

'e-Owls'



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

December 2020

MLFHS - Oldham Branch Newsletter

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Branch News :

Following March's Annual Meeting of the MLFHS Oldham Branch

Branch Officers for 2020 -2021 :

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



*Happy Christmas & New Year,
to all our readers, from the
Committee of the MLFHS,
Oldham & District Branch.*

Oldham Branch Meetings : Coronavirus Pandemic

Please note ... with great regret but in-line with the updated Statement, issued by the M&LFHS Trustees, and on the home page of the Society website, all M&LFHS Meetings, Branch Meetings and other public activities are to be suspended indefinitely.

Please check with the website for updated information.

HOWEVER,

The newsletter will be sent out as usual.

There will be further updates on the Society website Home Page and on the Branch pages.

The next issue of the Society Journal will go out to members as usual. It relies heavily on Branch reports and what the Society has been doing at events and fairs etc. However, this sort of news won't be there for quite a long time! To fill the pages with interesting articles, it's hoped that more people will write up family stories and contribute them to the journal. Please refer to the page, '*Notes for Contributors*', in the Journal, for information on how to send articles, etc.

The Society Facebook page [HERE](#) and the Twitter page [HERE](#) will be updated frequently.

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### **Chairman's remarks :**

Hello Everyone. I hope you are all keeping well and coping as best you can with another lock down.

This month we have a request from the Editor of The Manchester Genealogist Journal.

Because of the lack of meetings and events to report on this year, the Editor is short of articles for the March 2021 issue of the Journal. If you have any stories or articles which can be published, please send them to < editor@mlfhs.org.uk >. The deadline for entries is 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

Can I also remind you that we have a Branch Meeting organised for the 12<sup>th</sup> December via Zoom. Go to the 'Meetings' page [HERE](#) for booking options. This event is free to members and non-members alike.

Last but not least, may I wish you all a merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

My best wishes

Linda Richardson

Chairman, Oldham Branch

email me at < chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk >

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Editor's remarks.

Here we are, yet again, in another full (almost!) national lockdown. Enough said on that!

As mentioned in the last newsletter, online talks by the Branches, to replace the normal monthly ones, are now in place on the programmes. As I write this, we have held our own Branch dummy run, with a handful of friends (so that we could try and identify where problems might lie!) and it was encouraging! It's all about familiarising ourselves with the zoom app to get the most enjoyable experience from it. Once you have downloaded the app, you can even set up a meeting with yourself, just to try out all the settings! Be prepared, though, I haven't spoken to anyone yet who has found seeing themselves, for the first time on screen, the most uplifting experience! Bolton Branch are out in front, having done a practice meeting and their first talk with a guest speaker which, incidentally, was great. By the time this newsletter goes out, the Anglo -Scots will probably have done their first online talk, followed by our own on the 12th December. I'm hoping that some (many!) of you will sign up and support this new venture.

Back in June, I included a couple of articles on the 'Brierly Map' (June's newsletter [HERE](#)). Since then, I have had the opportunity to read more about the lives of the people, who are identified on it, in '*Oldham Town Centre - through the Brierly Map*' by Gary Millward. It is a fascinating snapshot of Oldham in 1815, as remembered by one ex-resident, in the mid to late 1800s. For the next few months, I will be including chapters from it, with links to relevant sections of the map.

Those of you who live locally, or have visited Oldham, may have seen the 'Brierly Map' hanging in Gallery Oldham. Not really a map, it's more an illustration of Market Place, and the streets leading off it, with the names of the folk who plied their trades in the buildings. I have a particular fondness for it as I found my 3x gt.-grandfather, John Steeple, in his butcher's shop

almost opposite the Parish Church.

Of course, although we're still only in November, this will probably be the last Newsletter before Christmas, so please allow me to wish everyone, 'A Peaceful and Happy Christmas and New Year'.

Major updates to the Oldham & District Branch website pages are listed [HERE](#), along with with any local news and updates from around the district.

Page updates include: Two help sheets for downloading and using the Zoom app for meetings.

Although I am always more than happy to receive articles, pictures etc., for 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 unless you decide to waive that right, at the time of sending.

Editor reserves the right to edit any contributions before publication.

email me at : < Oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk >

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## Oldham & District Branch

### Our first online Branch talk with Zoom

Please try and support us with your online attendance as we hope to deliver as much of our 2021 programme as possible whilst we are unable to hold our meetings in Gallery Oldham.

It would be of great help to us, for the smooth running of the talk (especially for our first!!), if you would look at the two help sheets that we have prepared, [HERE](#) and [HERE](#), one of which will also help you in downloading and using zoom if you are a new user of it.



Saturday,  
12th  
December,  
at 2 pm.



### ***Failsworth & Woodhouses War Comforts Society***

In WW1, the Government hardly even provided the bare necessities of life for men on active service. As early as September 1914, groups (of mainly women) were springing up all over the country to find ways to provide the extras that would make lives a little more tolerable for the men who had volunteered. Set up as private and church organisations, to begin with, within months many came under the umbrella organisation of the Red Cross.

This talk is based on the records and ephemera, of one such group, which were saved by a family, and which have survived into the present day.

Details of the talk are on the 'Meetings' page of the Branch website [HERE](#).

Booking for an online talk is essential and can be by emailing us (newsletter or website email addresses) or on Eventbrite [HERE](#) (where you can also find more details of the talk).

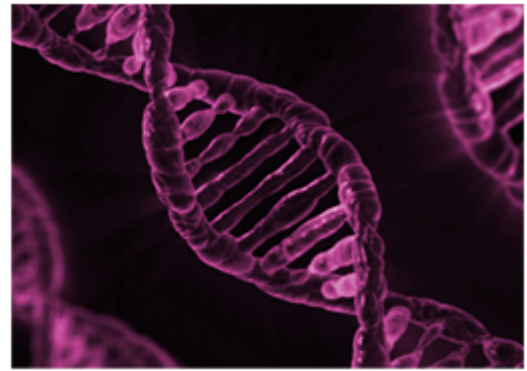
**The talk will be free to members and non-members alike.**

**Wherever you live, welcome!**

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Saturday,
9th,
January
at
2 pm



Just taken your DNA test with Ancestry

When you receive your DNA results from Ancestry you might have between 20,000 and 60,000 matches arranged in order of "best first". How do you work through them? Why might your third cousin not be shown in your list of matches (and it might not have anything to do with the milkman)? Is your ethnicity chart accurate? Hilary shows you how to interpret your test results, the benefits and limitations of Ancestry and how you can use your results with other sites, like My Heritage, to increase your chances of finding matches.

Details of the talk are on the 'Meetings' page of the Branch website [HERE](#) .

Booking for an online talk is essential and can be by emailing us (newsletter or website email addresses) or on Eventbrite [HERE](#) (where you can also find more details of the talk).

**The talk will be free to members and non-members alike.
Wherever you live, Welcome!**

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Saturday,  
13th,  
February  
at  
2 pm



***Annie Kenney ... a Working Class Suffragette.***

This local girl became one of the most well known of Suffragettes. Imprisoned many times, she endured hunger-strikes in the fight for Women's Suffrage.

Details of the talk are on the 'Meetings' page of the Branch website [HERE](#) .

Booking for an online talk is essential and can be by emailing us (newsletter or website email addresses) or on Eventbrite [HERE](#) (where you can also find more details of the talk).

**The talk will be free to members and non-members alike.  
Wherever you live, Welcome!**

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All the MLFHS Branches are intending to start giving on-line talks to replace the monthly meetings. Please visit the Branch Websites for information and any updates :

Oldham & District [HERE](#)

Anglo-Scottish [HERE](#)

Bolton [HERE](#)

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**The MLFHS Family History Help Desk ...**

**Is now open again, for a limited number of hours each week.**

**As situations change almost by the hour, there is no certainty of anything!**

**For updated information, please check the website [HERE](#)**

**However, there is still a Virtual Help Desk [HERE](#)**

The MLFHS, Manchester Ancestors website is registered with 'Amazon Smile', by which, if you make an eligible purchase on Amazon, you can click on a link for a donation to be made, by Amazon, to a charity of choice, ie., MLFHS, Manchester Ancestors.

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Beginners & Quarterly Talks ... CANCELLED until further notice.

Please visit the website to find any updates on the situation [HERE](#).

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**MLFHS Online Bookshop: Is OPEN for business again [HERE](#).**

with CDs, Downloads, Maps, Registers, Local Interest Books, More General Publications, Miscellaneous Items with MLFHS Logo etc., and Offers.

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Promotions and Education Committee

At the Executive Committee meeting in November 2019 the Committee, in light of a working party assessment, approved the formation of the Promotions and Education Committee.

The prompt for this was the situation in which the Executive Committee found itself following the retirement of the Family History Fairs co-ordinator who for many years had organised, promoted and attended to the Societies involvement in Family History Fairs throughout the country. No replacement was forthcoming. This, together with the Executive Committee's desire that the Society be promoted more broadly resulted in the formation of the Promotions and Education Committee.

The remit for the Promotions and Education Committee is threefold:

- To meet twice/three times a year or as often as appropriate.
- To provide guidance for any material that emanates from the Society by way of publicity and education including the Manchester Genealogist; all leaflets produced by the Society and all promotional material
- To be responsible for identifying, co-ordinating and developing the Societies involvement in fairs and other gatherings where the Societies aims would be met.

It is understood that the existence of this resource for the Society has not been sufficiently disseminated. We bring it to your attention in the hope that any member of the Society who has observations or suggestions as to how the Society might best be promoted would share these. You can get in touch with the committee via the Society office email address.

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**MLFHS & Branch e-Newsletters**

MLFHS and each of the MLFHS branches publishes a monthly e-newsletter which provides useful news items and articles etc. The e-newsletters are free and available to both members and non-members of MLFHS. Society members receive the MLFHS newsletter automatically; non-members can find them 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.

[MLFHS](#)

[Bolton](#)

[Oldham](#)

[Anglo-Scottish](#)

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Meetings and Talks at other Societies &/or Venues

Please note ... the relevant society/group websites or organisers are still being included, here, as they can be checked for further information or on-line resource material and activities.

All public activities are, of course, CANCELLED until further notice.

Oldham Historical Research Group: ...

Website [HERE](#)

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**Library Events & Gallery talks at Gallery Oldham**

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Saddleworth Historical Society & Saddleworth Civic Trust

At the Saddleworth Museum, High Street, Uppermill.

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**Family History Society of Cheshire : Tameside Group meeting.**

See their website [HERE](#)

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Tameside History Club :

Website and programme [HERE](#)

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**Tameside Local Studies and Archives - Regular Sessions and Events**

Website and programme [HERE](#)

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Moorside & District Historical Society

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**Regional Heritage Centre :**

Website [HERE](#)

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'A Mixed Bag'

As mentioned in the Editor's Remarks, this month the 'Mixed Bag' will feature the 'Brierly Map' which is such a fascinating glimpse into early Oldham and its townsfolk in 1815. In the June newsletter, 'Mixed Bag', we included the newspaper article from 1880 about it and the descriptive text which accompanied the map when it was displayed in the Local Studies some years ago.

June newsletter [HERE](#)

So fascinating is the map that local history enthusiast Gary Millward researched the folk who were identified on it and wrote up their stories, bringing these long-forgotten people to life again. Gary has very kindly agreed to our including his work in the newsletter. His stories run to many pages, so they will be serialised over the next 3 or 4 months, with a relevant portion of the map. The 'Map', hanging in Gallery Oldham, is an enlarged copy of the original and, when it's possible again, if you have the opportunity, then try and take the time to have a look at it. To help fill in the 'story' of the map, you can see an enlargement of it [HERE](#), in 4 parts, with a

transcription of Brierly's own notes from the back of the map. Each month, there will be a link to a .pdf download with the current quarter of the map together with the Butterworth map of Oldham, circa 1817, which helps to put Brierly's map into context.

Please note: Although extensively researched, few resources (other than Butterworth and Rowbottom) are identified so opinions expressed, have to be regarded as such, ie., opinions and not proven fact. This research, 'labour of love', was probably completed around the late 20th century, before family and local history material was so widely available on the internet. Many of the modern shops and businesses identified as 'now' have also disappeared from the streets of Oldham (as of 2020).

Links :

- * Full map and transcription from the back of it [HERE](#)
- * Section of the map (relevant to text below) & Butterworth's 1817 map of Oldham as .pdf [HERE](#)

Oldham Town Centre - through the 'Brierly Map'

By Gary Millward

Upon the wall in the Manchester Chambers Arcade there stands a circular black plaque. It informs us that the arcade was once a short length of Water Street, an ancient thoroughfare that was part of the main route to Manchester. It wound its crooked way down to King Street, which then possessed the peculiar title of Fog Lane. Water Street passed through Barn Street and ran by a group of old stone cottages that once stood in Jackson Pit.

If you were to walk this small stretch today, on reaching King Street, you will notice a public house by the name of Bucks. There once stood an old 18th century inn on the same site known as the 'Roebuck', which was in those days set back a little from a much narrower road. It was said to be a "respectable" inn during the tenure of *James Marland* 1810-1820. The accommodation was noted and it had a billiard room and a newsroom.

To the left of the 'Roebuck', but nearer to the road, stood the inn's outbuildings; they included a brew house, stables and a cowshed. At the back of these outbuildings was a bowling green that belonged to the inn and it extended to about where Union Street West runs today.

To the right of the inn was a foundry which, like its neighbour, was set back from the road. There was a small pool of water between the foundry and the road and the owner, a man named *John Evens*, would in the future make good use of this because, by 1832, he had a small three-horse power steam engine there. A legacy of *Evens'*, long gone and forgotten works, exists and that is the name of Foundry Street, which runs between the 'Bank Top' Tavern and St Patrick's church.

Crossing King Street and Union Street, in the direction of the Ashton Road roundabout, we arrive at the site of the old TSB Bank, which has recently been renovated as a solicitor's office, and it was here that Falcon House once stood. It was a very large house with walled gardens and trees and was described as an "elegant structure". This was once the house of *William Jones Esq.*, whose ancestors had kept the 'Roebuck' from 1744 until 1802. He owned land in Derker and was also the owner of a colliery. A much respected man in the community, he would become the town's very first mayor in 1849.

In 1815, not a solitary building had been erected, on what would become Union Street, although the new road had been roughly laid out for a number of years. Looking in the direction of the town centre, from Union Street, would have looked very different then from what it does today; kitchen gardens and orchards stretched almost all the way to High Street and they were very noted for their choice fruit and vegetables.

Moving on the left up George Street, which was known as Bardsley Brow back in 1815, will be noticed what was once the Independent Methodist Church.

In 1805, a group of disillusioned people left the congregation of St. Peter's Church and started to meet at the house of a man called *Joseph Matley*, under Methodist principles.



*The Independent Methodist Church,
on George Street, Oldham*

Over the next few years these meetings became very popular and they soon needed to build their own church. On 1st April 1815, the first foundation stone was laid. The congregation built the church with their own hands. The men and often the women would start work at four in the morning, making the most of the dawn light of that summer. They would put in a couple of hour's work before setting off to do their day jobs, working in collieries and at hat and cotton manufacturers, when the average working week, for mill workers then, was 74 hours.

The building opened a year later, and it is said to be the oldest Methodist Chapel of its

type still standing; testimony indeed to the remarkable men and women who built it all those years ago.

Returning toward the Manchester Chambers and the 'Three Crowns' public house, whose predecessor is identified on the Brierly Map as the 'Jolly Hatter'. It was a public house, until fairly recently, known as the 'One and Three' but, anciently, came under the sign of the 'Jolly Hatter' where *James Handforth* was the innkeeper. His tenure was between the years 1802-1839. He also owned the house next door, which was much larger than the tavern. Ignoring the modern extension, it will be noticed that the older part of the building has two sections; the smaller part, with the lower roof, was the original 'Jolly Hatter', whilst the taller and more substantial section was once the house of the innkeeper. The plaster and timber frontage covers up the original one of red brick. When house numbers came into being, later in the 19th century, the house would become No.1 Manchester Street and the tavern No.3. This is where the name "One and Three" originates.

In 1815 the site, where the Manchester Chambers now stands, would have looked very different. John Brierly tells us on his illustration that next door to *James Handforth* lived *Betty Bardsley* and next door to her was *Mr Hodson*, whose house was only one storey high. Brierly remembered how you had to descend two steps to reach his front door and how, when even a boy, he could touch the roof slates of *Mr Hodson's* house. "*Mr John Hodson* was the owner of a small cooks' shop and, during a morning in December 1831, it was broken into, through a small window that had been filled with bricks, which were torn out, and the villains plundered the front room of almost every article. 12lb of beef, pork, ham rolls, tea cakes, gingerbread, oranges and oatbread were amongst the dainty booty". Edwin Butterworth also recorded, "John Hodson, an elderly man, who keeps a small cooks' shop in Manchester Street, Oldham, was charged with stabbing Jonathon Mills, a young man, on New Year's Day. From the testimony introduced in this case, it appeared that the complainant, along with three of his companions, had entered the defendant's shop and provoked him so much, by their disorderly behaviour, that he took up a carving knife and in his passion, inflicted a serious wound, of three inches in length and an inch deep on the left cheek, of Mills's face. The complainant was seriously hurt for some time but at last recovered. The defendant, Hodson, was ordered to find bail for his appearance at the Salford sessions but, being unable to do so, was committed for trial.

Next-door was the Baptist Chapel, originally built as a place of worship for the Methodists. It was a small brick structure that "will contain a considerable number of people". It was later purchased by the Baptists and was opened as a meeting place for them on 6th September 1816. *Mr Stevens* opened the chapel in the morning and later that day *Mr Tricket*, of Bramley, near Leeds, baptized fourteen people in a reservoir at Hollinwood, "not having the facility to

perform it within the chapel". The chapel stood on the corner of Water Street and Manchester Street and was demolished in 1900.

Even in our lifetime, the Market Place has always been in an ever-changing environment. Older people may remember the southern aspect of Market Place, which was taken down in the first quarter of the 20th century, leaving only the Regent Hotel sticking out like a stump. Adjoining buildings to the rear, that fronted George Street, were also pulled down at the same time. In the 1950s and 60s, the centre of the Market place went from a traffic island to a pedestrian subway. Long standing pubs made way for stores. High Street shops found in every town centre replaced long standing independent family businesses. Demolition, rebuilding, pedestrianisation and now the building of the Spindles.

To imagine what the Market Place would have looked like in 1815, you must first picture that the annexed part of the Spindles, that stretches from the Co-Op Bank to 'Crazy George's', is not there. Instead, try to imagine a group of buildings parallel with the annex but set much further back in the vicinity of the bus lane that runs to the rear. This would have been the vicinity of the western side of Market Place. The northern and eastern sides are developed more or less on the original sites, although they would have encroached further inward due to the narrowness of the streets in those days. The buildings on the 'Three Crowns' side of Manchester Street once went much further into Market Place. If they were to be rebuilt on their original sites today they would extend right through the Spindles annex, coming out of the other side, about ten metres beyond the front doors of the Co-Op Bank. This would have been the extent of the southern aspect in 1815.

In 1788, the western side of the Market Place was a timber yard owned by *John Clegg*. The village was growing rapidly and was taking on pretensions of becoming a small market town. Butchers had started to set up stalls in the main street on Saturday evenings.

In 1789, the timber yard and village prison, known locally as "The Dungeon", were demolished. The prison stood on the side of the yard near to West Street. A street was formed on the site with four buildings being erected side by side. These were the first structures to be built on the western side of Market Place. The building on the Manchester Street corner, of this new development, abutted an older building on Manchester Street and this was the 'Crown and Cushion'. The first mention of this public house was in 1770, when *Edward Heap* was the landlord. It was taken over by *Mary Heap* his daughter in 1790, and it remained under her tenure until 1818. She had a brother keeping the 'Cock Inn', only fifty yards away in Cheapside, and another brother, *John Heap*, who was a Wesleyan minister. She had at least two sisters; one who also kept an inn at Cowhill and another who was married to *Joe Waterhouse*, the butcher. The 'Crown and Cushion' was a brick building of which you had to climb about five outside steps to reach the front door. The building was demolished in 1916 and would have stood facing about the middle of the Manchester Chambers.

In 1815, the four buildings on the western side of Market Place consisted of a draper's shop, a grocer, a hatter's and a public house.

William Campbell owned and lived at the draper's with his wife *Mary*. His shop was on the Manchester Street corner of the block with his front door looking down on to Market Place from the height of about seven stone steps. Just a couple of feet away from the bottom step stood a water pump and it was



*A section of the Market Place in the Brierly map.
Note the pump outside Campbell's shop.*

known locally as the *Campbell pump*. A gang of young lads would run errands with cans of

water and they were known in the neighbourhood as the “*Campbell pump set*”. Brierly was one of these boys and a sketch of the pump can be seen on the Brierly map just outside *William Campbell’s* shop.



The Western side of Market Place

The water from this pump was almost certainly not fit for drinking. It may have been used for washing or swilling down; it may even have quenched the thirst of horses. We can be confident of this because, in other writings, Brierly recollects. “We had to fetch all drinking water from Nook or Moo Meadow well, or Swineclough”. (*Nook was a spring with a well near the Sun Inn on Henshaw Street; Swineclough was in the vicinity of Alexandra Park, and Moo Meadow well was in a*

field around where the Marjory Lees health centre now stands.) “I have fetched hundreds if not thousands of cans full, on my head and, in slippery weather, down it would come over your fustian; then you would be covered in icicles”.

It should be noted that in times of severe frost, pumps and wells would become iced up, rendering them useless. Water would then have to be obtained from the local collieries. The canny owner would sell the water for “halfpenny a burn”. (*A burn was a large can carried on the head, it usually had two handles*). The expert carrier apart from carrying one on his head would also carry one in his hand. This was known as a 'bant can'.

Still on the western side of Market Place, next door to the draper was *Betty Garside*, the grocer. She also continued to run her late husband *John’s* brokering business after his death in 1813, aged 43. They had lost several children in infancy and her surviving son *Eli* fell of a ladder whilst painting and died as a result of his injuries. He was twenty years old. The inscription on his gravestone read :

*“When from the ladder top our Eli fell.
He cried aloud O God be merciful.
Who e’er thou art that stops to read this stone,
Pause for a while and think how soon life’s gone.
He that lies here was once in health like thee,
and in an instant in Eternity.
The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away.
Blessed be the name of the Lord”.*

Betty died in 1840 at 66 years of age.

John Brierly, the father of John Philips Brierly, lived next door to *Betty Garside*. His hatter’s shop was the largest in the block and it needed to be. *John* and his wife *Hannah* would eventually have twelve children, seven sons and five daughters. The shop had three or four steps leading up to the front door with a large window on each side of the steps. It had a drainpipe running down the middle of the front of the shop, just inches away from the door.

In 1833 it was recorded. “The warehouse at Lower Bent, occupied by Mr John Brierly, hat manufacturer, was entered into during Sunday night 14th April, through a cellar door at the back, which was broke open by a crowbar and the fastening chains destroyed by means of which, property to the value of £40 or £50 was stolen. The articles missing consist of silk tips,

black velvet, drab and brown cloth, silk plush, bands, buckles and galoons tape, with a large quantity of hat bodies of various sizes. A reward of ten guineas is offered for the apprehension of the thieves”.

All the properties in the block were three storeys high. They all had cellars with basement-light windows, set in at pavement level, gradually getting larger as you descended down the slope to the drapers.

At about the age of ten Brierly became an apprentice in his father's shop. He melted the glue, which was used to stiffen the hats.

William Cobbett, the English radical reformer and one of Oldham's two first Members of Parliament, in 1832, spoke to a crowd from the hatter's bedroom window during the electioneering in the run up to the town's first elections.

Brierly, in his writings, remembered that first polling day on the 13th December 1832, “I was a voter in the first election and I had breakfast at the 'Lamb Inn'. Ham, beef and mutton with brandy in the coffee for voters, free! A long table set out upstairs. We were taken up to vote at the Grammar school in tallies of ten”.

Henry Hunt, who was a central figure at the Peterloo Massacre, also addressed a crowd of several thousands just prior to the Reform Act of 1832, from his [Brierly's] father's bedroom window.

The final building in this block in, Market Place, was the 'Prince William of Gloucester'. It stood on the corner of Market Place and West Street and was being kept by *Mally Skelhorn*, who had taken over after her husband *John's* death in 1807. She stayed there until she died in 1837, aged 67. *William Skelhorn*, the son of *John* and *Mally*, was a member of the local militia and a master drummer. He was a tailor by trade, serving his apprenticeship at *William Campbell's* draper's shop. In 1825, he was initiated into the Masons and was one of the town's first aldermen at the time of incorporation in 1849.

In 1890, the brewery that owned the tavern ('Prince William of Gloucester') decided to demolish it and rebuild larger premises. This involved knocking down two adjacent shops, which had once belonged to *John Brierly's* father (*by the time of demolition the house that had been the hatter's had been made into two separate shops*). They also pulled down twelve hovels that had sprung up during the town's massive rise in population earlier in the century. These were situated to the rear of the block, in the land that is now bus lanes and gardens, which lies between the Law Courts and the Spindles annex.

James Butterworth, the Oldham historian and first postmaster of the town, wrote in 1817, “The Market Place is a very spacious one and might be rendered very handsome indeed by the erection of a few new buildings, which if properly planned would render the form of the present area very similar to a square”. He went on to say, “The main street through the town is generally clean, but some of the back streets and lanes are extremely loathsome and unpleasant. I particularly wish to remark this of West Street, that if it was thoroughly paved and not covered with so much loathsome filth, it would not only be as pleasant but as handsome a street as there is in most country towns.”

As I have mentioned previously, there was once a prison known locally as “The Dungeon”. It stood at the top of West Street, probably on the site on which the original 'Prince William of Gloucester' was built. But this was not the district's first prison. A dungeon that once stood on High Street preceded it. That thoroughfare was much narrower then and was known as Coal Pit Lane. The building was at the head of a close called Ward Croft. It was situated near where the McDonald's restaurant is now, but would have stood about ten metres further forward than the restaurant frontage.

There is no record as to when this earlier dungeon was erected but in 1710 three

shillings and sixpence was spent on a new lock. It was described as a “small gloomy looking edifice”, and was entered by crossing a small footbridge over a stream. It was a “lock-up” with wooden stocks in which unruly prisoners would be placed. There was a seat for the constable in charge and, as an added precaution, the interior was exposed to the view of the passers-by. The dungeon probably closed about 1715, due to the building of the original 'Angel Inn', which later occupied this site.

A further prison followed the one on West Street and that stood on Lord Street, approximately facing the swimming baths. It opened on July 22nd 1789 when it was written, “*James Woolstencroft* was put in the new dungeon at Oldham for bastardry. Being the first inhabitant of this dreary mansion received the charities of a gazing multitude”.

In 1815, there was a barn near to the bottom of Grosvenor Street, a thoroughfare that once ran parallel with West Street, approximately between where the Civic Centre tower and the Queen Elizabeth Hall stand today. The barn belonged to the owners of Hopwood Hall that once stood on the site of the Civic Centre. *Old Rowley* and *Joseph Chadwick*, who were wheelwrights, worked in the barn. Brierly recalled how the sons of *Chadwick*, *John* and *Benjamin*, were good friends and good runners, much faster than he was.

There were two large stone pillars, which supported the entrance gates to Hopwood Hall. Brierly indicates on his illustration that they stood on the Civic Centre side of West Street. The pathway from the gates led to the mansion of the Hopwood's. *John Boardman Esq.*, owned and lived at Hopwood Hall, at that time, after acquiring the property through marriage, marrying one of the two daughters of *James Hopwood*, who had died in 1792. It was *Boardman* who later pulled the properties down.

All contemporary maps made around the time Brierly suggests, show the gates leading to Hopwood Hall were on Cheapside. But Brierly clearly illustrates that there was another set of gates on West Street. They can only have belonged to Hopwood Hall. Opposite the Hall gates on West Street, stood seven buildings. They lay between 'The Prince William of Gloucester' and the 'Stag's Head', an inn being kept by *Robert Winterbottom*, in 1815. In one of the seven lived *James Jackson*, who was a tailor and clerk of St Peter's Church. *William Bentley's* butcher shop was another and *Thomas Heywood*, who lived facing the hall gates, had his painting, plumbing and glazing business there.

On the other side of the street, at the corner of West Street and Cheapside, stood *Worthington and Sons*, linen and woollen draper's shop. One of the sons, Nathan, died in an accident in September 1814, aged about twenty. The *Worthington's* had been carriers in York two centuries before and in 1835 the family entered the cotton industry.

Next-door was the house of *D. Lees* who was a ruffer. A trade allied to the hatting industry. It then became *William Gilliam's* tailor shop and that stood next door to *Daniel Mills's* bakery on Cheapside.

Old *Dan Mills*, who was “remarkable for his scrupulous regard to truth”, and his wife, were the oldest living couple in Oldham for many years, being married for sixty of them. Brierly said of Mrs Mills, “never was there a harder working woman”. The yeast *Dan Mills* needed for his bread was brought from Manchester by “*Berm Billy*”. He went to Manchester three times a week, from where he would bring a canful back on his head. He also brought back second-hand newspapers, which he sold for 4d, a considerable mark up as he obtained them for nothing. Most of the flour was purchased from *John Taylor's* flour-mill at Primrose Bank. Brierly used to fetch flour from the mill. It then cost 4d a peck but was of poor quality. “It was very unsound and bad; not all the yeast that *Berm Billy* could bring nor all the cossing of the mug of dough at old *Dan Mills's* could get it to rise”.

Old *Dan* was a bell ringer at the ancient parish church, as was his son, *James*, who was born at

the bakery in 1797. In old age *Dan Mills* recollected that there had been a family by the name of *Mayall* who had been wool carders and woollen cloth manufacturers around the year 1776. It is believed that this was the last vestige of the woollen trade in the town. Yorkshire had by then become the new centre for this kind of industry. *Dan Mills* died in November 1851 at the ripe old age of 91; his wife had died in 1842 aged 78. *James*, their son, died in 1883 aged 86.

On the other side of Cheapside, facing the bakery, stood the 'Cock Inn'. Late in the 18th Century it had been known as the 'Horse and Groom'. *James Heap* took over the inn and changed the name to the 'Cock Inn' in 1806. His sister was mentioned previously, she was keeping the 'Crown and Cushion' on Manchester Street at the same time. Older people may remember 'The Crown', a pub built on the same site, many years later, that in turn was demolished to make way for the C&A store in 1961.

Next door to the inn and coming back towards the direction of Market Place was a china and earthenware shop belonging to *John Higgins*.

Brierly shows on his map that, in 1815, four buildings occupied the north side of Market Place. *John Bamford* had his grocer's shop on the corner of Cheapside, with the rear of his shop abutting the earthenware dealer's shop around the corner. In June 1820, *Major*, the son of *John Bamford*, and *Thomas*, the son of *William Gilliam* the draper on Cheapside, died in a tragic accident whilst bathing in a reservoir at Hollinwood. They were both aged seventeen. Market Place was the scene of much grief on the day of the funeral.

Next door to the grocer lived *William Lambert* who was a painter and signwriter. George Scholes had built, both this house and Bamford's, on a piece of land known as Smithy Fold. *Scholes* was the father of *Joseph Scholes*, known throughout the district as *Big Dody*, the Oldham giant.

An alleyway separated the properties built on Smithy Fold from the next two. The alleyway had a gate at its head on Market Place and it probably led to stables.

On the other side of the alley was the low stone-built house of *William and Mary Connell*. He was a tailor and both he and his wife were about 38 years of age at the time the map represents.

Next door to the tailor, on the Henshaw Street corner of Market Place, stood the 'Old Cheshire Cheese', an ancient inn, whose gable end faced on to Market Place, where it had five or six steps leading up to the front door. *John Horrocks* kept the inn at this time.

Within nine years, all the buildings identified by Brierly, on the north side of Market Place, had



*The north side of the Market Place
as it may have appeared in 1815*

been demolished and replaced. *Bamford's* and *Lambert's* were taken down around 1824, with three new buildings being erected on the site, which also absorbed the alleyway with the gate. The middle building, of the three new structures, became the town's main Post Office around 1825, where *William Bamford* was the postmaster.

The 'Old Cheshire Cheese', was also pulled down and rebuilt in 1824. It would adjoin the other three shops, with a portion of the new inn being let off as a fourth shop.

Turning the corner into Henshaw Street, the broader side of the ancient inn would have been seen. The front door, on the gable end of the building, was not the original one. Market Place did not exist when the inn had been constructed originally; the Inn was built to front Henshaw Street, then the main route to Rochdale. Abutting the 'Cheshire Cheese', on Henshaw Street,

was *Abraham Jackson's* shop. He was a grocer and flour dealer, but the information on the Brierly map, regarding this site, has now deteriorated; indeed, it must have done so by 1929. One of the architects who copied the map put the words "green car" the other omits it altogether. Could *Abraham Jackson* have dealt in fruit and vegetables, and Brierly's original inscription been 'greengrocer'? With Brierly emphasising the gable end of the 'Old Cheshire Cheese', with its apex roof, he has illustrated *Jackson's property* as being detached. It actually abutted the inn. *Jackson's* son *Ralph* was using an upper room as a small schoolroom at this time.

The 'Crown and Anchor' is the next illustrated building on the left-hand side of Henshaw Street. But again, the information regarding this site has perished over the years. The building did not exist until 1820; therefore it is not contemporary with the time the map represents. I will return to the reasoning, behind the illustration of this inn, later, when we look at the 'Hop Pole' an inn directly opposite the 'Crown and Anchor' on the other side of Henshaw Street.

The 'Crown and Anchor' site would have stood in the vicinity of the rear of the 'What Every One Wants' store. But in 1815 it was just a piece of spare ground known as "Garden Pit". This extended to the back of the buildings occupied by *John Higgins* and the 'Cock Inn' on Cheapside.

There was once a very old row of stone houses on the site of Greenwood's, the gent's outfitters. The two houses nearest to Garden Pit were thatched. Adjoining these two houses, but jutting out about two metres forward toward a much narrower street, stood the rest of the row. In this block was the business of *Bullock and Cupid*, who had a greengrocer's shop, and *Little Kay* the confectioner was also in this place. The house in the row nearest to the thatched houses had, a year earlier, in 1814, belonged to "*Big Dody*" the Oldham giant.

There was once was a "large grim structure" at "Top O'th Edge" and it was the location of the parish workhouse. The walls of this edifice were painted white to lessen the austerity. *Joseph Scholes*, more famously known as "*Big Dody*", was the governor there. Men, women and children would be received if they were paupers. Children, the sick and old people were given food and shelter but able-bodied people had to work to earn their keep. As the children got older they were apprenticed off, lessening the burden on the parish. Many of these wretches were forced into a life even more miserable.

Brierly wrote "A man at Heyside, who kept many apprentices at handloom weaving, was had up for ill usage to them. He had a piece of bacon tied to a string, which they sucked in turns, to get their potatoes down".

This practice, of apprenticing workhouse children, had been going on for decades. An advertisement placed in the Manchester Mercury, on Dec 2nd 1760, read, "Eloped from his master. *Thomas Nield* aged 15, born at Oldham, last lived with *Robert Wrigley*, cotton weaver at Northmoor near Oldham. Send information to the parish clerk at the 'Bulls Head', Oldham.

The workhouse closed and moved to a site near Mount Pleasant, off Lees Road. The old workhouse, at "Top O'th Edge", eventually became a public house, and because of its white walls became known as the White House.

After retiring as governor of the workhouse, *Big Dody*, who was a hatter by trade, set up a stall at the top of George Street in Market Place, selling earthenware. He was a great uncle of Brierly and he used to call in at Brierly's father's shop everyday.

He was a huge man, said to be the strongest man in Lancashire, and stood well over six feet tall. He died at home in February 1814. The day of his funeral would long be remembered in the town. They had to take down the frames of his front door to allow the coffin to pass through it. The 'Manchester Weekly' reported on Feb 19th 1814, "On Monday morning in the 57th year of his age, after a short sickness, Mr *Joseph Scholes*, hatter died ..." it continued, "He was a man of gigantic stature and exceeded the weight of 37 stones. His coffin measured 2 yards 6 inches,

and nearly 3 yards in girth. The body, coffin and bier weighed three-pack weight. In point of size, strength and action with exact symmetry in all his parts, he stood unrivalled. His remains were supported by twelve men changing alternately ... " it carried on, "Thousands of the inhabitants assembled to witness the procession, saying they should never see his like again". The cortege went through Market Place, then down High Street and up Church Lane, passing The *Rev Fawcett's* house; the Reverend would later commit him to his final resting-place. His ponderous coffin was taken into the old Parish Church and taken down to the vault of the *Scholes* family. The truly mammoth casket of *Big Dody* can still be seen today, on church open days, in the crypt of the Parish Church.

The old row of stone houses where *Big Dody* lived was situated where the block of shops, with the ornamental figures over the doorways [they represent various tradesmen], now stands, between Greenwoods and the 'Snipe' public house.

Courtesy of and ©, Gary Millward

To be continued next month.

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### **A seasonal tale taken from '*Short Stories of Failsworth Folk*', by Sim Schofield, Pub.1905**

Sim Schofield is of interest for several reasons, as well as being a storyteller and poet. He was the son of a Peterloo veteran and himself a radical and activist all his life. It was Sim who organised the anniversary commemoration, in 1884, which resulted in the photograph of the Veterans which became iconic in the 2019 Peterloo anniversary events. You can see it again, along with the newspaper report about the 1884 anniversary [HERE](#)

Sim was married to Samuel Laycock's daughter, the subject of his well know dialect poem, '*Bonnie Brid*'. In their retirement they went to live in Thornton, near Cleveleys, opposite the gates of the church. It is said that one day, when there was a funeral, a bystander remarked to her that she wouldn't like to live so close and see all the funerals, and Bonnie Brid' replied, "Well, I see all t'weddings, too."

### **A CHRISTMAS STORY :**

#### **LOVE AND INDEPENDENCE IN POVERTY.**

And now let me relate a really touching story which came under my own observ, and it's said that one dayation. 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 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 accept o' that. As theaw'r't a registration agent, theaw con tell me 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-morrow'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 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.

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

This email came in, which may be of interest to quite a few of you, or to which you might direct family and friends who might have an interest ...

Subject: Family History research project - invitation to participate

Good morning/afternoon,

Our research team at the University of Newcastle in Australia (Drs Shaw, Donnelly, Burke and Parkes from the School of Education) are conducting research into family history and DNA testing and its impacts on people's understanding of themselves and their place in history as well as some general demographic information. To this end, we are conducting an online survey which is expected to take about 20 minutes. This study is an Australian first and provides your group members with an exciting opportunity to be involved in a new worldwide project about exploring the past. We are hoping that you would be able to share the attached invitation, either by email or social media, with your group's members and direct them to the link provided:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2DDTC2L>

Thank you for considering this invitation,

Dr Emma Shaw (for the research team)

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**And now a reminder from Mary Pendlebury**, of the trips to London which she organised for so many years, when, as she writes, "... I always gave them a file of interesting or amusing stuff..."

I have to admit that, as someone with a strong Lancashire accent myself, I struggled with a lot of the following!

Answers next month.

## A Cockney Alphabet



~~~~~  
Many thanks to our reader, Rodney Hampson, who sent us these excerpts from Rowbottom's diary, with more of their story.

Joseph Starkey

William Rowbottom's Diary
Handloom Weaver of Burnley Lane
1787 – 1830

Comments in italics are from Samuel Andrew who published edited parts of the diary in the Oldham Evening Chronicle. He didn't get everything right but his comments were, nevertheless,

a great help in finding the records to present the story.

1799 February 14th – Joseph Starkey, Esquire, of Royton, High Sheriff for the county of Lancaster this year.

Joseph Starky, marrying Miss Pickford, lived at Royton Hall in 1799. I do not know the year Joseph Pickford left Royton.

Joseph Starky, of Royton, Esq., captain 16th Regiment, High Sheriff 1799, married Mary, daughter of Joseph Pickford, Esq. (afterwards Sir Joseph Radcliffe, Bart.), who married for her second husband, 1805, John David Macbride, L.L.D. Mr. Starky died without issue.

1799 March 25th – Joseph Starkey, Esquire, high sheriff, set out from his house in Royton fenceable cavallery and a band of musick, with a deal of his neighbours, on his rout for Lancaster. It should be observed that in the late severe weather the gentlemen of Oldham gave to the poor large quantitys of coals and peas soup, wich was a seasonable relief at that time.

1799 August 2nd – Joseph Starkey, our worthy sheriff, with his neighbours, set out from Royton Hall to attend the assizes at Lancaster, wich commence to-morrow. The Oldham Association Cavallarey atended early in the morning.

Who is Joseph Starkey? the spelling of the name varies to Starky and Starkie. There was a great landowning family of that name in Lancashire but I found no evidence that he was amongst the main line of that family. He appears briefly, marries well and dies young with only official records of his being. The newspapers largely ignore his doings.

The church register gives us the briefest details of his entry into the world.

Baptism: 20 Oct 1765 St Mary the Virgin, Blackburn, Lancashire, England

Joseph Starkie - Son of William Starkie & Ellen

Abode: Blackburn

He married Mary the daughter of Joseph Pickford of Royton Hall, Joseph Pickford later changed his name to Radcliffe when he inherited his uncle's estate and became Sir Joseph Radcliffe bart., and moved to the larger home at Milnsbridge near Huddersfield. They also had estates at Clifton near Bristol. The story of the Percival, Pickford and Radcliffe families belongs to another day.

Joseph Pickford had married Elizabeth, daughter and sole heiress of Richard Sunderland of High Sunderland, Yorkshire on 16 November 1765.

Mary Pickford was born at Royton Hall and baptised at the Parish Church of St Paul in the village. Several of Joseph Pickford's children were baptised at home on the day of their birth and again "publicly" in the church; hence the two entries in the register.

Baptism: 9 Aug 1771 St Paul, Royton, Lancs.

Mary Pickford - Daughter of Joseph Pickford, Esq. & Elizabeth, his wife

Abode: Royton

Baptism: 15 Sep 1771 St Paul, Royton, Lancs.

Mary Pickford - Dau'r of Joseph Pickford, Esq. & Elizabeth, his wife

Abode: Royton

Notes: [Tight binding, cannot read month and some dates]

(NB: most likely a private baptism followed later than usual with a public one.)

Joseph Starkey b.c. 1765 married Mary Pickford dau of Joseph Pickford and Elizabeth Sunderland

October 23rd 1796 at Clifton St Andrews, Bristol, Gloucs.

Church Register says:- Joseph Starky of the parish of Bury, County Palatine of Lancashire Esq.

married Mary Pickford of the Parish of Clifton in this church by license. 23rd day of October 1796 by me James Taylor minister. Witnessed by Elizth Denison and Mrs Brannocroft.

The couple lived at Royton Hall and Joseph Starkey was appointed High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1799.

Manchester Mercury; Tuesday 12th February 1799; Joseph Starkey esq., of Royton, is appointed High Sheriff of this County.

Our diarist tells us that Joseph twice set off from Royton to attend the assizes at Lancaster but the newspapers don't report on any of the cases he presides over. We must assume that Joseph and Mary lived at Royton Hall but I found no record of the fact and just how happily they lived remains another mystery. They didn't have any children and when Joseph died in 1803 the record is rather stark:-

Death Duty register entry reads: Joseph Starky; residence his Majesty's 16th regiment light dragoons; death about 1803; record date 18th August 1803; recorded at Chester, Cheshire, England; occupation Esquire and Captain.

The entry in the parish church register at Royton reads:-
July 12th Joseph Starky Royton Hall, 38.

His Last Will and Testament written on 23rd May 1794 doesn't mention his wife at all. He requests that his sisters act as Executrixes - "thereto I do hereby give devise and bequeath unto my two sisters Mary the wife of William Laughton Mordaunt, Ann the wife of the reverend Hugh Hornby clerk. All and singular my Messauges, farms, and lands occupied (x a whole line unreadable x) and real estate whatsoever and wheresoever and of what nature or kind whereof I am now seiged or possessed situate lying and holding in the several parishes of Rochdale, and Prestwich cum Oldham, in the county of Lancaster or elsewhere in the kingdom of Great Britain, "

He also asks his sisters to pay his "sorrowful" mother the sum of two hundred pounds a year to be paid quarterly.

The will was witnessed by: Rich: Nuttall, Thomas Barlowe, and John Elliott.

Proved at Chester on 18th August 1803; and again at Canterbury on 6th September the same year.

As for Royton Hall, that limped along until 1939 when it was demolished. But in 1803 we read:-

Manchester Mercury, Tuesday 19th July 1803; Sale of Capital Effects: to be sold by auction by Mr John Pilling of Rochdale. On the premises at Royton Hall, on Thursday the 28th day of July 1803 at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, and to continue till all be sold. All the elegant modern household goods and household furniture, beds and bedding, pier and other glass, brewing vessels, a carriage and harness nearly new, 4 cows and a calf, a large quantity of vry good old and new hay, and some corn growing with many other valuable effects late the property of Joseph Starky Esq., deceased. Catalogues will be ready to deliver on the morning of the sale.

So they didn't mess about dealing with that lot.

Neither did Mary spend long in her widows weeds for in 1805 we read:-

York Herald; Saturday 3rd August 1805; marriage; a few days ago at Exeter, John Macbride, Esq., son of the late Admiral Macbride, to Mrs J Starky, widow of the late Joseph Starky, Esq., of Royton and second daughter of Joseph Radcliffe, Esq., of Milnsbridge, near Huddersfield.

Devon Marriage bonds and allegations for the year 1805.

5th July 1805

Marriage of John David McBride Esquire of Exeter College Oxford and Mary Starky of Saint David in Exeter, widow

In 1851 the family are found living in the University at Oxford.

Surname	Forename	Rel	Stat	Age	Occupation	Where Born
1851 census for	Principals Lodgings, Magdalen Collage, Oxford University: 107/1728/40/72					
MacBride	John D	head	mar	72	principal Magd, Hall	Plympton Devon
MacBride	Mary	wife	mar	79		Royton Lan
MacBride	Frances	dau	um	44	none	Colchester Essex
Bradley	Alice	srvt	um	71	servant	Farnley, Yorks
Hawkins	Sarah	srvt	wid	56	servant	
Oliver	Maria	srvt	um	36	servant	Farnley, Yorks
Oliver	Ann	srvt	um	20	servant	Lindley, Yorks
Dubbins	Joseph	srvt	um	33	servant	Wooton, Berks

John David Macbride was the son of John Macbride a naval officer and Politian. He was born in June 1778 becoming a fellow of Magdalen College Oxford where he studied Law and became Lord Almoner's reader in Arabic. He died at Oxford in 1868, Mary had died in 1862 and they are both buried in Holywell Cemetery in Oxford.

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### ***Chadderton Fold***

I'm so easily sidetracked, from any job in-hand, when I find something that catches my interest! The email I received recently (through the Oldham HRG website), from **Colin Ratcliffe about his family who had lived at Chadderton Fold**, was a case in point!



Colin included some family photos and postcards from the turn of the 19th/20th century. I don't know Chadderton Fold but my husband did and he recognised one of the photos as being of Bishop Lake's house. Realising my interest, from my email responses, Colin has, very kindly, sent many more pictures of old postcards of the district which I shall include over the months in the newsletters and also in a website Gallery (to which I will include a link when it is online) Colin believes that the house in his photograph (Bishop Lakes's) is the same house as that in which his father, was born in late 1901. Colin's grandparents were Richard Ratcliffe and Clara



Elizabeth Ledger who had married in early 1901.

His photographs are in the Gallery in the final pages of the newsletter.

The map is from the 1934 street map of Lancashire, on the MLFHS website. If you are a society member, you can login to see it, [HERE](#)

It is a superb resource ... the detail for such a wide area is remarkable.

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Emails to the Members' forum from John Marsden (webmaster), listing MLFHS updates to the Database in the Members' area of the website :

*** Scutari Hospital Deaths**

Anthony Steven has made a flying start on compiling a list of those soldiers (and the odd civilian) who died in the Scutari Hospital (think of Florence Nightingale) during the Crimean War 1854-56. His initial batch relates to 1,541 deaths 1854-5 and he is continuing to work on the balance. These are taken from reports published in a variety of newspapers. While these are not (by far) all going to be men from the Manchester area, there will undoubtedly be local men in some of the regiments. Details given include (mostly) rank, regiment, date of death and cause of death.

*** Manchester Probate Names Index**

Geoff Edge and his team have completed another 12,782 names which appear in the probates of Manchester testators 1821-1828. Work continues to complete coverage 1812-1837.

*** Manchester Courier BMDs**

Linda Bailey has added another 1,320 records of births, marriages and deaths published in the Manchester Courier, this batch relating to 1826. Both this and the probate names index provide valuable information for that troublesome period before the introduction of civil registration.

*** Withington Hospital Deaths**

Joe Hilditch has added another 85 deaths at Withington Hospital to the index which provides details 770 deaths between 1923 and 1938. These are valuable because (1) they often include place of burial and (2) the deaths were subject of inquests so may lead to newspaper reports giving more information.

*** Burials at All Saints, Chorlton-on-Medlock**

No additions this time, but the team have completed indexing of the first six of the eight registers covering 1820-1877. The 16,000+ burials will be added to the burials database as a single batch when the work has been completed.

*** Protestation Rolls for Salford Hundred** I have received from John Coupe copies of the 1642 protestation rolls for part of the Salford Hundred. Those for Bolton have been transcribed previously and are on the web site but the remainder includes returns for Oldham, Middleton and several other townships. I am looking at completing the work, and so will be looking for volunteers. HOWEVER this is not easy work! The names are written in Secretary Hand, a style of writing which can be challenging to decipher accurately. I would therefore be interested to hear from members who have some experience with this script and who would be prepared to take on some of the transcription of these lists. I do not have a start date for this - the photocopies need to be scanned first

*** Manchester Mercury** - to complete 1806 (365 records)
(1807-1808 - not available)
1809 (650 records)

Manchester Courier - 1827 (1254 records)

Thanks are due to Linda Bailey for this addition.

* a new item to the member documents (**General - Trades and Professions**). This is a listing of 500+ Manchester Public Houses, with addresses and the names of publicans, taken from Kelly's Manchester Directory for 1933. Thanks are due to Joe Hilditch for this list.

* a further 1,149 names to the Great Database. This is a further batch of soldiers' deaths reported at the **Scutari Hospital** and brings the index up to reports published up to February 1855, a total of 2,755. Thanks to Anthony Steven for this welcome addition. These deaths are not specific to men from the Manchester area but those identified as serving in the 20th Regiment (Lancashire Fusiliers) and 47th Regiment (Royal Lancashire Regiment) are particularly likely to be local to the county. However, it is quite possible that local men may have served with any regiment.

* Another substantial addition to the Great Database. This time it is 16,559 burials in the churchyard of **All Saints, Chorlton-on-Medlock**.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who contributed to this substantial piece of work.

If you are a member of the MLFHS, you can sign up to the Members' email forum [HERE](#)

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**A short selection of entries from the MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE [HERE](#) ...  
since the last newsletter :**

\* Time for smile : 19 Jokes All Genealogists Will Appreciate  
[HERE](#)

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* Knights, and a rebellious duchess: the effigies of All Hallows
At the heart of Lancashire's Ribble Valley, standing close to the banks of the River Ribble and overlooking Pendle Hill, is the church of All Hallows, Great Mitton.
[HERE](#)

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\* Manchester Jewish Museum, a former synagogue on Cheetham Hill Road, is preparing for a reopening in Spring 2021 following renovations made this year.  
[HERE](#)

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* Search Manchester Burials online
[HERE](#)

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\* Could you have Huguenot ancestry?  
[HERE](#)

~~~~~

* Unlocking our Sound Heritage
[HERE](#)

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\* Our Town Hall Project - the transformation  
[HERE](#)

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* Diseases and epidemics of the 19th century included long-standing epidemic threats such as smallpox, typhus and yellow fever. In addition, cholera emerged as an epidemic threat and spread worldwide in six pandemics in the nineteenth century.
[HERE](#)

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\* Manchester After Engels

[HERE](#)  
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* Ghost town: Is Manchester haunted (and can science explain it)?

[HERE](#)
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\* An Absolute Beginners' Architectural Guide to Oldham Cotton Mills

[HERE](#)  
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* "Mapping Magic for the Family Historian"

Walking in their Footsteps: Maps and the Family Historian

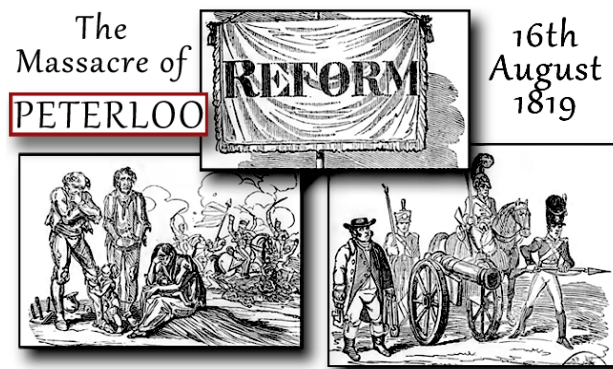
[HERE](#)
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\* For much more, visit the MLFHS Facebook Page : [HERE](#)

And [HERE](#) is the link to the MLFHS Twitter page.  
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PETERLOO : the Bi-Centenary

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



at [Peterloo-Manchester](#)
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Although the long-anticipated Bi-Centenary has come and gone, there are some Peterloo websites still active with history, news, photos and reports.

You can make searches on websites such as :

**Manchester Histories - Peterloo 1819** ... Manchester Histories have created a website which publicises all that is happening, or has happened, around the region.

Visit their website [HERE](#)

**Peterloo Memorial Campaign Group** ... to find out more about the memorial etc. organised by the Memorial Campaign Group, visit their website. [HERE](#)  
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Need Help!

Coronavirus Pandemic

Oldham Local Studies and Archives is now open again for limited access and with restrictions. However these are subject to change at short notice. Check the website [HERE](#) for up to date details and information.

Local Studies and Archives at 84 Union Street, Oldham, [OL1 1DN](#),

In normal times there are regular Family History Advice Sessions every Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 2-4pm.

There's no need to book. Just turn up with all the information you have and the resident family history experts will be on hand to help.

Archives are unique, original documents created in the course of everyday activities. Oldham's date from 1597 and cover an enormous range of subjects and activities :

- Hospital records
- Poor Law Union records
- Coroners Court records
- Local Authority records including Chadderton, Crompton, Failsworth, Lees, Oldham, Royton and Saddleworth
- Schools and education records
- Records for statutory bodies like the police force
- Church and religious records
- Business records
- Solicitors and estate agents records
- Trade unions and associations records
- Co-operative Society records
- Sports, entertainment and leisure records
- Personal, family and property records
- Society and Association records
- Records of Oldham communities

There is no charge to look at archival records although you would need to bring proof of your name and address (e.g. your driving licence) to do so.

Most archives can be produced immediately, with no advance booking required. However, some archives are stored off-site, in which case at least 2 days' notice is required in order to see them.

Other archives may be closed due to their fragile condition, or because they contain confidential information.

There are regularly changing displays in the Local Studies Library.

[Opening hours](#) and contact details.

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## **Website Links**

### **Other Society Websites**

Catholic Family History Society – [www.catholicfhs.co.uk](http://www.catholicfhs.co.uk)

Cheshire Local History Association – [www.cheshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.cheshirehistory.org.uk)

Chadderton Historical Society (archived website) – [www.chadderton-historical-society.org.uk](http://www.chadderton-historical-society.org.uk)

Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society - <https://www.lfhhs.org.uk/home.php>

Lancashire Local History Federation – [www.lancashirehistory.org](http://www.lancashirehistory.org)

Liverpool and South West Lancashire FHS – [www.lswlfhs.org.uk](http://www.lswlfhs.org.uk)

Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society – [www.mrias.co.uk](http://www.mrias.co.uk)

Oldham Historical Research Group – [www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg](http://www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg)



Peterloo - [Peterloo-Manchester](#)

Ranulf Higden Society (Latin transcription) - [Ranulf Higden Soc.](#)

Royton Local History Society – [www.rlhs.co.uk](http://www.rlhs.co.uk)

Saddleworth Historical Society – [www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk](http://www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk)

Tameside Local History Forum - [www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk](http://www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk)

Tameside Local & Family History - <http://tamesidefamilyhistory.co.uk/contents.htm>

The Victorian Society - [Manchester Regional Website](#)

### Some Useful Sites

GENUKI - [Lancashire](#)

Free BMD - [Search](#)

[National Library of Scotland](#) - Free to view, historic, zoomable maps of UK :

1891 - Oldham and locality [HERE](#)

Online Parish Clerk Project : Lancashire - [HERE](#)

British Association for Local History - [HERE](#)

and for their back issue journal downloads - [HERE](#)

Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, website, [HERE](#)

and for their back issue journal downloads, website, [HERE](#)

Internet Archive ... The Internet Archive offers over **24,000,000** freely downloadable books and texts. [HERE](#) There is also a collection of 1.3 million modern eBooks that may be borrowed by anyone with a free archive.org account.

Made in Greater Manchester (MIGM) [HERE](#) and Research guide [HERE](#)

### Some Local Archives

Barnsley Museum & Discovery Centre – [www.experience-barnsley.com](http://www.experience-barnsley.com)

Birkenhead – [Local & Family History](#)

Bury – [www.bury.gov.uk/archives](http://www.bury.gov.uk/archives)

Chester - [Cheshire Archives & Local Studies](#) (linked from Discovery at the National Archives)

Derbyshire - [Local & Family History](#)

Leeds - [Leeds Local and Family History](#)

Liverpool Archives and Family History – <https://liverpool.gov.uk/archives>

Manchester - [Archives & Local History](#)

Oldham - [Local Studies & Archives](#)

Oldham - [Oldham Council Heritage Collections](#)

Preston – [www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives)

Stockport – [www.stockport.gov.uk/heritage-library-archives](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/heritage-library-archives)

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

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

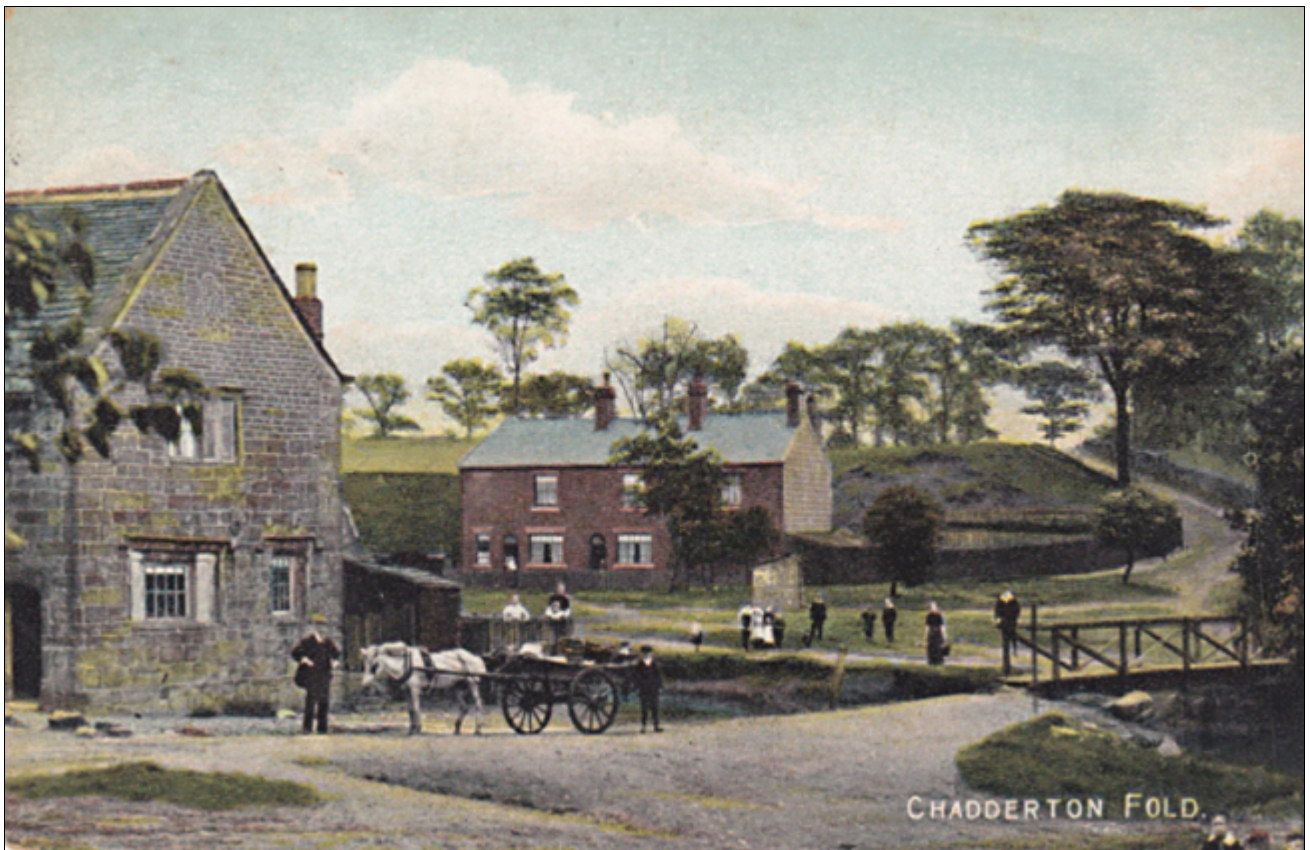
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For the Gallery

Chadderton Fold

***including part of Bishop Lake's house on the left, Kiln Lane leading up to
Chadderton Hall Road and the little bridge over the River Irk***



old postcard



The Ratcliffe Family at Chadderton Fold



**Richard Ratcliffe, Clara Elizabeth (née Ledger),
Vincent (the eldest), Horace and Florrie.**

On the 1911 Census the family are living at 47, Chadderton Fold.





Chadderton Fold

**Looking towards St. Matthew's Church,
which is on Chadderton Hall Road at the corner of Mill Brow**



'Bishop Lake's House' Chadderton Fold.

He was appointed as minister to the Parish Church, Oldham, in 1650.

Believed to be the original Chadderton Hall

Family photos courtesy of Colin Ratcliffe