

# Bolton's Genies



The Monthly Newsletter of the Bolton Family History Society:

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

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Facebook page <https://goo.gl/pxzgsB>

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

Bolton Document Collection on MLFHS website: <https://goo.gl/hJi8Ns> (members only)

Join the MLFHS/BFHS at: <http://mlfhs.org.uk/join/index.php>

**May 2017**

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

(This month's iconic scene, courtesy of Alan Bromiley of Bolton Camera Club. "Haulgh Hall in Hilden Street was built about 1600 and was originally inhabited by the Haulgh family". - <https://goo.gl/kozWim> BBC Domesday Reloaded.)

Welcome all. Do you like our latest picture? I remember, whilst at work many years ago, going to visit an elderly gentleman in this house. It must have been the Mr Eden mentioned in the link. I do remember York stone flagging in the house and a full-size suit of armour standing in the corner!

I am hoping to do a different iconic Bolton picture each month, so all contributions gratefully received

I think my next job should be to correct two name spelling mistakes I made in last month's edition. Sharon "Bunting" should have been Bunter, and David "Muir" should have been Muil. Both have very magnanimously pointed these things out to me, and I can only apologise and plead that I am only human.

This month has perhaps seen three big events from the BFHS perspective. We have had two AGMs, first the central MLFHS one in Manchester, and then our branch one in Bolton, (more on these below); and then we can proudly announce that Bolton also saw the launch of the campaign for the next General Election with Theresa May visiting us the day after the announcement. <https://goo.gl/6XcwsK>. We must be very important people. We have also had a very busy social calendar and it has been a struggle to reduce our items to a digestible size, there has been so much to share. Please bear with me/us.

## **BFHS MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE HELD:-**

### **Where?**

- Bolton Old Links Golf Club, Montserrat Brow, Chorley Old Road BL1 5SU. Buses 519&125 <https://goo.gl/TH5zYC> All MLFHS members free. £2.00 to non-members unless joining on the night.

### **When?**

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



## RECENT AND COMING EVENTS

Well, we have only had the one BFHS trip but various members have also managed to attend a few other local meetings and courses, and have kindly provided notes to share.

**\*Thursday 6th April 2017 One Day workshop on Quarter Sessions records by "Friends of Lancashire Archives"** <https://goo.gl/2XDqME> "Graham Holt and myself went on this Seminar, organised and lead by one of our most favourite speaker's Dr Alan Crosby and held at Lancashire Record Office at Preston. It was a sell out with 25 people present from various North West societies at £20 each so a good fund raiser for the "Friends". The information advertised, "providing a valuable resource for family and local historians" and that "Alan will explain the role of the magistrates in county law and administration as well as giving lots of examples to illustrate the variety of their work). It did.



We got a lot out of the day and I personally was a bit overawed by the quality and knowledge of some of the people in attendance. Alan's talk was incredible. He started off in the 14th century at 10am, and finished up in the present Day at 3.00 pm with a 30-minute break for lunch. He used a PowerPoint presentation and did not have any notes! We were given several documents from Lancashire Archives which demonstrated there is a stack of material available there which can give Family Historians a wealth of information, that cannot be found on the internet. It is estimated that only 1% of the documents in the Lancashire Archives can be found online! When any more seminars like this become available I would highly recommend that some of our members give it a try, it was very enlightening and informative". Thank you, Brian Whittle,

**\* Wednesday 19th April, Manchester Quarterly Meeting including the 53rd MLFHS Annual General Meeting.** This ticketed event is of course open to all MLFHS members and we had a good Bolton contingent there this year in a fully booked room. The AGM was preceded by an interesting talk by Leslie Turner, about John Leigh, a local Victorian cotton waste merchant turned philanthropist <https://goo.gl/OK5Lff> . Leslie is the coordinator of the Manchester Help Desk, which operates five days a week from 10.30 am-3.30 pm supported by over 30 volunteers, quite an achievement. She is also a Trustee on the Executive Committee. (more on that later).



We then moved on to the more serious business of the AGM. Perhaps to most, the important news was **the retirement of John Marsden** who has been the Chairman of the MLFHS for the last three years (but who has occupied several senior posts, over 17 years, since joining the Society in the early 1990s). We were told of how John supervised the Society's move from Clayton House in Piccadilly Gardens, for it to become part of the multi-disciplinary team in the re-vamped Manchester Central Library. That mammoth task was happily completed and costs were greatly reduced within the first twelve months of John's office, thanks to his management, and he is leaving us a superb legacy. He has also always been a very accessible "friend" of the Bolton branch. He has attended several of our meetings and become personally involved and supportive in special events such as the recovery of the Bolton Royal Infirmary Post War Out-Patient Register <https://goo.gl/5frM9j> . We have felt he has tried to be involved in all aspects of the MLFHS, looking beyond the walls of the Manchester hub, to all corners of the area covered. He promises he will still be around though in his web-master role, but, hopefully, in a more relaxed



manner. John was presented with a book about the works of Salford artist L. S. Lowry by David Muil, our incoming Chairman, and a smaller gift of appreciation from Bolton FHS.

Especially interesting for those of us who do not know the Manchester based personnel, we were then introduced to the former Vice-Chairman, David Muil, who is to be the new Chairman. He is a member of the Anglo Scots FHS. We are assured that David is bringing lots of management experience with him, plus has a strong interest in the MLFHS projects of which Bolton members are quite heavily involved, so all looking good. David later came to Bolton and chaired the Bolton General Meeting (see later). I know these are all just names to many so I thought I might prepare a "rogue's gallery" of the senior members of the



MLFHS Executive Committee who were present at the AGM. (with a bit of amateurish picture "cutting and pasting" that I hope you will excuse). From the left, ← John Marsden making his farewell speech, David Muil, incoming Chairman, Keith Marsland Treasurer, Bob Haynes, President, Barry Henshall, incoming Vice Chairman, Elsie Lowe, General Secretary.

We also heard the announcements that our very own Margaret Calderbank has been awarded a Fellowship of the MLFHS (see below), joining existing Bolton members Rita Greenwood, Barbara Owen and Ron Smith who are already Fellows. Rita and Barbara have also been elected onto the Executive Committee and thus also become Trustees joining our Brian Whittle and Graham Holt. Photos below show, from the left, Brian, Graham, Barbara and Rita



For those of you who might be wondering what all these "job descriptions" mean, as I understand it, as a registered charity this is part of our governance, (approved management within the rules for charitable organizations). A Trustee is a member of the Executive

Committee that manages the Society and ensures it is conforming to the applicable charity laws as specified by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. Our Trustees therefore for 2017-2018 can be found here <http://mlfhs.org.uk/about/trustees.php>, and our constitution is here <http://mlfhs.org.uk/join/constitution.php>.

The day was concluded by a second talk, this time by Dr Mike Nevell of Salford University, who gave an overview of some of the fascinating archaeological digs he has been involved with in the Salford area, investigating the last 9,000 years of progress, and often trying to pre-empt imminent destruction by new building developments. Follow this link for lots of interesting articles. <https://goo.gl/bpRarV>. He is to visit us in Bolton next year to tell us about the renovation of Worsley Hall Gardens. <https://goo.gl/OG0NUe>, to a nationally recognized site for the Royal Horticultural Society.



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**\*Wednesday 19th April, "Manorial Records for Family Historians",** This was the first of a series of free **Family History Lunchtime Talks at the Lancashire Archives at Preston County Record Office**, and on the same day as the MLFHS AGM, unfortunately. We could not be in two places at once therefore, but Carole Wright, one of our "roving reporters" managed to go, and gave us this report.



*"The 10.25am train from Bolton to Preston meant I arrived at Preston Record Office in good time to enjoy my sandwich in their lunch room before joining about 25 other family historians for a cup of tea and the start of the 12.30pm talk given by David Tilsley, the Archive Collection Manager. David's introduction*



outlined the three sections of his talk. a) What is a Manor? b) Types of manorial records and how useful they might be to family historians c) Which records survive and how to find them?

He went on to describe people associated with the manor, their function and importance to family historians, as being named in the records places them in a time and area and may give other details. The Manor Court provided for the smooth running of the manorial estate and so its records hold much information. e.g. "The Call Book" was an attendance register listing names of those tenants who were required to attend. The "Court Roll", or "Book" recorded land transfers, surveys, petitions and much more. The "Court Leet" dealt with keeping the peace and criminal offences. Its 10 jurors chosen from the manor would be listed in the records along with reports on problems previously raised and action taken e.g. concerning condition of roads or free- running of water courses with names of offenders. David provided examples of what could be accessed at Preston for some Lancashire Manors. "Do manorial records survive", and "Where are they kept?", brought the hours talk to an end. Not all have survived but for those that have "The Manorial Documents Register", is held at The National Archives at Kew <https://goo.gl/cNBj4L>. Information for the records of some counties is now on-line but not all. To find the name of a manor consult the appropriate on-line Victoria County History <https://goo.gl/IIgTkH>. The actual original documents will be held in the relevant Record Office and you will need the reference number from their catalogue.



And so, a very interesting and informative talk closed with a short question and answer session and a chance to view a selection of books on the manorial system, its records and excerpts and the opportunity to buy a more detailed "Guide to Manorial Records", published by Lancashire Archives for a mere £2. David was happy to answer individual questions at the end. What an enjoyable session!

Can't wait for May 17th and next month's talk on "Using Family and Estate Records for family historians", by Keri Nicholson. C.Wright

More family history talks will take place between 12.30 and 1.30pm on the following dates:

May 31st, "Asylum records for family historians" Kathryn Newman

June 14th "Coroners' records for family historians" Vicci McCann

June 28th "Probate records for family historians" Anna Watson

These will look beyond the basic sources for family history research and explore other sources at Lancashire Archives – it's not all online! Phone 01772 533039 or email [record.office@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:record.office@lancashire.gov.uk) to book a place.

**Wednesday May 3<sup>rd</sup> the Bolton FHS AGM, followed by "The History of Edgworth and Crowthorne Children's Home" by Anita Forth.** This was the first chance we had for our

new MLFHS Chairman David Muil, to come and meet our group and I think all will agree that it went very well. We had a turnout of approx. 90 again, and



David Chaired our meeting. I hope all will be pleased to know that all our present committee were happy to stand again so you are still stuck with us, and we are also very pleased to be able to announce that we have two more members willing to join us

Christine Ellis, and Jeanette Holland, and welcome to both. We will have a group



“shot” next month of all our committee plus all regular assistants without whom we couldn’t function. We were also proud to see Margaret Calderbank presented with her Fellowship award in recognition of her 25 years of dedicated service to the society, including 6 years of managing our Chair.



Anita was then invited to take over, and tell us about her amazing story of how she had arrived at the Crowthorn Special Needs Residential School. <https://goo.gl/1w4F0M>, in 1983 as an assistant teacher, to help care for the children there, and her subsequent quest. Whilst learning her way around she discovered a somewhat neglected “huge, old photo album”, tucked away in a corner, which nobody seemed to be very interested in. She decided to investigate and discovered it contained photos dating back from when the Home was first opened

in 1872. Her research in Bolton and Preston Archives, and the National Archives at Kew, revealed the incredible story of how the Rev Dr Thomas Bowman Stephenson, a Methodist minister working in the poorest districts of London, had discovered to his horror, the dreadful conditions that some very young, virtually abandoned, children were living in. Instances of almost feral infants in Dickensian conditions, “sleeping in barrels by the riverside”, and “under tarpaulins”, with no support were quoted. In 1869, he resolved to try to do something about it, and first hired a single room “cottage”, which was soon filled with 20+ children in it, but at least a “place of safety”. Within 3 months this was replaced by a dilapidated stone mason’s factory where 350 were accommodated. It was decided they were in desperate need of “Gods fresh air” though, and after advertising for help in the Methodist Recorder he received a response from Bolton’s James Barlow, who offered an, “old inn of ill repute, on the moors”, (the Wheatsheaf of Edgworth), plus £5,000 and several acres of land to develop the project. It was reasoned that this would serve a much better purpose, than its current one. . <https://goo.gl/Yx5IJY>. The building became the first National Children’s Home outside London, opening in 1872. Alfred Mager and his family arrived from London as first managers, and the “farm colony” of 24 boys and 4 girls was launched Here they soon learned the pioneering life skills of building, farming, baking, shoe and clog making dressmaking etc., etc., etc. as they went along, from skilled teachers trained in London. Circumstances were quite basic to start with but eventually they even had their own reservoir for clean water, a swimming pool, and a hospital. Nineteen “family houses” were developed, each having a “parental” figure. Their skills in trades were soon noted and their talents were requested overseas in the colonies, supervised by the Methodist Church. Many emigrated, and hopefully most under happy circumstances. Shirley Ann Field, the actress, is quoted as one of their success stories, and ex pupils still hold regular reunions, and have a FaceBook group <https://goo.gl/i4l1XN>. The role changed in in 1953 when it became Crowthorn school instead. “Action for Children” <https://goo.gl/Wh682J> has now taken over from the National Children’s Home and has access to some records and tracing help. Anita showed us some of her many pictures illustrating her story and I think we all had a new appreciation of these philanthropists from another time, who had had such a profound effect on Bolton’s heritage.



PS It was also a proud moment to welcome two new members Bill and Carol Jarvis who have travelled all the way from Utah USA to do some research over here in Greater Manchester, and they managed to drop in to our meeting and join the Society, having seen the flier in the journal. We hope they found what they were looking for.



**\*Thursday May 4th Visit to Ordsall Hall, Salford.** <https://goo.gl/G3Z6yg> . Well I



suspect few of our group from Bolton, knew about this “jewel” in our local “crown of historical buildings”, situated maybe 15 miles away, (although Dr Mike Nevell, as mentioned above, had discussed the history of this place as well from the archaeologists point of view at the MLFHS AGM so we were intrigued). There this 800-year-old recently renovated building sits,



surrounded by newly built offices, houses and flats, minutes away from Media City, and the Lowry Centre. Some of us did remember the area from maybe 40 years before, when it had been the old Victorian slums that had set the scene for ITVs longstanding “Coronation Street”. Hundreds of years ago it had been forestry and farm land of course, but just that comparison made us realise how much the passage of time can alter things.

On arrival, we were split into two groups. Ours was first taken to the attic, newly open to the public, and shown where the poorest slept, on the straw, vying for the warmest place near the chimney, with nothing between them and outside apart from a bit of wattle and daub. These were where the water carriers, firelighters, kitchen maids etc. slept on the communal floor. We progressed on to see the relics from the various time periods, and learn how the owners had changed hands from 1066 when the de Poitou family had acquired it, presumably courtesy of William the Conqueror, to 1251 when the Hulton’s had been involved, and on to the Radclyffe’s in 1335. (The Radclyffe bed is in fact one of their main treasures, as the only known surviving piece of original furniture from the house. From the 1400s onwards apparently four



poster beds were considered one of the most valuable possessions of any wealthy house both sentimentally as being the main scene of many births, consummations of marriage, and deaths, and financially; and these were often mentioned as a priority item in wills. <https://goo.gl/TW5bie> This bed was apparently “lost” for 200 years, then retrieved from a garage in Whalley Range in the 1930s, and temporarily stored on a farm in Derbyshire until 2014 when it was put up for auction. The new owner, a Lebanese philanthropist, has generously agreed to allow temporary exhibition of it

here <https://goo.gl/GpYBqK>), and actually now also become a welcome benefactor.

Many other familiar landowning names from the area were mentioned, such as Oldfield, Stocks, Egerton, Markendale, and I suspect the various family trees and lines of inheritance made some of us feel quite inadequate. The social history was fascinating with accounts given of the origins of so many familiar phrases such as “sleeping on a tight rope” (well supported mattress), “burning the candle at both ends” (making maximum but short lived benefit), “upper crust” (the poor got the burnt lower crusts of bread), enjoying a “square meal” (good sized plate), not to mention eating fashions such as multiple types of animal in one roast meal. We have not got enough room here to show all our pictures, but may hopefully get some on our Facebook page. We left nearly two hours later, trying to take in all the fascinating historical and social history information we had learnt. How sad to hear that there had been 19 other similar manorial houses within a 5 mile radius of this one, all gone, many only recently.

**\*Wednesday 7th June, David Casserley**, local author and historian, will talk about “**Bolton in the Civil War, A massacre but why?**” We heard a taster of this earlier this year at Halliwell LHS. Prepare for a fascinating story of 17<sup>th</sup> C “shock and awe” in our own back yard. A sobering but enlightening story.

**\*Future Trips** include our **fully booked trip to Media City on June 5<sup>th</sup>**, and a trip **Friday July 7<sup>th</sup> to Salford Museum** <https://goo.gl/6a6d30> booking now. Please contact as above.



## GENIE'S TIPS for MAY



### **Sharon's Computer and Genealogy Help** <https://goo.gl/F0m6aV>

This is a Facebook group and well worth visiting for those using it. I have learnt so much. Sharon Bunter lives in Australia but has Bury UK connections <https://goo.gl/pySDu7> which includes Bolton interests as well. Her groups are full of useful information, simply explained and with humour. Just wish she was nearer, to come and give us a talk, but maybe one day with a video link. We dream on.

### **"1939 Register Area Codes"** <https://goo.gl/s4Pezj> **Lost Cousins 11.04.17**

I suggest you read Peter Calver's explanation of this here <https://goo.gl/w1Q3ku>, and even better, if you have not already done it, sign on for his free fortnightly newsletter. Highly recommended. A helpful example came up in Facebook this week, *"I thought I had little hope of tracing where my Mum was when war broke out, that was until I found out about the unique National Identity card code given to everyone from the register. These 4 letter/ 2 number codes – e.g. ADNH 25/4 – indicates - Bethnal Green, the 25th household and the 4th person in that household. The number can be found on the register, and was used as a unique number on National Identity Cards and later the same number was used after the war on Medical Cards when the National Health Service Began."*



*I have both my mum's National Identity Card and medical Card, so using 'browse' on the 1939 register on Find My Past I was able to establish, even though she is 'blacked out' that she was living in Thingoe, on the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds, and I was able to find out exactly where she was living and who she was living with. If any of you have access to National Identity Cards or National Health Service cards and want to find out where your evacuated ancestors were on 29th September 1939, you can!"*

### **"Reports to Prevent Future Deaths"** <https://goo.gl/YbFm4e> **Courts and Tribunals Judiciary**

All reports (formerly known as Rule 43 reports) and responses must be sent to the Chief Coroner. In most cases the Chief Coroner will publish the reports and responses on this website. Details of the procedures are set out in Regulations 28 and 29, Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013.

The Chief Coroner's Office is currently working to upload all Reports made since 25 July 2013.

## **WORKSHOPS, COURSES and CLASSES**

We are happy to report the conclusion of the very successful series of five Saturday workshops held at Bolton History Centre. We are now into the Summer recess for classes with folk thinking more of holidays these days, but hopefully applying what they have been learning. However, we can announce the start of a



**Trial of Monthly Help Desks to be held in the same place, commencing Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup>, from 9.30am to 12md on the first Saturday of each month.**

As things stand there is no need to book but more information can be obtained via Tel No 01204332185, also



**3 July 2017 Genealogy: Researching Your Family Tree - Free online course** <https://goo.gl/vZne2s>  
**Dundee University** is running another of these excellent free, online courses

## THIS MONTHS LOCAL NEWS and SOME ORGANISATION UPDATES

### Lancashire Records



<http://goo.gl/l29JpL>



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

**News from the Lancashire Archives** <https://goo.gl/toBqsc> and coming **Events** <https://goo.gl/Kh7IzL>

**Helmshore Mills blow as English Heritage withdraws bid to save museum** <https://goo.gl/gu9fGb>  
**Rossendale Free Press.** *Campaigners are "devastated" for the museum, closed to the general public for six months. English Heritage had previously submitted an expression of interest to Lancashire County Council (LCC) to take on both Helmshore Mills, and Queen Street Mill, Burnley. However, the organisation has now retracted its interest in the sites.---*

**Registers Parish Church Of Bolton 1587 1660** by Paul Lacey <https://goo.gl/MKj8Ya> This is one of a small collection of articles about local places, especially Rivington, which seem to have been donated for public access by Paul Lacey in 2004. Lots of local history here and some records.

**Bolton's Elephants - Could a cotton trade connection explain the town's famous symbol?**

<https://goo.gl/zWN2JK> Gayle McBain, Bolton News

*More theories about Bolton's favourite icon "BOLTON'S elephant obsession has been researched by a number of people who have come up with various possibilities for the animal's high regard...*

**STOP PRESS---** “WDYTIA? LIVE to close its doors” <https://goo.gl/tCBTCe> By Rosemary Collins, 3 May 2017 “The UK’s largest family history event comes to an end after ten years”. I suppose none of us are really surprised, but still a shock.

## SOME INTERESTING, USEFUL, AND MAINLY FREE WEBSITES

**Who Do You Think You Are? Live Speakers’ Handouts** <https://goo.gl/5qaGlh> from the Society of Genealogists.  
*“Speakers’ handouts or slides presented at WDYTYA? Live shows in Birmingham NEC and previously in Glasgow and London are published here as PDFs or online links. Not every speaker will have provided slides of their presentations but we do expect more to arrive, so if the talk you wanted isn't yet represented on the list below do pop back to this page and check again later”.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

**The Dangers of the Green Dye Fashion “The History of Green Dye Is a History of Death--Happy St. Pat’s!”** by Jennifer Wright Mar 17, 2017

Some of you might remember in an earlier edition there was a feature about fashionable Victoria clothing, and the perils of same. I found this recent article quite fascinating in a horrified kind of way <https://goo.gl/ej7z8B>. “In 1814, a company in Schweinfurt, Germany, called the Wilhelm Dye and White Lead Company developed a new green dye. It was brighter than most traditional green dyes. It was bolder. The shade was so jewel-like that it quickly began being called “emerald green.” And women loved it ---” This article goes on to explain the fashion of green tiles, wall paper etc. all containing arsenic and the dangers. Maybe that’s why my decorator great x 2 grandfather had such an early death.





## **More DNA Stuff**

Well unless you have had your head in sand, most will have not been able to avoid hearing that we have just had an International DNA Day, on April 25<sup>th</sup> commemorating the announcement of the discovery of DNA in 1953 <https://goo.gl/vYyhry> . *"Deoxyribonucleic acid, a self-replicating material which is present in nearly all living organisms as the main constituent of chromosomes.*



*It is the carrier of genetic information"* <https://goo.gl/3lWg6c> according to the Oxford Dictionary. Most of the DNA companies have also been trying to sell their wares at discounted prices. Have you been tempted yet?

>" **How Your Genealogical Family Tree Is Different from Your Genetic Tree**" - <https://goo.gl/2Lfsqt> Family Tree Magazine 18.04.2017

*"The distinction between your genealogical family tree and your genetic family tree is important when analysing your DNA test results. We explain the difference between these distinct, but overlapping, family trees."*

>" **What DNA testing can tell you about your family history**" <https://goo.gl/vYgkrl> **WDYTYR**

>" **DNA Testing for Family History**" <https://outlook.live.com/owa/?path=/attachmentlightbox> **by Sharon Bunter**

> **"Living DNA"** <https://goo.gl/hPb7TG> head office in Somerset, UK.

At last we have a DNA test more geared to the use of UK researchers than those who have moved on to other countries. I am sure it is by no means perfect, and it is certainly more expensive at £120 p&p, (recently £99 on World DNA Day) , but at least it offers a chance of localising to 80 world regions, including 21 in Britain and Ireland, which is what most Brits are interested in let's be honest. The jury is still out of course but any personal experiences in this area, good or bad, would be welcome. I know there are a lot of disappointed people at the moment after taking other tests, but maybe this one will be more productive if you want to take this route.

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

### **Transcribing Article 5**

**From Paul Dixon, Aliso Viejo, California, Coordinator, Lancashire Online Parish Clerks**



I remember around the year 2000 hearing about a project started in Cornwall called Online Parish Clerks. I thought what a great idea that was and that when we got one for Lancashire, there were at least a couple of parishes where I could offer my services. By this time, I had already ordered films for a couple of parishes through my local LDS Family History Centre, which I had then photographed on the film reader and begun to transcribe for my own use.

Well, time went on! It was now 2003, Lancashire was not well covered at that time with online access to the contents of parish registers. There was really only the IGI, which was only an index and was also spotty and with major gaps, particularly Blackburn where my father's family originated.

The lack of online resources came up as a discussion topic on the LANCSGEN message board. Online Parish Clerk projects had appeared for a small number of other counties, but at this point it was clear that one would not appear for Lancashire unless someone took the initiative.

I was unsure as just an ordinary member of the list what right I had to call for people to join with me in such a project. I consulted privately with some of the leading members of the LANCSGEN list and collectively it was decided we should go ahead.

I also contacted the leaders of the exiting groups, which by that time had added Dorset and Devon to the fold. I must mention the assistance I got from the leader of the Dorset group who gave me so much help and guidance that I became comfortable that it was a project that could be managed. I also learned from them that the LDS were prepared to loan copies of their photographed registers to projects of this nature. There was discussion with other parties that already had website offerings to determine whether it would make sense to join with them. But all options available seemed to place too many possible restrictions on our activities, so with the help of some friends who had offered some space on a server they ran, I put our

initial offering online and announced it to the public on 13th February 2004. To begin with, we had little to offer. I had extracted a list of Lancashire parishes from various online resources and that was our starting point, a list of parishes in Lancashire.

My vision for the site was to provide a wide range of material in addition to access to records from parish registers. This would include information on the history of the various churches and images that would show where an ancestor may have lived and worshipped.

The early days were very much a learning period, both for us and for the LDS, who were, at that time, our only source of registers. Fortunately, by then, they were able to supply registers in the form of digital images and not microfilm, which allowed people to work at home on their own computers.

A transcription can be performed on the older style registers, where an entry would probably occupy a line in the register, starting with a date and be something of the form "John son of John Smith and Mary of Someplace". But the modern style registers, based on a preprinted form, could not be transcribed in a strict sense like the older registers. I realised that a strict transcription did not present the information in a manner that would easily support searches, so I concluded that the best approach would be to define a single-entry format that would be used for all register types. That format would be one that defined fields for each element of a name and for other common information types found in the registers. I created a document to define that format as an excel file entry and transcribers were provided with an Excel template to begin their work.

The members who had originally enrolled in the project started to receive registers from the LDS. We then had a flow of transcriptions arriving that needed to be displayed. I wrote a program to process the files and format them into html pages displaying each entry, with an index to the entries and a menu page to cover multiple registers from a church.

There were still frustrations as not all parishes and registers had been photographed by the LDS and not all of those photographed were made available to us. A particular frustration to me and to many researching Bolton was St Peter's Halliwell.

The church has not deposited its registers with any record office so they were not available other than by calling at the church. Having myself lived in Smithills for many years and being a long-standing member of St Peter's before moving to the USA, I made an approach to the clergy while on a visit back to England. That led to a written proposal submitted to the PCC and supported by a number of my friends on the PCC. As a consequence, we were granted access to the registers to photograph and transcribe them to go online. This was mid-2007 and it was our first access directly to registers.

The project was also growing in size, so at this time, an expanded management team was formed with coordinators for different functions and to manage transcribers in different regions of the county. Area coordinators were able to offer guidance to new members and to use programs that check many aspects of the transcriptions before they were submitted for display on the site. In an effort to ensure quality, registers now go through a number of checking stages before they appear online.

Since our first access directly to registers at St Peter's Halliwell we have been granted access to registers from many other churches in the county. For those with Bolton interests, this has included the West Bolton Ministry. We were recently granted access by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford to the registers from this Diocese, which have been photographed both at Preston and onsite at the Salford RC Diocese archive. The project has expanded from the time when it was just a collection of files on my computer to the point where it is now managed from a database with workflow management and with all material under a proper revision control system. All steps are now being taken to ensure that the project is secure and can survive and be maintained well into the future.

We are always seeking to expand our access to new records. If anyone has contacts in a church where we do not have records, we would be happy to get an introduction. If anyone has photographs of churches, particularly old photographs or photographs of church that have been demolished, I would be happy to publish those on the site, copyright or acknowledgement can be attributed as necessary.

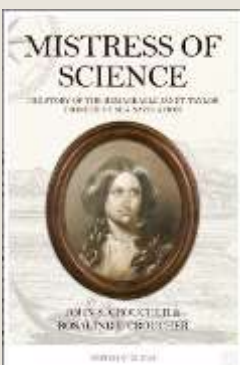
We are always seeking people with particular skills, our most urgent need at the moment is for photography, a task which can be carried out with any reasonable digital camera and appropriate software. There is also a need for people with an interest in the history of the churches and willing to research and contribute material to enhance the records we provide.

### **“Mrs Janet Taylor—a remarkable l’onn”,**

I have known Marion Hunt for near 5 years now through various family history classes and social follow ups and as a member of the MLFHS attending the Bolton branch.

From time to time she has mentioned Mrs Janet Taylor as being an interesting ancestor with a wonderful story to tell. During her research of her great x 4 aunt, who has even been mentioned in “Graces Guide to British Industrial Industry” <https://goo.gl/5RdL5Q>

Marion also found a link with an Australian “cousin” John S Croucher who was doing parallel research and, with his wife Rosalind, has actually written a book about the lady. John and Rosalind have now agreed to write this short overview for us, and a fuller version will be in this quarters journal “The Manchester Genealogist”.



*I knew that Janet Taylor, born Jane Ann l’onn, was an interesting relative. What kind of woman runs a navigation school in mid-19th century London, for over thirty years, has eight children (and three step-children), patents a nautical instrument and swings ships? She did—and she was my great-great-great-great aunt. Just how extraordinary she was, was something I was determined to find out about. What started as a journey of curiosity resulted in a determination to tell her story, to fill in a unique, and missing, piece in the history of sea navigation.*

*Janet was born in Wolsingham, County Durham in May 1804, to the Rev. Peter l’onn and his wife Jane. She returned to St Helen Auckland in her last days, to live with her sister Elizabeth who was married to the incumbent, Canon Matthew Chester. It was*

*there she died in January 1870 and was buried there.*

*What did the remarkable Mrs Taylor achieve? In 1833, at the age of 29, she published her first book and went on to produce a number of major works of importance to the maritime community, most of which went into many editions. Mrs Taylor’s nautical tables — a vital tool in the determination of longitude at sea — were widely recognised as an invaluable aid to merchant seamen and her works are still being hailed many years later.*

*In addition to her impressive record of publications, from the early 1830s she conducted a ‘nautical academy’. Nearly 65 years after her death, it was written in the Nautical Magazine that her academy was ‘much patronised’ by naval and merchant seamen. In 1834, she even patented a nautical instrument, ‘A Mariner’s Calculator’, claiming ‘improvements in instruments for measuring angles and distances, applicable to nautical and other purposes’.*

*Mrs Taylor also ran a ‘navigational warehouse’ from which she sold a wide range of nautical and mathematical instruments. Held in high regard by the Admiralty, she was also granted permission to be a sub-agent for their charts.*

*In the 1850s, Mrs Taylor became a key player in the middle of one of the biggest scientific controversies in navigation—how to solve the problems of compasses affected by iron ships. By this time, she was a compass adjuster, heading a large business of over 100 men in the heart of maritime London, based on the application of techniques for correcting magnets to counteract the effects of iron on ships’ compasses advocated by the Astronomer Royal, Professor George Airy.*

*Mrs Taylor received international recognition for her contributions: gold medals from the King of Holland and King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia; and, by 1844, a gold medal from the Pope. In 1860, her contributions to navigation were finally acknowledged in England through the award of a civil list pension of £50 per year, ‘In consideration of her benevolent labours among the seafaring population of London’. Ten days after Janet died, an obituary published in The Athenaeum concluded in saying ‘Perhaps some surviving relative or friend may be able to throw light on the life and labours of one who was as*



*extraordinary from her acquirements of knowledge as from her social reticence.' I am such a relative, descended from Janet's eldest brother, William I'onn. In 2016, the biography of Janet I wrote with my wife, Rosalind, was published. We hope that, in a small way, Janet Taylor's story may now be seen in the light it deserves: the story of an extraordinary pioneer of sea navigation.* by John S Croucher

'Mistress of Science: The Story of the Remarkable Janet Taylor, Pioneer of Sea Navigation', by John S Croucher and Rosalind F Croucher, is published by Amberley Publishing, ISBN 978-1-4456-5985-5 <https://goo.gl/mlWOU5>



## **OTHER LOCAL SOCIETIES NEWS**



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

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,

**30th May 'Death on the Doorstep'** – In 1665 the plague ravished the Derbyshire village of Eyam.

In 1832 cholera swept through the city of Manchester. This talk will compare the different approaches used by local people to overcome these deadly epidemics. John Doughty



### **Turton Local History Society** <https://goo.gl/PHNXjA>

Illustrated talks and meetings are held from August to April inclusive on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at Longsight Church Centre, Harwood BL2 3HX beginning at 7.30pm. This next month's event

**24 May - Pubs of Edgworth - Guided Walk (John Barlow)**

### **Westhoughton Local History Group** – <http://goo.gl/XNugI5>

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.

**18 May The Band of Hope in the North West: Annemarie Mcallister**

**1 June History of Schools in Westhoughton: Garth Ratcliffe**



### **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. Next event

**May 9th, 2017 David Kaye - "From Horwich to Hyderabad"**

### **Belmont Local History Society** <https://goo.gl/4qFDfY>

**Monday the 8th May in the Belmont Bull at 7:30pm.** It will be a talk on researching your family tree. Everyone is welcome, we hope to see you there!

### **Blackrod Local History Group Contact David 01257481393**

**Thursday May 18<sup>th</sup> 2pm at the Blackrod Council Chamber. My work as a Local History Detective, by Steve Halliwell**

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