

'e-Owls'



Contact us :

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

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

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

March 2021

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



*Holebottom Colliery,
Oldham*

Oldham Branch Meetings :

**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. Meetings are now in place using the zoom app. There will be further updates on the Society website Home Page and on the Branch pages. 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 again

I hope you are all still bearing up and coping. Hopefully there will be some relaxing of the lockdown before too long and we will be allowed to go into other shops rather than just the supermarkets and also get haircuts etc.

This morning I received a letter from a long standing member of our Branch who does not have a computer or internet connection. This member has missed the monthly meetings tremendously and has been grateful to receive the newsletter by post.

It must be even harder for people in this situation as we just assume everybody has the internet these days. I feel sure that everyone is looking forward to going to an actual physical branch meeting before too long.

In the meantime, keep safe.

Best wishes to you all

Linda Richardson

Chairman, Oldham Branch

email me at < [chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk) >

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Editor's remarks.

Hi Everyone,

This month, I'm not even going to mention lockdown or hopes for normality (whatever that might now be), or even the 'jab'. It seems, at the moment, that nothing can be written or spoken of that doesn't have some mention of 'the virus'!

As I write this, in the week following our successful meeting, on zoom, with a talk by Carol Talbot about the Oldham suffragette, Annie Kenney, there does seem to be the hesitant promise of spring in the air. Having said that, March weather is notoriously unpredictable!

New in the Branch pages on the MLFHS website is a Gallery of Images [HERE](#). We've started it off with some of our own images and some from regular contributors; If you have local photos and images to contribute, we would love to add them to the collection (you would, of course retain copyright on them whilst allowing MLFHS to re-use them at any time in an appropriate and sensitive manner). Details on the Gallery page.

As well as the regular news of online meetings etc., in the Newsletter Gallery, we have added some local postcard views from around the district.

In the Mixed Bag we've included the penultimate chapter in Gary Millward's, '*Oldham Town Centre - through the 'Brierly Map'*'. Also, in the Mixed Bag is a follow-up piece after the talk on Mary Higgs, given by local author Carol Talbot, at the February meeting of Oldham HRG.

In the e-Postbag, there is a newspaper report about the unveiling of the statue of 'Blind Joe', in Alexandra Park; more about the Nadin family; and a family story from reader, Glyn Collin, called '*Family Secrets & Lies*'.

Our mailing list for the newsletter continues to rise so I hope you will all enjoy this latest copy.

Keep safe and positive,

Sheila

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 >

Please note, regarding using the links to website pages or .pdf documents : if clicking on a link when the newsletter is viewed on the internet, without first downloading it onto the computer, the new page opens in the same window so the 'back button' has to be used to return to the newsletter.

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## Oldham & District Branch

### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE OLDHAM & DISTRICT BRANCH OF MLFHS

#### Notification for MLFHS members from the Branch Chairman:

In last month's newsletter, MLFHS members were reminded that the Annual Meeting would normally be held in March. It was asked that they would email our chairman if they would wish us to have a short meeting, on zoom, at which anyone could give us feedback, on what we have been doing in the last few months, or ask any questions. As no-one has signified that this would be a useful meeting, the present committee (elected in 2020) will stay in place, and monthly meetings will continue on zoom until circumstances change.

The Chairman and Committee Members would again like to thank you for your support over the last twelve months and look forward to seeing you in person again soon.

In the meantime, if you care to contact us at < chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk > with regard to your thoughts or questions, we would be glad to hear from you.

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Online Oldham & District Branch talks with Zoom

Last month's talk:



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".

The talk at our February Branch meeting was given, on zoom, by Oldham author, Carol Talbot, about the militant suffragette, Annie Kenney. This proved to be an exceedingly popular talk ... the original target of 60 attendees registering was reached within days of its opening; the limit was extended and reached over 90 before the list was finally closed! My fingers were crossed that we could make the running of the talk as informal and friendly as usual. With 3 zoom co-hosts and the fact that Carol's talk would be so interesting and the audience so appreciative, we were hopeful and happy. However, we won't mention the zoom meeting link for the speaker that went astray; my anxiety when she didn't login straight away; and my frantic search for a meeting link to send to her! No, we won't mention it! But, we were ready to start (just) by dead on 2pm!

Carol's talk was an interesting mix of family background; Annie's first encounter with Christabel Pankhurst, when she spoke at an outdoor meeting in Oldham; her subsequent membership of the Women's Social and Political Union, with their motto of 'Deeds not Words'; and her experiences as a militant suffragette through to the war years, subsequent marriage and family. It was an hour in which Carol brought Annie to life, again, for the many of whom already knew something about her but also for those to whom, until Saturday, she was only one name amongst the many who fought for a woman's right to vote and, importantly, to be HEARD.

Carol is also the author of a book about, Mary Higgs, who came to Oldham after her marriage, and who spent her life working tirelessly, for the rights of women in poverty, in education, the workplace and the home.

Our thanks go to Carol for a really absorbing talk.

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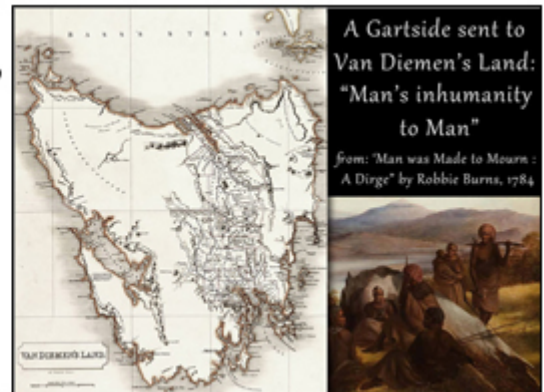
Please try and support the Branch, with your online attendance, as we hope to deliver as much of our 2021 programme as possible, whilst we are unable to hold our meetings in Gallery Oldham.

It would be of great help to us, for the smooth running of the talks (especially if your 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.

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Saturday,
13th,
March
at
2 pm



A Gartside sent to Van Diemen's Land: 'Man's inhumanity to Man'

The transportation of Edwin Gartside in 1832 and the story of Van Diemen's Land, the convicts and the indigenous aboriginal population.

A free, online talk given by Sheila Goodyear

Login will be from 1:45

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

Booking for an online talk is essential and booking is on [Eventbrite](#) or by email to the newsletter or website editor.

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

Wherever you live, Welcome!

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Saturday,  
10th,  
April  
at  
2 pm



## ***Memories from Holidays Past***

a talk given by Chris Helme

With no holidays allowed at present, we can at least look back at holidays we have enjoyed. This presentation will take you back to those childhood holidays in a caravan, Guest House and Butlin's. Everything from knobbly knee competitions to calamine lotion. From Sunday School annual treats to outings at Blackpool, the 1960s package holiday and then to futuristic holidays and a few laughs on the way.

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

**Booking for an online talk is essential** and booking is on [Eventbrite](#) or by email to the newsletter or website editor from the middle of February.

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

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Saturday,
8th,
May
at
2 pm



Confessions of a Country Lane Researcher ...

An illustrated talk, on interesting family and local history items, from over 40 years as a researcher.

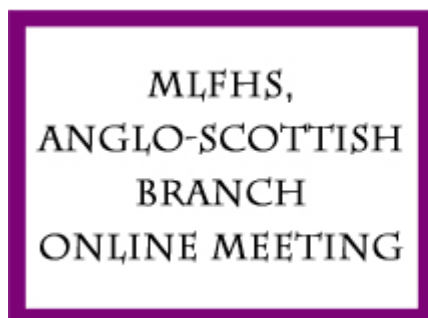
A talk given by Tony Foster, Saturday 8th May 2021, at 2pm.

Booking on Eventbrite to follow.

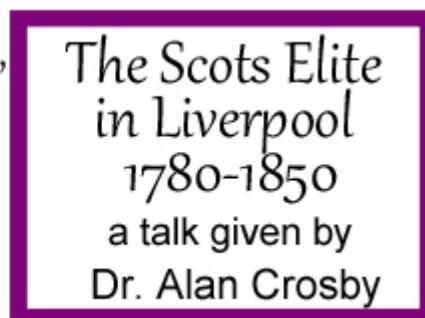
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### **MLFHS Branches delivering their monthly meetings and talks on-line**

**Anglo-Scottish Website Pages** [HERE](#)



Saturday,  
20th  
March  
at  
2 pm



Go to the Anglo-Scottish website for more information and booking details.

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Bolton Website Pages [HERE](#)

MLFHS Bolton Branch online Meetings	Wednesday, 3rd March at 7:30 pm	<i>A Practical Guide to Help You Get the Most Out of Your Irish Research</i> A talk given by Carol Wells
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Go to the Bolton website for more information and booking details.

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### **MLFHS updates**

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

**is closed under current restrictions**

**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](#)

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MLFHS, Manchester Ancestors ... Saturday 6th March, 2pm

MLFHS aka Manchester Ancestors	Saturday, 6th March at 2 pm	<i>Using Newspapers in Historical Research</i> A talk given by Denise Bates
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Using Newspapers in Historical Research

Denise is an historian, researcher and writer. Her specialist period is Britain c.1815-1939, particularly its social and cultural aspects. Her interest and expertise in using newspapers in historical research grew from using them whilst researching her first two books, *Pit Lasses – Women and Girls in Coalmining*, and *Breach of Promise to Marry*. Her book *Historical Research Using British Newspapers* includes material which will focus on the talk and more.

Booking on [Eventbrite](#)

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**Beginners' online Talk ... Saturday 27th March, 2pm.**

|                                                   |                                          |                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MLFHS<br/>aka<br/>Manchester<br/>Ancestors</b> | Saturday,<br>27th<br>March<br>at<br>2 pm | <i>Beginners' Talk:<br/>The Census</i><br>A talk given by<br>Michael Couper |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### ***The Census***

A free, online talk (on zoom) given by Michael Couper.

Michael Couper looks at the reasons for and method of taking census together with the varied

information each census gives. Also discussed will be methods of finding your ancestor when errors of transcription have occurred. These talks are aimed at people new to family history research or those who simply wish to refresh their knowledge.

Booking on [EVENTBRITE](#) is essential;  
a zoom link to the meeting will be sent out to those registering.

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

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

* Three new additions to the Great Database:

Military General Service Medal - Awards to men of the Lancashire Fusiliers

Colin Calderbank has transcribed the details (Name and Rank plus some miscellaneous notes plus the campaigns for which they were awarded clasps) for 236 recipients of the MGS Medal. The medals were not awarded until 1847, three decades after the campaigns for which they were awarded, and only about 10% of those who qualified are believed to have claimed their medals.

Deaths at Scutari Hospital

Anthony Steven has completed the transcription of another 1,863 names of soldiers who died at Scutari Hospital during the Crimea campaign 1854-56 as were published in UK newspapers for the period. These are, as noted previously, by no means all local men, but will include men from local regiments.

Beersellers in 1911

Joe Hilditch has transcribed the names and addresses of 1,690 beer and wine sellers listed in Slater's Manchester Directory for 1911

Thanks to Colin, Anthony and Joe for these useful additions.

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\* I have now added the last book of **baptisms at Salford, Sacred Trinity**, to the Great Database.

Thanks to Susan Mayall for these 2,360 additional records.

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* Another 2,036 records have been added to the Great Database.

This is an **index to the Grave Book for Little Lever United Reformed Church (URC)**.

Burial register seldom records the grave in which the person is buried. Memorial inscriptions do not necessarily always record all the persons buried (and sometimes memorialise those who

were buried elsewhere). The grave book, for those unfamiliar with them, records who is buried in each grave and so provides strong evidence that those in the grave are in some way related (though this is not always the case). They also record 'unusual' burials such as those of stillborn children and of the ashes of those who were cremated, which may not appear either in the register or on the memorial.

The grave book was originally transcribed by volunteers of our Bolton Branch working under Sylvia Massey. The project also recorded the memorial inscriptions, which are already included in our MI database.

The original transcript is also available in the Document Collection - Bolton - Death and Burial. Special thanks to Rita Greenwood, for prompting me to add this very interesting index to the Great Database.

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\* This is a transcript of the **burial registers for Salford, King Street, Bible Christian Church graveyard 1814-1837**.

There was already a dataset of 10,091 records covering burials 1800-1813, which had been transcribed by Joan Lawler many years ago. This latest addition covers a further 5,682 burials. King Street was a very popular burial ground, firstly for followers of this fairly obscure sect, but possibly more so for those who wanted a cheap burial place. Many of those buried at King Street came from Manchester and so if you have been unsuccessful in finding a burial in the parish graveyards it is just possible that their family may have had them buried here.

All thanks are due to Geoff Edge for undertaking this substantial transcription.

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* Linda Bailey has just sent me another part of the **Admission Registers of Manchester Grammar School. This is Volume 2** covering 962 admissions 1776-1807 (bringing the total to over 3,000).

Thanks to Linda Bailey and Chris Hall for this latest addition.

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\* I have added a further 1,850 records to the Great Database.

These are transcriptions of **baptisms at Prestwich, St. Mary 1752-1768** and were transcribed by Susan Mayall.

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* Another small, but very interesting addition to The Great Database:

Listing of the **officers of the 49th (Openshaw) Battalion of the HomeGuard**.

Transcribed by Joe Hilditch (304 records)

Useful, in that it includes addresses and dates of birth.

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\* Another 1,011 records added to the Great Database. These are from **Bolton Historical Gleanings by B. T. Barton (1882)**.

There are several diverse record sets relating to Bolton and District transcribed from this publication by Colin Calderwood.

A copy of the extracts has been added to the Bolton Documents section of the member area.

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Visit the '*What's New in our Record Collections*', in the Manchester pages of the website, for links and information [HERE](#)

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

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Please note ...

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

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

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Oldham Historical Research Group: ... Online Meetings on zoom



Wednesday
17th,
March
at
7 pm



'It is our duty clamorously and unceasingly to agitate.'

(Phillis Annie Skinner, editor, Manchester Conscientious Objectors Journal August 1918)

"Piecing together the life and times of socialist, anti-fascist and antiwar agitators J.Allen Skinner (1890-1974) and Phillis Skinner (1874-1950), from Conscientious Objection and imprisonment in WW1, anti-fascist work in the 1930s to Direct Action against nuclear weapons in the 1950s and 60s, using M15 papers and other ephemera."

A free, illustrated talk, given by Dr. Alison Ronan

Booking on Eventbrite [HERE](#).

Your support for us would be appreciated and, if you would like to join us for our meeting on zoom, or need more information, please email me at < pixnet.sg@gmail.com >.

Website [HERE](#)

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**Library Events & Gallery talks at Gallery Oldham; Curator talks** [HERE](#)  
on [Eventbrite](#) and [Instagram](#)

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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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More pages from *Oldham Town Centre - through the 'Brierly Map'* by Gary Millward, 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](#)

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 most relevant quarter of the map together with the Butterworth map of Oldham, circa 1817, which helps to put Brierly's map into context.

continued from the February newsletter :

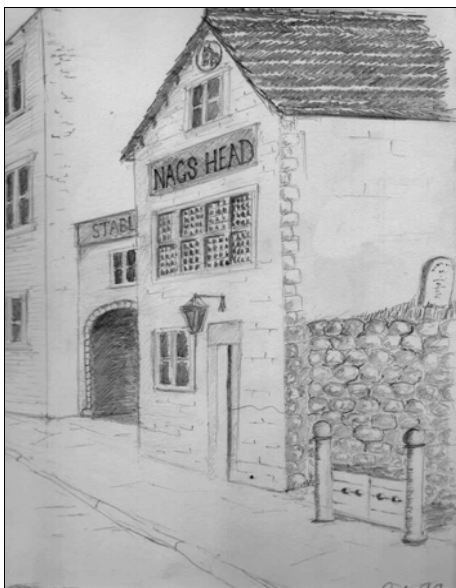
Brierly does not indicate any buildings whatsoever on the other side of Church Lane. The two most contemporary and reliable maps are dated 1804 and 1819 and development cannot be determined on the older map, but the south side of Church Lane had been very much developed by 1819. But what would have been the state of development in 1815?

There was once a bowling green, on the south side of Church Lane, belonging to the '*Nags Head*'. It was mentioned in 1725 as being in the possession of *Sarah Hopwood*, the innkeeper at the time. It was on a piece of land known as Spout Kirk Croft. The bowling green was twenty yards long and three yards wide, including the thickness of the wall, which separated the green from Church Lane.

The '*Nag's Head*' was almost certainly Oldham's most ancient tavern, probably dating back to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. *Sarah Hopwood's* husband, *Richard*, who had died in 1708, was once the innkeeper and the owner of the bowling green. Dating back even further, in 1592, *Edmund Hopwood* was entered as an innkeeper from Oldham at the Manchester Quarter Sessions. It is, therefore, not beyond the realms of possibility that *Richard* was a descendent of *Edmund* and that the inn had stayed in the family for over a hundred years.

The actual location of the '*Nag's Head*' itself has never been documented and has remained a mystery, although it is known to have stood on Goldbourn, now Church Street. The words "*Nag's Head*" are shown on a map dated 1756, but the map is too vague and abstract to pin point the actual position of the inn, and it could lie anywhere within a thirty yard stretch of the ancient thoroughfare, and on any side of the street.

Another clue was needed.



Nag's Head, as it may have appeared on Goldbourn around 1804.

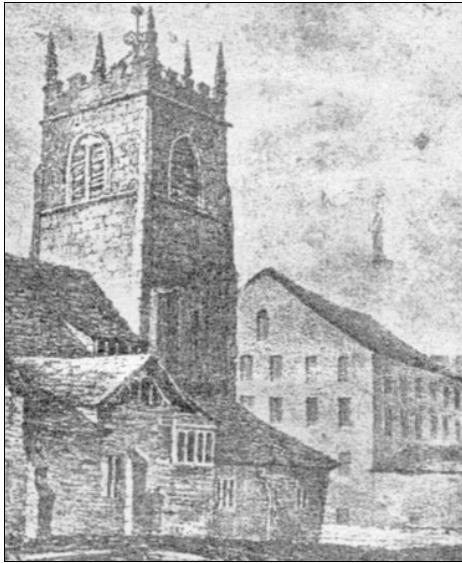
I had recorded in my notes, that *Andrew Bamford* was keeping the '*Nag's Head*' during the 1760's, and thought nothing more about it. But then I stumbled upon a snippet of information, recorded by *Rowbottom*, which would shed new light on the location of the inn. He recorded on 2nd Feb 1788. "*Bamford, Mary*, relict of the late *Andrew Bamford*, innkeeper, Church Lane Oldham died". Church Lane? If the '*Nag's Head*' was on Church Lane and on Goldbourn it must have had two entrances, and could have stood only in one place, and that is the site occupied by *Dr Rowntree* on the Brierly map and where the now closed solicitor's office is, on Church Terrace today.

This also seems to be the position, of a fairly large structure, featured on an early 17th century map known as the *Seven Holy Crosses of Oldham*. It is a crude and ill-defined illustration, but seems to feature a structure to the south of

the ancient church.

The building runs north to south as against the church, which traversed east to west. It is reasonable to suggest that this represents the '*Nag's Head*' and any discrepancy in out-of-positioning can be put down to the obvious limitations of the cartographer.

The '*Nag's Head*' closed in 1805 and the last licence holder was *Edward Abbott*, who transferred his licence to the wine merchant's, that would become the original '*Up Steps*' Inn.



Church Lane Mill stands behind the tower of the ancient Parish Church of Oldham.

Now knowing the location of the ancient inn, it can be ascertained that the building was more than one storey high and the ground floor must have been on a number of different levels. The ground is considerably higher on Church Lane than Church Terrace. It can also be ascertained, that the building was demolished in 1817 with the rest of the predecessors of Church Terrace.

It therefore seems logical, to suggest that the buildings shown on the south side of Church Lane, on the 1819 map, be at the most two years old. Therefore in 1815, only the Church Lane entrance to the *Nag's Head*, and the bowling green wall, if indeed that was still there, existed. So Brierly is probably correct in leaving the southern side of Church Lane barren of development.

Back on High Street, Brierly illustrates a block of buildings that start with the name *Barlow* and end with the name *Taylor*. The first of these structures belongs to *Henry Barlow*, a tinsmith, who had his shop on the corner of Church Lane and High Street.

The *Barlows* were an Oldham family of long standing, with a metal working background. *Edward* and *Benjamin Barlow*, both eminent clockmakers in the 18th century, were members of the same line of *Barlows* as *Henry*. But it is not only for *Henry*, that this house should be noted. His son, *Thomas Oldham Barlow* was born here on Aug 4th 1824. He was educated at the Grammar School, where he was taught by the *Rev William Winter*, showing great skill in draughtsmanship under the Reverend's tutoring. On leaving, he went to work for *Messrs Stevenson and Royston*, at Manchester.



Thomas Oldham Barlow by Millais

At the age of 23, he set out for London where he forged himself a reputation as an engraver of great renown.

He struck up a very close friendship with Sir John Millais, who was about to form the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood with Hunt and Rossetti. As a result of this friendship, Millais entrusted *Thomas Barlow* with engraving some of his commercial works. In 1881, the tinsmith's son became a Royal Academician, a status not shared by many engravers. During this period, Millais painted a portrait of *Barlow*, at a time when portraits were being commissioned for William Gladstone, Cardinal Newman and Alfred Lord Tennyson.

Thomas Oldham Barlow died on Christmas Eve 1889 and two years after his death, the portrait of him by Millais was presented to Oldham Corporation, and is now in the possession of the Oldham Art Gallery.

Brierly omits, on the map, the owner of the shop between the tinsmith and *Billy Windy*.

In a letter Brierly had written, "On the other side of the way lived *Mrs Hall* the fishmonger keeping her husband and son, the latter named *Billy Windy*, and next door *Henry Barlow*, tinman, was placed". The tinsmith probably owns the building not identified on the map.



An old photograph showing the old Barlow house on the corner of Lord Street and High Street. Billy Windy's house can be seen on the far right. Barclays Bank now stands in the vicinity.

Although *Barlow's* property was a stone built three-storey cottage, it had no cellar and was very small in floor surface area. With the tinsmith's and the unidentified property being built on an incline, it was only two metres or even less from floor to ceiling at the back of the far room on the ground floor and this is where the fireplace was situated. *Barlow* had his workshop on the top floor where there was a doorway set in the outside wall from where he winched up the raw materials. It is very probable, that with the cramped conditions of the small shop, that he needed the cottage between his workshop and the fishmonger for living space. The two *Barlow* cottages abutted the other five shops on the block, though they

were slightly off centre to the others, having been built at an earlier period.

The tinsmith shop was taken down in 1880. If the building had survived until today, it would have stood in the middle of the road, at the bottom of Lord Street, adjacent to Barclays Bank.

The other five or six shops in the block were uniformly built, red bricked and three storied. All the shop fronts were similar, apart from the signage. *Jonathon Nield*, a shoemaker, once owned all these shops and he left the properties, after his death in 1790, to his two sons, *James* and *Jonathon*.

William Hall the fishmonger lived in the first of these shops, adjacent to *Barlow*, with his wife and son *William* nicknamed *Billy Windy*.

Billy Windy was the hard man of the parish; he stood 5 feet 9 inches tall, and was said to be as strong as a horse. He had a love for fighting and rarely came second best. He would issue the challenge "any weight or height, come on".

He was once given a pig by someone, who told him it was double jointed, and the story was told in the form of a rhyme, the first verse of which ran.

Billy Windy had a pig
Un it was double jointed
He lapped it up and kept it warm
But he wur disappointed.

It was said that it was a reckless man who sang it in his presence.

Around this time, *Billy* had a rival called *Bun Do'son* and, in order to settle the matter of supremacy, it was arranged that they would meet, to fight, in a drinking room at *Jenny Horrocks's 'Lamb Inn'*. Although *Bun* was the bigger man, the fight ended with *Billy* lifting him totally off the floor and throwing him at the fire range, which he completely broke.

After this, *Billy* remained without a rival and, in order to keep in practice, he would give the constables a beating. Afterwards, he would appear before the magistrate, who held court in the commercial room on the first floor of the *Angel Inn*. On one occasion the Head Constable, '*Bill Yewood*', was at the wrong end of a thrashing, for telling him to step off the footpath in Market Place and, while serving his sentence for this act, the prison chaplain pointed out the error of his ways and advised him to emigrate. A subscription was set up, by the Governor of the jail, to which all the warders subscribed; even the magistrate at Oldham joined in and, as a result, he set out for America with a well-lined purse. The constables, now rid of their tormentor, could

then walk the streets of the parish with a greater sense of security.

The last account of *Billy* described him as a “prosperous farmer in the Far West, the owner of several thousand acres of land and an immense flock of cattle”.

Some years after his emigration, he wrote to an Oldham gentleman, thanking those who had kindly given him a new start in life. After this no more was heard of *Billy Windy*.

The end shop marked *Taylor* on the illustration, is the only other identified property in the block. Though a common name, there was a *Thomas Taylor*, who was a joiner, living on High Street at this time, and this is probably the man identified on the map.

The passageway, that runs up the side of *Taylor's* house, is the same one that separates the Nationwide building society from the Royal Bank of Scotland today.

According to the map, the predecessor of Church Terrace had three buildings. The *Reverend William Winter* occupied the first, the second is unidentified and the end one belonged to *Dr Rowntree*.

The illustration shows that *Reverend Winter* lived on what is now the site of the Royal Bank of Scotland. He was the curate for St Peter's Church and master of the Grammar School. It was said *Rev Winter's* house was built on the site of the 'Bowling Green', belonging to the 'Nag's Head', but that is doubtful, as the green was set too far back. It may have encroached upon an area “leading” to the bowling green. It was a small house and was known as the “parson rooms”.

Rev Winter died on the 10th July 1838, having been curate for over fifty years. After his death, the old Grammar School went into decline after enjoying an Indian summer during his time there.

The building next to *Rev Winter* is unidentified on the map, but Brierly identifies it, as belonging to *John Travis*, in a disjointed sentence, in a letter sent back from Australia, “*The Rev William Winter* and old *John Travis* wholesale grocer, there was a row of houses opposite one being a cooper's shop”.

It will become apparent that if Brierly is connecting the *Reverend William Winter* as a neighbour of *Travis*, then the parson could not have lived in the block in 1815.

John Travis was trading in the Mumps area in 1815, and does not move to his newly built shop on Church Terrace, until 1818 when he is mentioned in a directory as living in Greaves Square.

John Travis went into partnership with *Jonathon Ogden* and *Thomas Kay* around the year 1784 and, together, they built a small cotton mill at Lower Sheepwashes, which is an ancient name for the area of Waterloo Street below Union Street. A small rivulet ran near by and it was utilised to produce power for the mill; horses supplied extra power.

On Dec 11th 1788, *John Travis's* wife died; five days later and, to cap the most miserable of weeks, his mill “was burned completely to ashes.” It had been insured for £800. *John Travis* would not live in his new shop for long; he died in 1820 aged 70.

The third and final house is that of *Dr John Rowntree* but, like *John Travis*, he could not have been there in 1815 as an inn was occupying the site. It was not until 1818 that the building that *Rowntree* occupied was built; indeed he is not mentioned in directories until the mid 1820s.

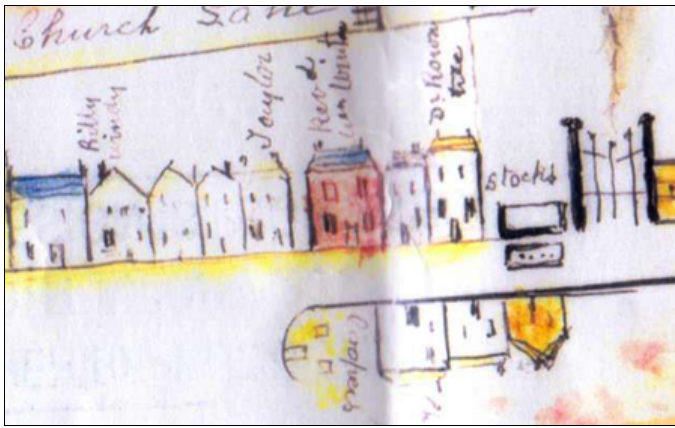
Dr Rowntree was not a native of the town; he was a Yorkshire man. Both he and his son would become very eminent in the district later in the 19th century.

Brierly was only eight years old when the predecessor to Church Terrace was taken down, therefore, it is understandable if he misplaces these three people by just a few years.

Nevertheless, if the *Reverend Winter*, *John Travis* and *Dr Rowntree* were not on the sites indicated on the map in 1815, who or what were?

It had been stated of the year 1817, “In the May of this year some old buildings extending from the east end of High Street to the old church gates were removed with an intention, afterwards abandoned, of rendering the area at the junction of Yorkshire Street and High Street a new

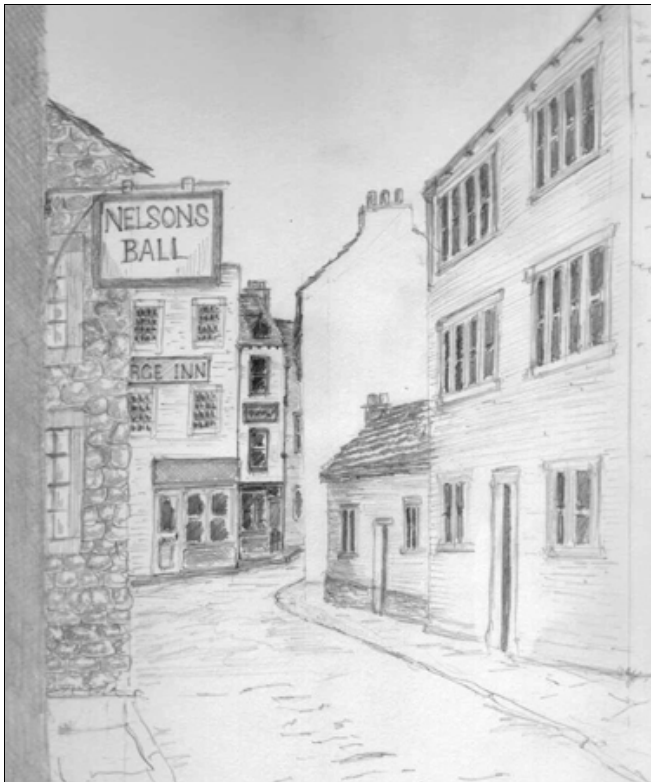
market place. In this pile was the public house known as the '*Nelson's Ball*' "



A section of map featuring Church Terrace and the village stocks

Sometime between 1805-1817, *William Wright*, who was once the keeper of an ancient inn known as the '*Blue Ball*' or '*Nelson's Ball*' that had stood near the present '*Greaves Arms*', had his alehouse demolished. It appears, he must have transferred his licence to the old '*Nag's Head*' just a few metres away. In 1815, the site that says *Dr Rowntree* on the illustration appears to be the ancient '*Nag's Head*' sporting the new sign of the '*Nelson's Ball*'.

After the death of Viscount Horatio Nelson, at Trafalgar, many streets, monuments and inns were named in honour of him. *William Wright* or "*Bill Reel*" retained the sign of the '*Nelson's Ball*' when he moved into his new premises in May 1817. This new public house would eventually change its name to the '*Greaves Arms*' and this was the predecessor of the one we see today.



How Goldbourn may have appeared in the very early part of the 19th century. The George Inn and the very narrow High Street are visible at the bottom.

If you look up, high on the wall of Church Terrace, today, you will notice a date stone between the hair stylist and the cafeteria. Engraved into the stone is the year 1713, and the initials R.A. Above the date is a circle with a five pointed star within it and there is also a smaller circle at the centre of the star.

Ignoring the totally inappropriate modern renovation work, it is hard to visualise that these two shops are really late Georgian or Regency buildings. But the date stone suggests the reign of Queen Anne?

The stone could be just a relic, of course, placed by the renovators a few years ago, and have nothing at all to do with the present building, and all enquires about the stone have proved fruitless.

However, in 1936, when the original '*Up Steps*' public house was demolished, the dismantlers found a date stone, inscribed, BDM 1734, built into the foundations of the cellar walls; the

initials of *Benjamin and Mary Dawson*; the same inscription as on the drainpipe head of the public house.

This appears to have been a common practice, by local builders in the 18th century, so this stone may have been found during the restoration work on the Church Terrace site and, therefore, it may relate to the building that occupied the site in 1815.

The former date stone bears the initial of *Sir Ralph Assheton IV*, of Middleton, and the star and concentric circles are the *Assheton* coat of arms. *Sir Ralph* acquired the title, Lord of the Manor of Oldham, from *Joshua Cudworth* in 1683. *Edwin Butterworth*, the Oldham historian, writing more than 150 years ago, thought it very unlikely that the site was ever occupied by a Manor House or indeed that *Sir Ralph* ever resided in the district.

Assheton died in 1716, and that same year *Nathaniel Curzon* acquired the land that would

become known as Curzon Ground, which included Curzon Street, Albion Street and the Market areas of the town. He had obtained the land on marriage to *Mary Assheton* co-heiress of *Sir Ralph*.

To be continued next month.

Courtesy of, and ©, Gary Millward

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](#)

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## **Mary Ann Higgs, O.B.E. (née Kingsland) 1854 - 1937**

As we know, local author Carol Talbot gave a talk, on suffragette Annie Kenney, to the Olham & District Branch of MLFHS, at the February meeting. However, a few days later, she also gave a talk, to Oldham Historical Research Group, on another Oldham woman, this time one largely forgotten, named Mary Higgs. I read Carol's very readable and informative book on Mary Higgs, some years ago, so this talk reawakened my interest in her, especially as she worked closely with Dame Sarah Lees and her daughter, Marjory. Wanting to know more, I turned to my 'old friend' the Internet Archive, with it's millions of old books. Although I knew, from Carol's book, that Mary had been educated to degree level, and had taught in the pioneering Bradford Grammar School for Girls before her marriage, I was surprised to find that Mary herself had written books, '*How to Deal with the Unemployed*' pub. 1904; '*Glimpses into the Abyss*' (which includes her undercover investigation, '*Five days and nights as a tramp among tramps*') pub. 1906; and '*Where Shall She Live? The Homelessness of the Woman Worker*' pub. 1910. The three that I found were all related to her lifelong aim to provide decent and safe accommodation, especially for women in poverty, exposing the evil circumstances in which so many were forced to live. The following are extracts from the opening chapter of, '*Glimpses into the Abyss*' and, the first part of '*Five days and nights as tramp among tramps*',

### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **VAGRANCY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **1. VAGRANCY AS AN UNDERLYING SOCIAL FACTOR**

If we take the history of any country we find that human life has covered it at different times much as geological strata cover the face of the earth. In Victoria Cave, Settle, for instance, human remains and relics of the corresponding animal and social life were actually found stratified. If you take the lowest stratum of society in any country the aboriginal man was, and still is, in countries where aborigines survive, a vagrant. The nomad is the foundation stone of human society. He is therefore a *survival*, and should be treated as such. So long as mankind was nomad, the only way in which a man could be a vagrant in the modern sense of the term would be by some crime that excluded him from the companionship of his fellows like that of Cain. A man with his hand against every man would be a vagrant. A whole tribe might become vagrant relatively to other tribes, as the Bushmen of South Africa, or the gipsies of all countries. As civilization proceeded they remained as representatives of a prior stratification of humanity. As by degrees men became pastoral and acquired flocks and herds, the man of no possessions would be relatively left behind as the unabsorbed nomad. But the world was wide, the best land alone was appropriated, and even when England had become largely agricultural

there was plenty of room for Robin Hood and his merry men, and doubtless countless others, to lead the nomad life.

Though the great majority of the population was settled on the land, there was an amount of authorised travelling that, relatively to the facilities for travel, was considerable. Pilgrimages to shrines and military expeditions and merchants' journeys led many on to the roads with money in their pouch, and the less wealthy could make use of the hospitality of abbeys. Fuller describes the old abbeys as "promiscuously entertaining some who did not need and more who did not deserve it" ("Church History," ed. 1656, p. 298). Even the funds of the Church did not suffice for the number of people roaming the country in idleness and beggary, as by degrees the country became settled, land enclosed, and the opportunity for sustenance by a vagrant life less and less certain.

As far back as the reign of Richard II., in 1388, it became necessary for the protection of society to legislate against vagrancy. The natural thing when society was almost wholly agricultural, and stationary in villages or towns, was to legislate against and forbid vagrancy. Beggars impotent to serve were to remain where the Act found them, and be there maintained or sent back to their birthplace. This is the germ of the law of settlement, by which every Englishman was supposed to have a birthright in his native parish. The laws were made stricter and stricter, yet vagrancy did not cease, even when the penalty was whipping, loss of ears and hanging for the third offence.

Even now society does not recognise that units squeezed out of true social relationships *must* become vagrants, as surely as soil trodden on the highway becomes dust.

The amount of vagrancy, *i.e.* of those obliged to revert to primitive conditions, depends as surely on the drying up of means of sustenance as the highway dust on the absence of refreshing showers.

Any change in society that displaces a large number of units is sure to result in increase of vagrancy. Of those forced out many cannot regain a footing if they would.

[Pg 5]

But as time went on another class was added to the nomad as akin to it, and yet its origin is wholly different. The man unable to settle because of his affinity to a roving life is one thing, the man *squeezed out* of the pastoral or agricultural life is another. The latter is akin to our "unskilled labourer," a social unit unfitted for any but a primitive kind of existence, unfitted for industrial development, but not essentially nomad.

As early as Henry VIII., 1531, we find a second class, that of the "incapable," those who could not work, who were "licensed to beg."

The formation of this class was accelerated by the failure of the Church to provide for the assistance of the poor, by suppression of abbeys, etc., at the same time that the abolition of villeinage, which was still recent, threw off from organised society dependents very unfit to live a self-supporting life. Thus again, the drying up of means of subsistence created as it were another layer of easily drifting dust.

These two classes, that of the "poor, impotent, sick, and diseased," *i.e.* the incapable, and of the "lusty," form the foundation of our Poor-law system.

It is thus seen that changes in the social organisation left behind another stratum to be provided for by legislation. So long as the half-feudal, half-ecclesiastical framework of society existed, there was nutriment for the individual who was left stranded. He was shepherded in some way or other either by church or lord. But when social change left him unshepherded the charge fell on *the nation as an organised unit*. The Poor Law began. The necessity for it arose at once when "all parts of England and Wales be presently with rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars exceedingly pestered, by means whereof daily happened in the same realm horrible murders, thefts, and other great outrages."

Since, therefore, a transition period leaves behind such a layer of social *débris*, it is only to be



expected that we should find the third great change that has passed over society, which is still recent, namely, the change to the industrial epoch, to be productive of another layer of social *débris* or dust.

## VAGRANCY AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

If you stand, in the clear fresh dawn of an early summer morning, on a hill-top in the northern country where I live, and look towards the dawn, you see outspread before you a wide stretch of bare green hills, intersected by the dark stone lines of fields. Your eye follows caressingly each dip and fold of the bosom of Mother Earth, beautiful in bareness, the outline clear against the sky. In each nook and hollow lie grey patches, clumps of stone houses, witnesses to human habitation, and blue spires of smoke ascend revealing the hidden lights of homes. From each group arises the tall spire of a mill chimney, not yet belching smoke, and in the valley cluster the giant mills of to-day, each larger than his brother. As the eye takes in each feature, the mind can by a "bird's-eye view" reconstruct history. There far away is the hill top whereon our Celtic forefathers worshipped when all the British were rude dwellers on hills and in dales—*Short shrift to the vagrant of another tribe in those days!* There, over yonder hill, lies a Roman camp, to which leads an old Roman road, civilisation was imposed on barbarism; now roads intersect the landscape on every side. With communication comes travel, and the vagrant becomes possible. But *vagrancy is not a problem of unsettled and warlike times.*

On yonder hillsides, if the snow lay thinly on them, you could trace even now by disused furrows the patches of arable land, amid fields for pasture, lying round each little clump of houses, speaking of the day of village communities and communal rights. Between the scattered hamlets lay wide stretches of moor. There would then exist survivals of the past savagery, nomads living a wild life like gipsies; or the marks of the new era, pilgrims bound to shrines making use of the roads, roving soldiers, travelling merchants, here and there a vagrant, made so probably by crime, slipping out of his place in society, but *with all the wide stretches of country between villages to choose from if he would.* Such a man, an involuntary vagrant, was looked on with suspicion, his hand against every man. Bands might gather and live in the forests, like Robin Hood and his merry men.

But yet again, you may watch in thought the spread of those grey lines which speak of ownership of the soil. The village sucks in the surrounding country, the very moors become enclosed, *small space is left for the nomad life.*

Watch! The clustering cottages develop into industrial communities, yonder village bears a name borrowed from Holland, and there still stand the loom cottages empty of looms. Now the landscape is crowded with busy hives of industry, town and country go hand in hand, the farmer and the weaver live side by side or combine the two occupations. Agriculture gives place to pasture for sheep, as wool is needed. The displaced husbandman, after a period of restlessness *in which the vagrant problem first arose*, settles to weaving or kindred industry. None need now wander save by choice, from hereditary nomad taste for liberty, and the bold life of soldier, sailor, or smuggler lies open for such.

But again comes change. The small grey mill rises in the landscape, the clustering village becomes the small town, houses thicken, land grows scarce—what now is to become of the nomad? *He must "take to the road" for nowhere else is left him.* Society no longer wants him, and barely tolerates him. Hospitality, a virtue of scattered communities, dwindles to—the Tramp Ward!! He must needs, if he would travel, turn to prey on the communities who will not recognise him otherwise. He becomes hawker, tinker, pedlar, beggar and thus in his turn acquires a trade. We might let him survive as an interesting relic of the past, and die a natural death, by the catching and cultivation of his children.

But hark! A sudden noise breaks the stillness of morning. A noise like nothing else on earth, a whistle and a boom combined. It is the "buzzer." The landscape has changed again, and there, the landmark of *the Industrial Revolution*, stands the giant mill; and now comes a rush of

human life, clank, clank, clank, the stream of mill-hands in clattering wooden clogs is hastening to work. It is the daily *migration of labour*, the tide morning and night ebbs and flows. Yet no two days will the stream be alike. Accident, sickness, misfortune, or fault, will each day leave some units stranded, and others take their place, and if you look you see another feature in the landscape, a long line of railway stretches as a link for swift travel between town and town. Here is something *altogether new*. These human units, divorced from native communities, cannot be expected to be readily anchored, and accordingly you see around each ancient community and interspersed with it, crowds of workmen's cottages, *each a tent rather than a home*, taken to-day, and left in a month or two. If you could uncover life and watch it as you do an anthill, you would find that it had attained a new and fresh activity. On every side Humanity is becoming organic. Huge conglomerations which we call cities blacken whole stretches of country, and the feature of the life of most men is *daily migration*. By train, tram, or road, tides of humanity move to toil; every holiday sees crowds covering green fields in pleasure parties, or transported by train. The whole of life has grown *migratory*. Is it not evident that we have here not the ancient problem of the *Tramp*, but the *modern* problem of the *Fluidity of labour*! To expect our Tramp Ward—the *repressive provision of a stationary society* for the sparse survivals of a previous age—to cope with the needs of *Migration of Labour* is about as reasonable as it would be to expect the ancient windmill to grind corn for our modern population!

Let us examine the new state of things in reference to that citadel of national life—the *home*. I shall place before you the problem in a startling light, if I ask you whether the present Vagrancy problem is not to a large extent *the disintegration of the home*; and whether, therefore, we are not face to face with the root problem on which the very existence of our civilisation depends, since *by the preservation or extinction of the home a nation stands or falls*.

Right down through all the changes but the last, you would have found the population mainly stationary. Even now the existence of local names, so widely spread that you may have fourteen or fifteen families in a small district of the same surname, reveals the remains of the stationary life. But for good or for evil it has gone. Examine any family you like and it will be the exception to find it whole. Individuals are scattered far and wide when up-grown, perhaps in England, perhaps over the world. Only the stagnating slum population is stationary. And this is not their virtue. If they had a little more initiative they would not stagnate; they form a *pool* of underfed and ill-paid labour, and constitute by far the largest part of the modern problem of the unemployed. The alert and well-trained workman is *migratory*—at the news of a "better shop" he will be off to another town, with or without wife and family. The young man will desert the country side to try his luck in some great centre—the girl may go to service. We no longer *expect* families to stay whole. Greater freedom has brought greater travel, and a relaxing of the bonds of parental discipline. Our streets are crowded nightly by the young, on whom the restless activity of our age has taken such effect that they cannot and will not seek sleep till evening is far advanced. The very "day of rest" is a day of travel.

What is the result of all this increase of migration? The old inn has become the modern hotel, the occasional "apartment to let" has multiplied a thousand-fold, the seaside resort has sprung up with apparatus of pier and promenade, since we must move about even on a holiday. The whole world is on wheels or on a walking tour. But what about the destitute pedestrian? Is it fair to dub him a *tramp*? Travel he must if he is to live, but truly he is between Scylla and Charybdis. For, unmoored from home and friends, he has on the one side the tender mercies of the Tramp Ward, which are often cruel, and on the other the horrors of the common lodging-house. Society hustles him hither and thither, throwing him a dole; or offering him a prison, if he ventures to sleep out. He can hardly exist at all, unless he is clever enough to prey on the community; he becomes a bundle of rags, fain to lie all night in a London park, or sleep near a brick-kiln. It is "hard lines." If he would die out quietly it would be all right for Society; he would not be missed, no one wants him, and this he feels bitterly.

## FIVE DAYS AND FIVE NIGHTS AS A TRAMP AMONG TRAMPS

### 1. A Night in a Municipal Lodging-house.

Having gradually been brought to the conviction, by investigation of numerous cases of destitution among women, that there were circumstances in our social arrangements which fostered immorality, I resolved to make a first-hand exploration, by that method of personal experiment, which is the nearest road to accurate knowledge, of the conditions under which destitute women were placed who sought the shelter of the common lodging-house or the workhouse.

It was necessary to find a friend willing to share the possible perils of such an experiment, and to arrange in such a way that it should be unknown to all but a few. I was fortunate in finding a fellow-worker willing to go with me, and as to the truth of the following story she is a sufficient witness.

We dressed very shabbily, but were respectable and clean. We wore shawls and carried hats, which we used if desirable, according to whether we had sunshine or rain, or wished to look more or less respectable. We carried soap, a towel, a change of stockings, and a few other small articles, wrapped in an old shawl. My boots were in holes, and my companion wore a grey tweed well-worn skirt. My hat was a certificate for any tramp ward, and my shawl ragged, though clean. We had one umbrella between us.

Our plan of campaign was to take train to a town some way from home, arriving in the evening, and then to seek lodging. We had five nights to spend, and were expected at a town some way off by friends who thought we were on a "walking tour"! We cut ourselves off from civilisation on Monday with 2s. 6d. in our pockets and a considerable distance between us and home. We were expected on Saturday by our friends. We thought that we should be able to sample only two workhouses after the first night, expecting to be detained two nights at each.

Escaping observation by going to a country railway station, we took train to a town about fifteen miles from home. We enquired of the police and others, and found that there was a large municipal lodging-house, so we bought a loaf and a quarter of a pound of butter, and applied for beds. We were just in time to get a double bed in the married couples' quarters, for which we paid sixpence. We were shown by a servant—a young woman, about twenty-three apparently—into a large, lofty kitchen, furnished with wooden tables and benches. There was a splendid kitchen range, and all was clean and tidy; hot and cold water were laid on to a sink, and boiling water for making tea could be drawn from a tap. Pots and pans, and *basins* to drink out of, were kept in a handy cupboard. One roller towel, however, was all the convenience for personal washing or for wiping pots. There was a dish-cloth, and we preferred to wash our pots and put them away to dry rather than to wipe them on the towel used by our fellow-lodgers.

Our first difficulty was as follows: We had bread and butter; we had, also, in our bundle, some tea and sugar, the latter mixed with plasmon, as we feared we might not keep our strength up till the week-end without some such help. But we had neither spoon, knife, nor fork, so we could not spread our butter nor stir our tea. A woman, with a girl of twelve, whose language left much to be desired, told us we could have the three necessary articles, and also a locker in which to keep our food, by depositing one shilling. We accordingly did this, but were not given a locker, as we were only staying one night. We had to put our provisions in the corner of a cupboard used by others, but they were not touched. Provided with the necessary implements, we proceeded to make tea, and to cut our bread and butter receiving friendly hints from people who saw we were novices, and studying our companions. We drank out of basins. Besides the loud-voiced woman and child of twelve, there was a man and his wife, and a very nagging woman, whose husband received a great deal of abuse. The inmates appeared to know each other somewhat, and talked about others who had lived there.

We made enquiries for the closet, and found that the key hung by the fireside, and gave admission to a single water-closet, very small, in a yard through which everyone passed to the

kitchen. This appeared to do duty for the single women also, as they used the same kitchen and sitting-room as the married couples. There was a good flush of water caused by a movable seat. There was no lavatory or any convenience for washing except the sink in the kitchen used by all the lodgers, men and women alike, but there was a notice up that "slipper baths" could be had for twopence. This absence of any opportunity for personal cleanliness, apart from extra payment, must lead to uncleanness of person where people are all living on the edge of poverty; it is, too, most desirable that women should be able to wash apart from men.

After tea we found our way upstairs to a sitting-room, also furnished with wooden tables and benches and fairly clean. Beyond it was a bedroom for single females, separated by wooden partitions into cubicles. The servant was in attendance, and was the only official we saw during our stay, except when we purchased our bed at the office, and obtained and returned our knife, fork and spoon. Being very tired, we asked for our bed, and were shown a boarded-off cubicle, the door of which we could bolt. It was lighted by a large window, and in the dim light looked fairly clean, but the floor was dirty. The top sheet of the bed was clean, the bottom one dirty, and the pillows filthy. We spread a clean dress skirt over them and resigned ourselves. The bed was flock, and was hot and uncomfortable; it smelt stale. We opened the window. There was no furniture besides the bed; we hung our clothes on nails in the partition. I killed a bug on the wall close to my head.

Compared, however, with our further experiences, this lodging-house was fairly comfortable—indeed, one of our fellow-lodgers, who apparently was a respectable working-man, said it was "a palace" compared to others!

We had a restless night, disturbed first by the coming to bed of several married couples in adjacent cubicles. We could hear all the conversations, and the nagging woman kept telling her husband, in a tone of voice much louder than his own, to "Shut up!" Then sleep was difficult in such strange surroundings: outside, trams went past till after midnight; inside, many of our companions were audible by snores. We got some uneasy sleep, but were awakened very early as some of the men were called about five o'clock. Towards six o'clock we got up ourselves, with a longing for fresh air. We dressed, but could find nowhere to wash but the sink in the kitchen, with all our clothes on, as a man was already in possession, and was washing up his pots when we came down. We reflected that with only this poor lavatory accommodation, however clean our fellow-lodgers looked, they *could* not be personally otherwise than dirty, if they stayed on here; unless, which is very unlikely, they kept on spending twopence for "slipper baths"!

We got our breakfast in the same manner as tea, and were prepared to go, but had to wait an hour before we could get our one shilling deposit returned, the office not being open till eight o'clock. We sat in the sitting-room, watching and talking to our fellow-lodgers. Their talk was very free and often profane. Several women and the little girl were sitting round a table, crocheting the articles which are hawked from door to door. Men were reading papers. One by one the single women lodgers came out of the inside room and went downstairs to wash and get breakfast. The servant was sweeping the room. Her language was not altogether clean; she smoked a pipe and mentioned a drink. It did not seem altogether desirable that a young woman should practically be left in charge. Her presence could be no guarantee for conduct or language, and she might easily herself be tempted into immorality by men lodgers. Her language showed that she was not much above the rest of the inmates.

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The conversation turned first to the accommodation. We learned that we had been fortunate in our cubicle, as some were infested with bugs. One woman described how they harboured in the crevices between the woodwork of the cubicles, which were not close fitting, and how she cleared them out with a hatpin and exterminated them. The relative merits of various cubicles in relation to the absence or presence of these insect pests were discussed at length. The conversation naturally turned on the accommodation at various lodging-houses, and we heard



of horrors that explained why this was called "a palace," and was so much appreciated, that we were reckoned lucky to obtain a bed after seven o'clock at night. We were told of a place where eight married couples slept in one room, with *one bucket* for all purposes. As the time went on the conversation turned to visitors, and we learned that people came once a week to sing and speak, and were much appreciated. "It was only what they ought to do." We tried to get a little more information on this subject, but the talk veered round to the Moat Farm murder. The execution was due just at eight o'clock, and all eyes followed the clock, and surmises as to the murderer's feelings were coupled with references to the crime, with which all present seemed to be familiar. We were glad when eight o'clock put an end to this topic and our sojourn, as we could obtain our deposit and depart.

**More next month.**

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From the e-Postbag

A little more about Blind Joe, from last month's newsletter, sent by reader Hilda Bowen ...

A report in the Oldham Chronicle, 1868, of the unveiling of a memorial statue of him.

THE LATE JOSEPH HOWARTH, THE OLDHAM BELL-MAN.

UNVEILING OF THE STATUE IN THE PARK

On Saturday afternoon, the statue of the late Joseph Howarth, the well known and highly respected bell-man of this town, better known by the soubriquet of "Blind Joe," which has been sculptured by Mr. Burnett of Clegg Street, and recently erected by subscription, in the Alexandra Park, was publicly uncovered under very favourable auspices. The weather was very fine during the ceremony of unveiling, but shortly afterwards a smart shower of rain came on, which, however, did not last long, and it soon cleared up again, and the evening was very fair. There were several thousands of people gathered in the immediate vicinity of the statue, while large numbers of others were here and there scattered about in different parts of the park. The proceedings were enlivened by a brass band, which played a selection of popular music at intervals during the afternoon and evening. Just before the ceremony commenced, one of the airs that the band played appeared to us to be very inappropriate, that is, taken in a literal sense, we refer to the popular air, "Not for Joseph." Now if this had any reference to the statue of the late departed worthy, it was certainly very much out of place, for the statue undoubtedly was "for Joseph," but this *en passant*.

A considerable space around the statue had very prudently been roped round, and was guarded by several of the borough police force. Amongst the company present inside this roped of area we noticed the mayor John Robinson, Esq., Aldermen Knott Riley and Collinge, councillors Whitehead and Grimshaw, Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Lund, Mr. Ramsden, Mr. Hodgkinson, chief constable, and several other gentlemen who had taken an interest in the erection of the statue.

The proceedings commenced by Mr. Bailey (the secretary of the committee that had carried into effect the wishes of the townspeople in the erection of the statue) ringing the very same bell that had been used by the original of the statue they were about to uncover in his vocation. After which the hymn commencing. "From all that dwell below the skies," was sung by the vast assembly.

Mr. Bailey then addressed the company as follows: Mr. Mayor, Alderman Collinge, members of the park committee, and ladies and gentlemen, it was suggested some time since that a statue of the late Joseph Howarth, would not be ungraceful or an inappropriate ornament in the park. A few of his friends and admirers immediately set to work to raise the means of carrying this laudable object into effect, and bringing about the erection of the statue that is now before us. At first their labours seemed to meet with a most flattering encouragement, but they soon found that it would be a work of time. However they were not discouraged, and have at last

succeeded in carrying out what they contemplated. (*Cheers.*) It was a long time before a block of stone, of sufficient dimensions, could be obtained, to enable the artist to cut the figure life-size. A block was however eventually found, and presented to the committee by Councillor Jackson. (*Hear, hear.*) The artist immediately fell to work with right good will, and had soon finished the statue as far as had at first been contemplated. The Committee thought, however, that there might be able to raise sufficient funds to get a pedestal on which to place the statue, and they set about the collection of the necessary subscriptions, and that object has also been accomplished. As regards the financial state, there a few subscriptions still to collect in, but the statue may be said to be entirely paid for.

All you who knew our late respected townsman cannot but think with me that this statue is a decided work of art. To those who did not know him, for me here to describe all his excellencies and peculiarities, but this much I will say, that a more consistent man never existed. (*Hear, hear.*) At one time of his life he used to go about the streets selling pies. When they hot he would call out "hot pies," but as soon as they got cold he would leave off calling, and if anyone asked him if his pies were hot, he would candidly tell them that they had been hot, but that they were getting cold. If he called the last day of a sale or exhibition, and it was decided to have a second last day, and he was asked to call it, he would refuse to do so, as he said he only believed in one last day.

He applied for admission to a blind asylum in Liverpool once, and before he could get attention to his application he had to get a certificate from the rev. J. Fawcett; and when he went to get the certificate, that gentleman asked him what persuasion he belonged to, and he replied the Methodist, but bethinking himself, he said he was a "Wesleyan Methodist," and such he remained to the end of his days. This will show you the consistency of his character.

I find that the clapper of the bell which I hold in my hand, and which belonged to him, is very nearly worn through, and if he had lived a few years longer it would probably have been completely so. Such another man was seldom or ever known in his calling. He would only go five or six yards at a time without repeating any announcements he might have to make, and he only wanted to have the bills read over to him and a few instructions given to him and he would go through four or five different announcements, one after another, without making any perceptible error. Touching the bell, it has been lent to me by Mr. Heywood, and has been in that family since his death, with the members of which Joe dined once a week for 40 years. He was never without friends.

The honourableness of his dealings, his consistency and his preaching amongst the Wesleyan Methodists always got him friends. I shall not keep you any longer. I am very proud to be able this day to present to Mr. Alderman Collinge, as chairman of the park committee, this statue.

The statue was then uncovered by Mr. Bailey amidst loud and prolonged cheering and hurrahing.

Alderman Collinge said: "Mr. Bailey, as chairman of the park committee I am very happy to receive this statue as an addition to the other ornaments of the park. I hope it will be always kept in its present condition, and it will be my duty to endeavor to see that it is so kept; and to further that object, I have very great pleasure in handing it over to the custody of our worthy mayor.

The mayor expressed himself as follows: Alderman Collinge, ladies and gentlemen, I am very happy to see so many of you here to-day. I have very great pleasure in receiving this statue into the safe keeping of the town council. It gives me much gratification to see the statue placed in its present position and I think the original male himself worthy of it. I knew him for 50 years and for a long part of that time in his capacity of bell-man, and I always found him to be an honourable, Christian man. I am glad that the people of Oldham will let the world see that they can honour a good and worthy man in whatever station of life he may be. Some people wait until a man becomes a statesman before they erect a statue, but they had erected one for a

bell-man. They had erected it, not because he was a great man, but because he was a good man. I will promise that for the time I am in office, it shall be my duty to keep it in its present state *(Applause)*

Hearty and prolonged cheering followed, which having somewhat subsided.

Mr. Land proposed a vote of thanks to the Mayor, for his kindness in being present on that occasion. He said: As the mayor has very kindly thanked you for attendance here to-day it would ill become us if I we did not thank him in return for his presence. Someone might have moved a vote of thanks better than I can do; but, as I have been deputed to do so, I shall do it with great pleasure. I am glad that our worthy mayor has referred to the erection of the statue to great townsman in the manner he has done. If a man deserves a statue why should he not have one, although he may not be a statesman, or some other great man?

There appears to me to be a great similarity, in one way, between this statue and the one of the goddess on the other side of the park. She handed nectar to the gods, and the original of this statue handed pork pies to the masses. *(Laughter)*

This statue has been erected, not because he was blind or for his peculiarities, but because he was instrumental in doing so much good. It is no reason that because a man is blind he should not be useful. A blind man may, as has been seen by the instance of our late townsman, can do as much for the enlightenment and good of the populace as any other man. For although he may be blind, if he is only honourable and true in the words of Bobby Burns, "a man's a man for that" *(Hear Hear)*

Mr. Ramsden seconded the vote of thanks in a few complimentary and appropriate words.

Alderman Knott said: It has been proposed and seconded, that a vote of thanks be given to our worthy mayor, and I have no doubt but that you will heartily respond to it.

I shall crave your attention while I say a few words on this auspicious occasion

As has been stated, it is not because the late Joseph Howarth was a blind man or bell-man, that this statue has been erected to his memory; but because he was a good man. *(Hear Hear)*

There are few people who can lift up their finger and say "truthfully", that he has done them any wrong. Wonderful things have been related of him, and as I have had great facilities for seeing and observing him, I can conscientiously state that most of what has been circulated concerning him is substantially true. When distressed circumstances overtook him he lived in my house for six years and if you had seen as much of him as I have you would be astonished at his extraordinary retentive powers. I have read to him a long bill of sale only once over, mind you, and he would go out and repeat it, word for word, without making the least perceptible mistake. As was very often the case, he would have a chapter of Scripture or a psalm read to him, at his own request, and he would then go and repeat it in such a manner as to astonish those who heard him for the first time, to the congregation of the Wesleyan Methodists, to whom he was in the habit of preaching. I am very happy to see that the statue has got into such good hands, as it has, and I trust that it will always remain in its present state, and that no unclean or improper hand will ever touch it, and that all who visit the park will give it that veneration which it deserves. *(Applause.)*

The vote of thanks was then most cordially and heartily given by the entire mass of people, who continued hurraing for some time. The mayor returned thanks in a few able and suitable remarks.

The National Anthem was then sung by the whole body of people, at the conclusion of which the assembly dispersed, some to their homes, and others, to roam about the spacious park.

The mayor and most of those who had taken part in the ceremony, together with several other gentlemen, partook of a well-served luncheon in the refreshment room in the park.

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**An email from reader Desmond Flanagan**, wondering if someone can help ...

Good morning Sheila ... I am gathering from memory short episodes from my past life ... I recently re-viewed some past hand written notes I made in the 1970's when I conducted adult Evening class at the Lower Mosley Street, Adult Education College in Manchester, and I wonder if you could put me in contact – through the FH contacts, with some person who could get me a photograph of the College Building in Mosely Street, Manchester?

If anyone can help, please email Desmond at < desmondflanagan74@gmail.com >

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Another welcome contribution from Rodney Hampson :

Joseph Nadin, Thiefcatcher. The next generation

In the February newsletter I shared what I had found on Joseph Nadin, known as “the thief catcher” a rough sort of chap who began as a sort of self-appointed bounty hunter. Finding escapees from the law and handing them over to the Courts. He was paid very handsomely for doing so although his methods themselves were unlawful. By 1801 aged 35 he was so connected to the establishment that he was Deputy Constable for Manchester. Some examples of his work appear in the Quarter Sessions Records.

Lancashire Quarter Sessions 1811

This Court doth order the treasurer of the County Stock forthwith to pay unto Joseph Nadin the Constable of Manchester the sum of twenty three pounds, seven shillings, and sixpence the costs he has been put unto in pursuing James Green and William Entwistle who made their escape out of the New Bailey at Salford when under the sentence of Transportation for doing which this shall be the said Treasurer's warrant.

Lancashire Quarter Sessions 1815:

Like order for £4. 13. 3. Payable to Joseph Nadin for conveying baggage belonging to his Majesty's troops. For doing etc.,

Lancashire Quarter Sessions 1816:

Like order for £5. 17. 0. Payable to Mr Joseph Nadin for pursuing John Windsor suspected of having committed a felony.

Nadin retired in March 1821, purchased an estate in Cheshire and lived there until he died at the age of 83, in 1848.

The newspapers tell us he died on March 14th 1848 and that he was buried at St James, Manchester on March 20th. The family continued to use St James as their Parish Church even though they were now based at Orrish House Cheadle Mosley.

I had hoped the newspapers might have reported his death with some biographical detail but they were rather bland.

Liverpool Mail: Saturday March 25th 1848: Deaths: on the 14th inst , aged 80 years, Joseph Nadin of Cheadle Moseley, Cheshire, and formerly deputy constable of Manchester,

The Blackburn Standard Wednesday March 22nd 1848 said On Wednesday last, at his residence , Cheadle Moseley, at an advanced age, Joseph Nadin Esq., formerly and for a very long period deputy constable of Manchester.

I found his Last Will and Testament but it is four pages of spider scrawl and I lost the will to live trying to transpose it. I did manage to garner some names which led to further searches. I am sure fellow family historians will recognise the feeling when a family not connected to your own gets hold of you and you are compelled to follow. Why do we do this ?

Joseph Nadin b.1765, married Mary Rawlinson at Manchester Cathedral in 1792 and in the next ten years the couple baptised three strapping sons in the same place. Two of the sons became solicitors and the third a wine merchant. By the 1840s the family is well established and prospering in Manchester, as we see in the Electoral registers and trade directories.

Electoral Register for Lancashire 1845

13786: Nadin Joseph abode Cheadle Mosley, Near Stockport. Qualification freehold house at Deansgate.

Nadin Joseph Jnr. Moss Lane, Hulme. Qualification freehold house at George Leigh Street

Electoral Register for Manchester 1850

11767: Nadin John, abode 1 Embden Terrace, Greenheys, Hulme, qualification one third share of freehold house at Cock Gates with tenant George Mills

11768: Nadin Joseph, abode Pigot Street, Greenheys, Chorlton upon Medlock, qualification one third share of freehold house at Cock Gates with tenant George Mills

11769: Nadin Joseph Jnr, abode Moss Lane, Hulme, qualification freehold house at George Leigh Street.

Whellan's Directory of Manchester 1852

Nadin Mr John, 1 Embden Ter, Greenheys

Nadin Joseph, Merchant (J. Nadin & Co) house at Kersal View, Higher Broughton

Nadin Joseph, & Co. merchants, 4 Bond Street

Nadin Mr Thos. 112 Loyd Street, Greenheys. (sic)

Slaters directory 1855

Nadin Mr John, Orrish Meres House, Stretford New Road

Nadin Joseph, merchant (Joseph Nadin & Co) Kersall View, High Broughton

Nadin Mr Thomas, 12 Heathfield, Moss side

So let's look at the three sons individually, but briefly, if anyone is especially interested I will be happy to share what I found.

The eldest son was **Thomas**, born in 1793 the year after his parent's marriage. He married first in 1815 to Sarah Bramhall and they had three daughters, all named in Joseph Snr Will.

Unfortunately Sarah died in 1820 and Thomas remarried the following year to Louisa Mary Elizabeth Lavender. She had been baptised at St Georges Hanover Square, in London in 1797 and I resisted the urge to pursue her family. They had four children, two boys and two girls. One of the girls never married and lived with her half sister from the first marriage. The other girl, Mary Ann, married an Iron Founder and they went to live in the midlands.

Their eldest son Joseph Nadin trained for the law with the intention of going into the family Law Business but just before he qualified he changed course and became a Priest. He served in several parishes but spent the longest time at Crewe where he was very highly regarded. The younger boy was Edward Nelson Nadin who died unmarried aged 33.

Louisa Nadin of Oxford Road, Manchester died in 1838 aged 42 years and was buried at St James Manchester on November 28th 1838.

Manchester Times: Saturday December 1st 1838: Deaths: on the 21st ult., after a long and painful illness, aged 42 years, Louisa, wife of Mr Thomas Nadin, solicitor, of this town.

Worcestershire Chronicle: Thursday November 29th 1838: Deaths: Nov. 21st aged 40, Louisa, the wife of Thomas Nadin Esq., solicitor, Manchester, and fourth sister of Mr Lavender, Governor of the County Gaol, Worcester.

Thomas Nadin of Cheadle died in 1849 and was buried at Manchester St James on February 3rd aged 55.

The middle son was **Joseph** b.1795, also baptised at Manchester Cathedral.

In 1824 he married Eliza Royle who unfortunately died the following year. Then in 1826 he appears to have married her sister, Winifred Royle, who had witnessed the first marriage just two years previously. Unfortunately she too died in 1833 aged 26 years. There were no children from either of these marriages. Then in 1838 Joseph marries for a third time at Liverpool St

Philips to Mary Hannah Cooke, the daughter of a wool stapler. They have two sons. Charles born 1840 married in 1860 but unfortunately died in 1866. The other brother Walter Stott Nadin born 1848 married in 1870 to a widow named Reay who had been married to a mariner. (Her maiden name had been Ray so that took some sorting out). Walter died in 1902 and was buried in Southern Cemetery.

Joseph Jnr died on July 29th 1861 at Chorlton on Medlock and his wife, Mary Hannah, died in 1895 at the same place.

The youngest son of Joseph Snr was **John**, born 1797 and also baptised at Manchester Cathedral. He married in 1817 to Eliza Holgate when John says he is a book keeper. By 1841 he and Eliza are at Orrish Meres House, Cheadle Mosley and John says he is a wine merchant. They raise eight children over the next 22 years. They don't all live to old age but they all reach adulthood.

Joseph Alexander born in 1821 married in 1853 to Betsy Roberts and appears to have taken to farming. In 1871 he says he is a retired farmer aged 50, they have no children. After the 1881 census they move to Portsea in Hampshire where Joseph died in 1884 and was returned north to be buried at Cheadle. Betsy stayed on and died in 1899.

Amelia Holgate their first daughter named for her mother's maiden name in 1825, she married iron merchant Frederick George Gardiner in 1860. They didn't have any family and she died in 1874 aged only 39. She was also buried at Cheadle.

John born 1830 married in 1850 to Mary Ann Youde the daughter of a coachmaker. They went to Australia in 1852 and he died at Candelo in 1896.

Robert Samuel born 1838 describes himself as a manufacturing agent. He never married and appears to have spent his life lodging in two rooms in Sale. He died in 1914 and the newspaper reports

Manchester Evening News; Saturday March 14th 1914: Deaths: Nadin, on the 12th inst., Robert S Nadin, aged 75 years, late of 1 Baxter Road, Sale, service at Cheadle Parish Church on Monday at 12 o'clock (noon).

In his will he leaves nearly seven thousand pounds.

Finally the youngest Adelaide, b. 1841. Adelaide married in 1864 to Joseph Calwell Lee a merchant originally from Ireland. They had two children and t'heir son, also Joseph Caldwell Lee, joined the navy and is found aboard the ship '*Warpite*' in London in 1881.

Adelaide died in 1870

Manchester Evening news, May 26th 1870: Deaths: Lee. On the 25th inst., at her residence, Orrish Meres House, Harbrough Road, Ashton on Mersey, aged 28, Adelaide, wife of J C Lee, and youngest daughter of the late John Nadin, Orrish Meres House, Old Trafford.

Their father died in 1875 when both were still minors and they became wards of their uncle Thomas Fletcher Nadin the son of John Nadin 1797.

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### ***FAMILY SECRETS AND LIES***

*A family story from reader, Glyn Collin.*

My grandfather George Collin was born at Oldham on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1890 so WW1 ended on his 28<sup>th</sup> birthday when he was in Mesopotamia but we know nothing about the event as his early life was like a closed book, he didn't speak about his childhood or early life. He married my grandmother in 1925 and when she asked why he had no medals he told her he had posted them home and they were never received but that is not true, he was home in 1919 and the medals were not awarded until 1920 & 1922, maybe he was disillusioned after serving 12 years being discharged for ill health. We found from other family members that he hated his step father and didn't care much for his mother and he ran off aged 15 with his brother to join Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry at Pontefract but mother brought them home. Then aged 17 he

ran off again to join The Royal Horse Artillery for 6 years and was sent to South Africa, in the 1911 census he was at Potchefstroom as an RHA driver. Then the regiment moved to India and in early 1914 he was given the choice of emigrating to Australia or going home; as he had run off, he thought it his duty to go back to see his mother and whilst waiting for the boat the Great War began and he had to stay. He was posted to Mesopotamia in 1916 eventually arriving home in 1919. He was in poor physical health, having epileptic fits due to contracting malaria in India but he had to return to work as a coal hewer.

In later years when the Armistice Parade was on TV he would sit up when the RHA appeared and say That's My lot, the only other thing he said was I wonder what happened to our Jane? The sister who was given away. Gran remembered that in the 1926 miners strike he and a mate walked from Wakefield to Oldham in their pit clogs to see if he had any family still there. He returned with a photo of a man which he said was his uncle but turned out to be his half brother. Grandad's mother had married in Wigan in 1884, then they all moved to Yorkshire and she had baby Emma in 1885 but it was an unhappy marriage so she ran off to Oldham to work as a weaver, leaving Emma with her parents. Her husband moved to Barnsley and married again in 1891 and later served a year in prison for bigamy.

In Oldham, mother had met Thomas Collin, a widower, 25 years older than her with five children. They had ten years together and four children were born, Joseph 1887, George 1890, William 1893 and Jane 1895. The step children hated her and moved out to live with relatives. In 1896 Thomas died of cancer of the tongue aged 56 and mother had to come home to Wakefield bringing the 3 boys but Jane was given to Tom's youngest sister. It was finding Jane that started my interest in family history I put an advert in Oldham Chronicle in 1983 asking if anyone knew what became of Jane Collin born Wellyhole Street 1895. I received a lovely reply from a lady at Greenfield called Rhoda Kenworthy. Thomas Collin was her grandad too, and she was able to tell me about Grandad's half siblings of whom we knew nothing, and Rhoda knew nothing of three boys being taken to Yorkshire but she did have the same photo which Grandad brought home in 1926. Rhoda's husband was an insurance agent for Western & General and when he was called up in 1939 she had to take over so he would have a job to return to. Rhoda was known as Ponylegs, trotting round Oldham collecting insurance money, so got to know a couple of old brothers up Wellyhole Street who were thrilled that Tom was her grandad. They couldn't praise him enough, he was known as Tom mechanic and was the finest mechanic they ever had at Bank Top Mills.

The eldest son Robert Collin was a cab proprietor in Oldham they said he joined the Blues and did duty at Buckingham Palace which was a lie, the army would not take a family man, he was married with two daughters Alice and Elizabeth. In 1896 Robert ran off to Peterborough with another woman Eliza Davies and they had a daughter Annie Margaret in 1899 who was feeble minded from birth. Eliza died of cervical cancer aged 35 in 1906 and Robert moved to Spalding as a hotel bus driver and died in the local workhouse of consumption in 1915. His daughter was sent to Whittington Hall Institution in Derbyshire where she died aged 19, a sad end to Robert but his family never knew what happened to him

The next sibling Sarah Ann, the bossy one who married James Thomas Heginbottom an iron turner in 1890 and had two daughters Eva & Ella. Eva died in the 1918 flu pandemic and Sarah Ann, later moved to Birmingham with Ella and family and died there in 1938.

Rhoda's mother was Matilda born 1872 who married James Bottomley in 1896 and had 3 children Nellie Frank and Rhoda in 1909. Matilda was bed ridden with dropsy from Rhoda's birth and both she and her husband were only 44 when they died. He worked on the railway and was struck by a light engine whilst crossing the lines which affected his heart; Matilda died 6 weeks after him and her coffin could not be taken into Lydgate Church because the fluid was leaking out.

There were also two brothers Fred born 1870 and James 1880. Fred was the family secret, when their father died, Sarah Ann took in James but Fred had to go in the workhouse where he

remained for 37 years. Fred had worked as a railway carter but had a learning disability and had become unable to work he was labelled insane when he entered the workhouse. Uncle Jim told Rhoda a cock and bull story that when a kid he had shouted Back, back and caused a horse and cart to back into Bank Top lodge and the horse drowned their father hit him and he banged his head on the stone window sill, neighbours took him to the infirmary and he was transferred to the workhouse, a load of rubbish.

Jane, the sister who was given away, had her name changed to May Collin Jones and was brought up in Blackpool, her father was a painter and decorator, she became a teaching assistant and her two sisters were teachers and their brother became the first Principle of Blackpool Technical School. May married Gerge Tinker in 1924 he was an auditor and later worked for Jaeger knitwear they had two sons and moved to Finchley and retired to Bowness on Windemere where May died in 1963, she never knew she had been adopted as her birth certificate could not be found.

James became a spinner for Asa Lees he married Mary Marlor in 1907 but both their sons died in infancy. Mary worked in a velvet mill at Moorside and her only pleasure in life was saving money. When she dropped dead on the bedroom floor in 1951, James went to Rhoda's workplace to fetch her and she had nine unhappy years caring for him until he died in 1960. He was a bitter man because his children had died, a nowty old bugger who often told Rhoda she should not have been born, else her mother might be alive today. Her husband told him, good thing for you that Rhoda was born! And good thing for us too otherwise we would never have known what happened in Oldham. Rhoda died in 1989 and rests in Saddleworth Churchyard

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A short selection of entries from the MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE [HERE](#) ...

since the last newsletter :

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[HERE](#)

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\* Northern Mine Research Society

[HERE](#)

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* Hollinwood Canal Society

Archive Photos of the Hollinwood Canal

[HERE](#)

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\* Britain from above 1934 ... Manchester

[HERE](#)

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* "They are nothing but a nuisance".... Decimalisation 50 years ago today!

Britain on film

[HERE](#)

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\* Manchester Misses You

[HERE](#)

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* Historic Enland Blog, Heritage Calling

5 Sites That Tell the Story of Early Anglo-Saxon England

[HERE](#)

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\* Historic England ... High Streets Cultural Programme

[HERE](#)

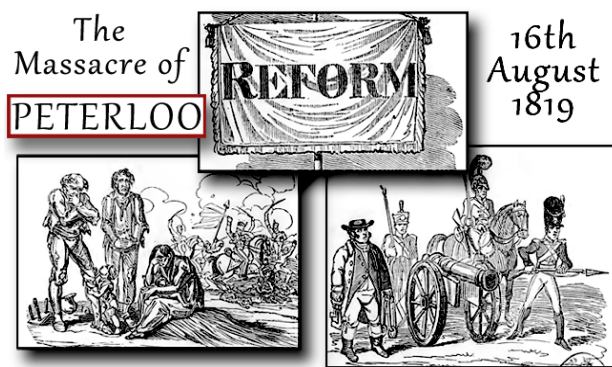
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* For much more, visit the MLFHS Facebook Page :[HERE](#)

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

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](#)

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](#)

Need Help!

Coronavirus Pandemic

Oldham Local Studies and Archives is closed.

However the restrictions 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](#)

Historical Maps of parish boundaries [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

Photos from Around the District in Years Gone by



'Big Lamp' ... Shaw
(junction of Church Road, High Street and Shaw Road)

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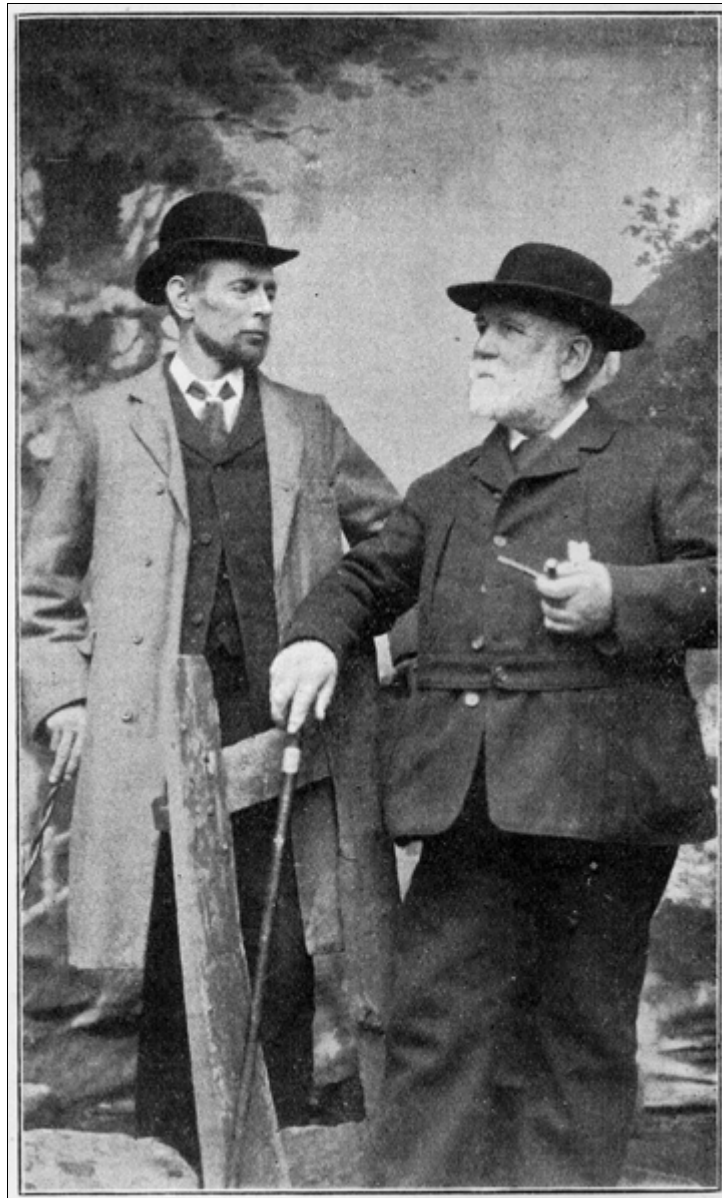


**Cutler Hill, Failsworth**

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Daisy Nook

The name 'Daisy Nook' came from a book by Benjamin Brierley titled '*A day out*' or '*A Summer Ramble*'. Brierley asked his friend Charles Potter, an Oldham Artist, to draw an imaginary place called Daisy Nook. Potter came to nearby Waterhouses to complete his drawing - and from then on the area was known as Daisy Nook.



**Sim Schofield (author of '*Short Stories about Failsworth Folk*'
with the artist, Charles Potter**