  
 Death in the Sub-district of: **St. Pancras**  
 In the Parish of: **St. Pancras**  
 Name and surname: **George Henry Chapman**  
 Sex: **Male**  
 Age: **75 years**  
 Occupation: **Retired Police Officer**  
 Cause of death: **In the 1st year of his illness following a long illness with a view to a transfer to the "London" Hospital for the treatment of his illness by Dr. J. L. S. Jones, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S. (Ed.)**  
 Date of death: **10th January 1951**  
 Signature, description, and residence of informant: **A. H. Chapman, 10, St. Pancras, London, N.C. 11**  
 When registered: **11th January 1951**  
 Signature of Registrar: **[Signature]**

This is a true copy of an entry in a register in my custody.  
 Dated 11th January 1951. **[Signature]** Superintendent Registrar

deceased and the registration district in which the death occurred". Now of course we have the upgraded GRO Index <https://goo.gl/nswbuQ> which gives age at death up to 1915.

Certificates also provide: -

When and where died, Name and surname, Sex, Age, Occupation, Cause of death (See <http://goo.gl/5YFPJ6>, <http://goo.gl/aj1UnW>, and <http://goo.gl/tZanh0>, Signature, description and residence of informant, and when registered

**Judy Webster's genealogy tips & indexes for local, interstate & overseas folk in Queensland's historical records** <https://goo.gl/MWnw6W> © Copyright, Judy Webster accessed 17.12.16. OK so this is Australia based but what an amazing resource with a lot of UK related advice. Just have a dip.

**York's Archbishops Registers Revealed** <https://goo.gl/x479zS> "provides free access to over 20,000 images of Registers produced by the Archbishops of York, 1225-1650, in addition to a growing searchable index of names, subjects, places and organisations. The registers are a valuable, and in many cases, unexploited source for ecclesiastical, political, social, local and family history - covering periods of war, famine, political strife and religious reformation in the Archdiocese of York **and the wider Northern Province**" --- this of course includes areas of Lancashire.

**The Internet Archive of Genealogy** <https://goo.gl/p0SrIC> "--- is working to prevent the Internet - a new medium with major historical significance - and other "born-digital" materials from disappearing into the past. Collaborating with institutions including the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian, we are working to preserve a record for generations to come".

This is once again, from across the other, slightly smaller pond, and from several university resources. It seems the project is trying to digitalize out of copyright genealogy and "all things historical", reference books from all over the world and make them freely available. It includes Parish Registers from many UK counties as well as others from USA and the Continent, as well as things like steam boat histories and pensions. Look at this one for the "Annals of Manchester; a chronological record from the earliest times to the end of 1885" by Axon, William E. A. (William Edward Armytage), 1846-1913 Published 1886 Topics Manchester (England) -- History, genealogy" <https://goo.gl/bnuFva>

**Keyboard Shortcuts in Family Tree Maker** <https://goo.gl/55TrNc> Well maybe you knew about it but I didn't.

## WORKSHOPS, COURSES and CLASSES

**Saturday 7th January 2017. For Complete Beginners. First steps and record keeping** <https://goo.gl/BTjStf>



**Manchester Central Library Branch, in the Performance Space on the ground floor, 10.30am until 12.30pm.** Madeline Best will be talking about the basics of beginning your family history research along with mention of items you need to check along the way and the possible pitfalls and incorrect information you may find.

These talks are aimed at people new to family history research or those who simply wish to refresh their knowledge. The talks are free to Society members but non-members are most welcome to attend for a small charge of £3.00 (refundable for anyone who joins on the day). Booking is recommended (follow link above), and helps in planning. Participants may attend any, or all, of these talks as desired. It is expected that we will run these on a regular basis, depending on demand.

**Thursday January 19th Rita Greenwood (of Bolton FHS) starts**



**her courses again via "Enjoy Learning" at the Friends Meeting House, 50 Silverwell Street. Bolton, BL1 1PP** <https://goo.gl/8rXkTT>.

The Stage 3 course starts at 10 – 12md which is for



those who have done some family history before or have done their own research and found there are parts where they think they have, come to a dead end.

The stage 4 is the Intermediate/ Advanced Class 1pm-3pm, with 10 sessions including another promised visit to Preston CRO. Last time in February 2016 we were lucky enough to be shown some of the Hulton



Archives. At £78 for either level, I know all the regular attenders think it is well worth it, and why we keep coming back for more.

Other activities have also included events like last November's visit to the Bolton Archives, <https://goo.gl/EZlBg0>, and you may be interested to know that some of our members are to return this month to start their training as cataloguers for some of the still unprocessed deposits. I wonder what they might find. These people were really thrilled in Scotland <https://goo.gl/ifnPmb>. "Census find sheds new light on St Kilda's history" 29 December 2016. Enquiries to Tel: 01204 332194 or [Julie.lamara@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.lamara@bolton.gov.uk)

If you can't get to any of these courses at the moment there are several **online starter packs** such as  
\***"The WDYTIA? 12-Week Family History Challenge: Week 1 – Start Your Journey"** <https://goo.gl/Zs4T3F> accessed 29.12.16 or

\***"How to start your family tree"** <https://goo.gl/PykzEY> **Family Tree Magazine** accessed 29.12.16 and

\***"Genealogy: Researching Your Family Tree"** <https://goo.gl/RldWfr> another run of the excellent free course from Strathclyde University, sign on now to start January 16<sup>th</sup>, starts January



## **THIS MONTHS LOCAL NEWS and SOME ORGANISATION UPDATES**



Lancashire Records Do you all get the regular updates of new data available on this site via [ukbmdnews@ukbmd.info](mailto:ukbmdnews@ukbmd.info) from John Marsden, the webmaster who is also our MLFHS Chairman. This is an example of an emailed update received 17.12.16. and they come about monthly.

*"New data has been added at [www.lancashirebmd.org.uk](http://www.lancashirebmd.org.uk) as follows:*

*Added 11,802 Births for Bolton RD comprising: Little Bolton (1914-1917) South West Bolton (1910-1921) and more ---*

*Thanks, are due to Bob Winder, Graham Robinson, Pauline Hurst and Geoff Haslam and their teams for the above. --John Marsden Webmaster: [www.lancashirebmd.org.uk](http://www.lancashirebmd.org.uk); [www.cumbriabmd.org.uk](http://www.cumbriabmd.org.uk) [www.1851-unfilmed.org.uk](http://www.1851-unfilmed.org.uk) [www.mlfhs.org](http://www.mlfhs.org). "*

Have you ever wondered who these people are, and how they have got involved? Read below.

**Lancs OPC** <http://goo.gl/AN699Z> and left click on the "What's New" tab on the left



**Salford's Early Past Pt 3: The First Farmers** <https://goo.gl/4xmStH> **archaeologyuos.**

This site is run by Dr Mike Nevell from Salford University, and he gives a fascinating report about recent iron age relics found in the area. We hope to invite him soon to give an account of more recent discoveries he has found even nearer to Bolton. A few of us heard him talk recently about the Bridgewater Canal and some very interesting records held at the university.

**GENUKI: Lancashire** <https://goo.gl/w1Gf6z>

Everything being upgraded as I write. Have a look if you haven't visited for a while, and they add  
*"Help wanted. There are many pieces of basic information that you as a user have, but are invaluable to newcomers. Frequently these are based on local knowledge or personal experience. This sort of information can easily be added to the Lancashire pages, with very little effort on your part. If you would like to provide some information, please have a look at the "information required" page".*

**“Bona vacantia”** This is the Wikipaedia explanation for you Heir Hunters, <https://goo.gl/D53Jys> and the good news is a new list is out <https://goo.gl/71C9Yi> – “A list of unclaimed estates held by the Treasury Solicitor. Last updated 30 December 2016”. If you come up lucky just remember who your best friend is.



## **SOME INTERESTING, USEFUL, AND MAINLY FREE WEBSITES**

**“Genealogy Discount”** <https://goo.gl/Ewr7YI> This is of course the time of year when all the big companies are after our money, and bargains can be negotiated. It is a good idea to keep watching or even subscribe to this website which seems to be pretty good at monitoring it all. A reminder to you also that

**“Lost Cousins”** <https://goo.gl/a6BXAa> by Peter Calver, offers a free to access bimonthly newsletter, as well as annual subscription of £10. To my embarrassment, I have still not added to my tree for some time but his up to date information, and explanations are invaluable, and perhaps the next best thing I can do is spread the word.



**Leeds General Cemetery burial records 1835-1960 now online** <https://goo.gl/3ZFwYO> I know a few of you have connections from Leeds so hope this helps. It seems not intended for “Deceased Online” but free.

**The Woodward Family Tree (and much more)** <https://goo.gl/wlmSOS> . Compiled by Graham Woodward, Nottingham, England (UK). Last updated 23 September 2015. A Facebook contact has passed this URL on. I am not sure of the credentials of the above, but the background information is fascinating for researching English and Welsh BMDs and beyond.

**Search the PRONI Historical Maps viewer** <https://goo.gl/ZWCsy0> Search and browse a range of historical Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) maps and find information on sites, buildings and landmarks of historical interest

**Finding your Scottish ancestors online thanks to technology** <https://goo.gl/KmVtDd> The Scotsman CHRIS McCALL 08.12.16 “ScotlandsPeople has attracted around one million unique users per year since it was launched in 2002 by the National Records of Scotland (NRS), making it one of the most popular publicly-funded websites in the country”.--- “The website was relaunched in September and the improved service allows users to search statutory record indexes - including births, deaths and marriages - for free. Users are only charged if they wish to view or download a record image”

### **DNA Stuff**

We keep getting asked for help in finding out more information about DNA testing and the best way of doing it. The truth is that this is such a complicated minefield that it is very difficult to find a simple explanation which will satisfy everybody’s enquiries. The best we can do is pass on some of the apparently more helpful articles and let you work things out to suit yourselves.

**“Mitochondrial DNA: Connecting Generations”** <https://goo.gl/J6VwCi> Legacy Tree Genealogists accessed 29.12.2016

**“If you have taken an Ancestry DNA test please upload a tree”** <https://goo.gl/C3RsML> Common sense really but Chris Patton feels it needs to be said so me too. “If you don't upload a tree, prospective cousins will just see ‘Tree unavailable’ if a DNA match is flagged up: (but note that even the diagram on this link is all focussed on the USA, -- not us home birds.

**FamilyTreeDNA** <https://goo.gl/8LwfsI> and now “Findmypast” are getting in on the act via one of their new partners with 3 different options. I will let you read and decide.



## The 2017 Transcribing and Indexing Project

Further to my introduction above, I really don't think I can do better than refer you to these excellent comments from across the VERY BIG pond from Australian Judy Webster's, genealogy tips & indexes for local, interstate & overseas folk in Queensland's historical records © Copyright, Judy Webster

**Using and Compiling Indexes and Traps involved in using them** <https://goo.gl/Ibe5yi>

Most notably "from *Planning Research: Short Cuts in Family History* by Michael Gandy (FFHS, Birmingham, 1993), pp.43-44:

*'Don't insist on certain spelling forms. Say the name out loud in the accent of the area, then pretend you're an old gaffer with no teeth. Now be a deaf, indifferent clerk who doesn't come from the area and thinks he hasn't got time to waste on yokels. His pen scratches and blots and he's got the beginnings of arthritis or palsy. Then let the ink fade for 200 years and get the register transcribed by a beginner, typed up by someone who was watching the television, and spot-checked by someone who thought it was probably all right so why bother.'* [So, expect the unexpected when it comes to the spelling of names!]

This article below is the first of a series of accounts kindly sent to me from different contributors to the mysterious world of transcribing and indexing. It is our senior MLFHS Chairman John Marsden's account of the start of



### **The LancashireBMD Project, <https://goo.gl/JzeJN0> a Brief History**

LancashireBMD is perhaps the largest project the MLFHS has ever undertaken. The goal of the project is to establish online indexes to all births, marriages and deaths for which the registers are today held in Register Offices within the pre-1974 Lancashire county boundary. (Editor Note -see Wikipedia <https://goo.gl/ZJdrKT> -- so including Greater Manchester, Merseyside, parts of Cumbria, and variations with the West Yorkshire boundary).



LancashireBMD is one of eleven similar online index sites, <http://www.ukbmd.org.uk/> all based on software developed by Ian Hartas of the FHS of Cheshire. The first site to open was CheshireBMD, <https://goo.gl/yRmr1U> which was established in 2000. The LancashireBMD site opened on 7 August 2002 with a batch of some 76,000 marriages for Salford. The project expanded from there to involve volunteers from a further six family history societies working at register offices in sixteen local authority areas. To date (Dec 2016), a total of over 20 million events have been indexed.

### **Why LancashireBMD?**

Given that the GRO indexes to births, marriages and deaths are available online free through the [www.freebmd.org](http://www.freebmd.org) web site, what is the value in apparently duplicating these indexes?

#### **1. The Reduced risk of Errors due to Multiple Transcriptions.**

Firstly, the LancashireBMD indexes should be both more complete and more accurate than those produced by the General Registry Office. While both ultimately relate to the same register entries, the FreeBMD GRO indexes involve multiple transcriptions. Each quarter, copies of all register entries were made and sent to the GRO. The GRO created index slips for each name and sorted these into name order. They then transcribed the names into a (manuscript) index book. Subsequently, these manuscript books were copied into typed index books. These were then filmed and published on microfiche.

\* FreeBMD indexers then transcribed the names from images taken from the fiche before these appear on the online index. Five **successive transcriptions** introduce a serious risk of error and omission of individual entries and the typing and filming operations the risk of whole pages being omitted.

\*The LancashireBMD indexes, in contrast, are made either directly from the original register entries (i.e. **1 transcription**), or from the contemporaneously produced name index books. (**2 transcriptions**). The possibility of error and omission is greatly reduced and the omission of blocks of entries is almost completely eliminated. In summary, users get the best possible indexes available.

Accuracy is not the only benefit, however.

## **2. The LBMD Quality is enhanced by extra information as well. (Editor's note)**

\*The GRO death indexes do not include the age of the deceased before 1866 or the birth indexes the maiden name of the child's mother until 1912, and the marriage indexes do not identify the spouse (to permit entries to be paired) also until 1912.

\*While LBMD does not always provide the missing birth and death index details, these are usually included. All marriages, however, are precisely paired so that users can be certain that they have the entry they want.

\*LBMD also enables the location of an event to be pinpointed more precisely, whilst GRO only identifies the registration district where a birth or death was registered. LancashireBMD identifies the sub-district, so whereas, for example, the GRO index will tell us that the birth of Henry JONES was registered in 1911 in Chorlton-on-Medlock, LancashireBMD will pin the registration down to Ardwick, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Didsbury, Gorton, Hulme, Openshaw or Rusholme. This can be very helpful when dealing with a common name, if you know where the family were living. For marriages, the pinpointing is even more precise since marriages registered in Church of England churches (and increasingly after 1898 in nonconformist chapels) the index identifies the church concerned. In summary, LancashireBMD is more geographically precise.

\*The LancashireBMD project is not only a boon to researchers, it is also welcomed by the Register Offices. Without LancashireBMD, register office staff have to search through the contemporaneous index books which accompany each register. Where a birth date is known, this might mean searching in six or seven books, but for a marriage it could mean over three hundred! The availability of composite indexes considerably reduces the time (and cost!) of locating certificates ordered by researchers. In fact, the work is further reduced since when researchers order certificates following a LancashireBMD search, they supply the register reference and the registration staff have no search to do at all.

\*Finally, although MLFHS undertakes the work for no financial gain (the indexes are available free of charge on the internet), the project directly addresses one of the Society's constitutional aims: "To promote the preservation, security and accessibility of archival material". Everyone, as they say, is a winner!

### **How are the LancashireBMD Indexes Created?**

Our ideal way of creating the indexes is to work directly from the original registers → and index from scratch. The difficulty with this (approach) is that it needs to be done at the register office and it is therefore both difficult to get sufficient volunteers who are able to work there, and the computers available for volunteers are limited in number, so doing the work this way would be painfully slow.



The alternative is to photograph or scan the index books, which were compiled at the same time as the registers, one for each register volume. This allows the images to be distributed worldwide to volunteers who can transcribe them from the comfort of their own homes. While a faster approach, this leaves the problem of errors in the original indexes being carried forward into LancashireBMD and so the transcribed indexes are checked against the original registers. In the case of birth and death indexes, the opportunity may be taken to add mother's maiden name and age at death respectively to the indexes. In the case of marriages, an additional step is involved at the checking stage since the index books give only the page on which the marriage appears and each page contains two marriages. The page numbers are replaced with entry numbers so that brides and grooms can be correctly paired in subsequent searches. Although this approach generates additional work, the on-site effort is considerably less than would be involved in indexing directly from the registers.

In some cases, particularly where the index books are in poor condition, we photograph the death registers and send the images to home workers for indexing. Since we are not permitted to distribute complete images of the registers, we apply a card mask to the page to cover all but the name, date of death and age columns which will be used to create the index. This approach cannot be applied to births since the



surname column in the register contains both the father's forename and surname and we would not be allowed to distribute images containing the former piece of information.

Once the indexes have been completed, usually for several thousand events, these are put through a pre-processing program, which arranges the data into a consistent format for loading onto the LancashireBMD web site. The program also checks for some errors which might have slipped through the indexing process (such as triple letters, illegal characters such as the back-tick and common mis-typing such as 'Willaim'). The program also strips out any entries marked 'VOID', 'CANCEL(ED)' or 'BLANK'. Once up-loaded to the site, the new data becomes immediately available to users.

#### Some Statistics (for those of you that like them)

MLFHS volunteers are active in the Register Offices at Bolton, Manchester, Salford and Oldham and volunteers from other societies in most of the other eighteen Register Offices in the area. Some 75 volunteers are currently working on behalf of MLFHS at the four offices named above. Around 35 of these people work at home transcribing from images of the manuscript index books while the balance work at the Register Offices filming the index books, checking the transcribed indexes against the registers and in some cases indexing directly from the registers.

The state of completion of indexes for which MLFHS is responsible is summarised below:

<b>District</b>	<b>Births</b>	<b>Marriages</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
Bolton	1837-1904*	1837-1992	1837-1967
Manchester	1837-1962	1837-2000	1837-1957
Oldham	1837-1986	1837-1974	1837-1986
Salford	1837-1914	1837-1956	Not Indexed

\* The state of completion of the several sub-districts varies from 1904 to 1940. See the detailed coverage on the LancashireBMD web page for details.

The numbers of events indexed for these districts is as follows:

<b>District</b>	<b>Births</b>	<b>Births</b>	<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Marriages</b>
		Total with MMN*		Total with Age	Total
Bolton	495293	495270	488998	488984	283770
Manchester	2004864	867830**	1389145	1389142	968565
Oldham	650273	648811	490925	490925	243673
Salford	547936	None	None	None	240377
Totals	3698366	1144081	2369068	2369051	1736385

\* Mother's maiden name

\*\* Work is in progress to add MMN to all births for Manchester

During the past twelve months, the number of daily visitors to the LancashireBMD site has averaged 1,500. Of these 86% were UK users, 8% from North America and 5% from Oceania (Australia and New Zealand). The rest of the world (primarily South Africa) accounts for about 1% of visitors.

John Marsden

Thank you, John. More contributions in the coming editions, and for further enquiries please contact our Bolton FHS research officer Graham Holt via the above address who can advise on local work that needs doing.

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**Scotlands Places** <https://goo.gl/Q6HpdW>

About the Project

The Transcribe ScotlandsPlaces project is encouraging members of the public to help create transcriptions of various resources in the website. These resources are images of historic archives which contain

handwritten information about the people and places in Scottish history. We welcome you to take a look at the work that's been done by the various individuals taking part in the project. We also welcome you to register, join a group, and begin transcribing today.

**Familysearch Indexing** <https://goo.gl/e1OQUi> **"Get Started with Indexing"**

*"Indexing is the process of entering information from historical records into an online, searchable database" and <https://goo.gl/gGSCit> "Celebrating 10 Years of Indexing" "In 2006, the call went out for volunteers to help in this unprecedented, global cause. And the online community responded. In fact, in just 10 years, over 1.2 million volunteers worldwide have joined the cause and continue to donate much needed time and talent to help index the world's historic genealogical records."*

Over the next few months we plan to publish accounts from various members of how they have been able to get involved in this massive contribution to conserving and preserving data recorded from times past, and making it accessible for us all even freely or by subscription

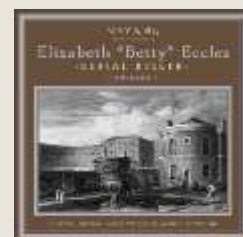
## **MEMBERS COMMENTS, QUERIES, and MEMORIES)**

### **Another Bolton Dark Angel: Betty Eccles**

I read with interest the mention in the last Genies newsletter page 5 <https://goo.gl/oB8STm> of Mary Ann Britland nee Hague and the murders of her daughter, husband and lover's wife.

However, we also have another female potential serial murderer in Bolton.

Betty Eccles, again wanting to collect the burial money. It is not known how many people she eventually killed with arsenic but she was tried and executed in 1843 for the murder of William Eccles, her teenage stepson. There were other suspicious deaths of Alice Haslam, a daughter from her previous marriage, a baby named William Heywood and another daughter Hannah Haslam who died in infancy however Betty was not tried for these.



Betty Haslam, nee Heywood, her first husband Mr Haslam, dying and leaving her a widow, married Henry Eccles on 3 Jan 1841 at St Peter's Parish Church, Bolton. In 1841 the family, Henry Eccles the husband, (35) a Waggoner by trade, Betty (35), , were living at Boggart Hole, Tong with Haulgh with four children William, Richard, Alice and Mary from their previous marriages. The Bolton newspapers carried reports of the trial and subsequent execution which are available at Bolton History Centre.

Reports of her exploits are available on the internet. <https://goo.gl/PikFxt>

**and speaking of Arsenic beware of Twelfth Night Celebrations** <https://goo.gl/2XrnBg> **Findmypast blog** This post was contributed by Helen Barrell, a writer of historical fiction (and non-fiction). Accessed 22.12.16

## **OTHER LOCAL SOCIETIES NEWS**

### **Halliwell Local History Society** <http://goo.gl/8erYvr>



Email [margaretk@talktalk.net](mailto:margaretk@talktalk.net) .Meetings are usually held on the last Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm, at St Luke's Church, Chorley Old Road, BL1 3BE opposite Shepherd Cross St, Bolton,  
**31st January 'Life in the 1960's'. – A nostalgic look back at the 1960's. Welcome back to Graham Stirrup** for another of his well-illustrated and entertaining talks

### **Turton Local History Society**



Normally all events are on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm All start at Longsight Church Centre at Harwood, BL2 3HX. This month's event, Please email Secretary [PeterMHarris@care4free.net](mailto:PeterMHarris@care4free.net) for more information.

**Westhoughton Local History Group – <http://goo.gl/XNugIS>**

Meetings take place on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month, between 10am and 12md in the room above Westhoughton Library, Market St, Westhoughton, BL5 3AU.

**5<sup>th</sup> January AGM and Review of 2016: Committee and Ann Redburn**

**19<sup>th</sup> January “Lancashire Steam”: Tom Heavyside**



**Horwich Heritage Centre- <http://goo.gl/fSPsij>**

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm at the Horwich Resource Centre, Beaumont Road (off Longworth Road), Horwich BL6 7BG.

**Tuesday 7.30pm January 10th 2017** Please note their Chairman Stuart Whittle has informed us that Unfortunately, Jonathan Ali the advertised speaker is unwell, so we have had to make a late change to our speaker next week. **Roy Davies has been good enough to step in with a talk entitled 'On the Bench' about his life as a Magistrate. "**

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Lastly you may note that the format of our website and this newsletter keep changing. This is mainly because we are all amateurs and most of us on big learning curves. I can't believe how the appearance of this newsletter has changed over the last 2 ½ years, but there it is in the Index on our website, and I think this facility has been one of our biggest achievements as a resource in the last year.



The enterprise was initiated by our Graham Holt in trying to conserve the accumulation of useful websites that we have acquired over the years and keep them easily accessible for reference. The list was reviewed and indexed largely thanks to Dennis Corbett, one of our regular readers.

Graham is now still adding each month's new references himself again, but would be very grateful if someone else could take this over to lighten his load. Please would anyone be willing to take this role on. Please contact the Genie as above for more information.

and even more “lastly”, may I apologise for a rather disjointed edition this month. Apart from the busy social scene the dreaded “lurgy”, (now named as the flu) , currently doing the rounds also caught up with me before Christmas, and seems reluctant to leave. Well in good company. Even the Royals have struggled haven't they.