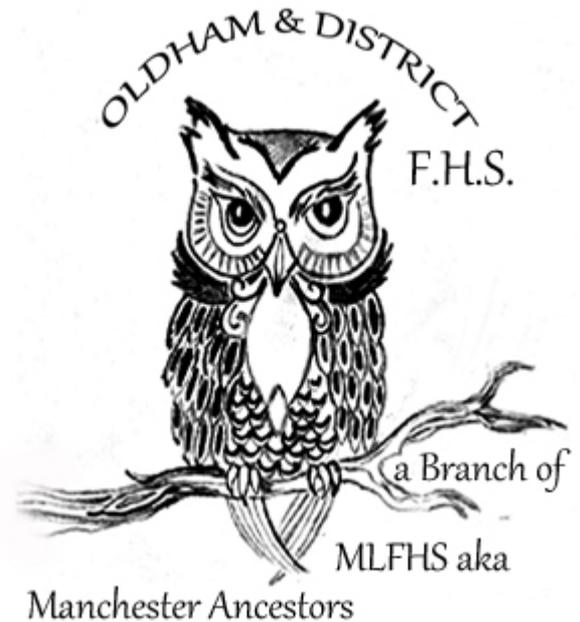


# 'e-Owls'



## Contact us :

Branch Website: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/oldham>  
MLFHS homepage : <https://www.mlfhs.uk/>  
Email Chairman : [chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk)  
Emails General : [oldham@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:oldham@mlfhs.org.uk)  
Email Newsletter Ed : [Oldham\\_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:Oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk)

**MLFHS mailing address is:** Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society,  
3rd Floor, Manchester Central Library, St. Peter's Square, Manchester, M2 5PD, United Kingdom

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

**May 2023**

## MLFHS - Oldham & District Branch Newsletter

### Where to find things in the newsletter:

|                                     |         |                               |         |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Oldham Branch News : .....          | Page 2  | MLFHS Facebook picks .....    | Page 28 |
| Other Branches' News : .....        | Page 8  | Peterloo Bi-Centenary : ..... | Page 29 |
| MLFHS Updates : .....               | Page 8  | Need Help! : .....            | Page 29 |
| Societies not part of MLFHS : ..... | Page 10 | Useful Website Links : .....  | Page 30 |
| 'A Mixed Bag' : .....               | Page 12 | Gallery : .....               | Page 32 |
| From the e-Postbag : .....          | Page 25 |                               |         |

### Branch Information & News :

#### Branch Officers for 2023 -2024 :

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



Gillian and Linda manning the Oldham & District Branch Stall at the Family History Fair in Manchester Library, March 2023

#### Links to the Website :



['Where to Find it'](#)

On the Oldham & District Website Pages



Newsletter ['Snippets' Page](#)

Find Articles, Transcriptions and Gallery Images you missed



**Oldham & District Branch Meetings :**

**For current information on all M&LFHS Meetings, and other public activities,  
Please check on the Branch website pages for updated information.**

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

~~~~~

**Chairman's remarks :**

Hello and welcome to the May newsletter.

Our Annual Members Meeting was held in Oldham Library before our meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> April. The meeting was chaired by Mr David Muil. Joan Harrison has stepped down from the Branch Secretary role for health reasons, but we have a volunteer who we hope will fill this role. We also welcomed two new committee members, Pat Etchells and Hilary Hartigan. The Chairman, Treasurer, Newsletter and Website personnel remain the same.

Below is a full copy of my report to the Branch Members.

**OLDHAM & DISTRICT BRANCH  
REPORT FOR AGM  
8th APRIL 2023**

I am happy to report that the Oldham Branch continues to attract a good audience on Zoom. Also the number of people attending the Branch meetings in person has increased over the past 12 months.

We were again asked by Oldham Local Studies if we would attend the Oldham Family History week, as well as Heritage Week in September, which we did. Both events were not particularly well attended which was rather disappointing for us.

We also attended the Fair in Manchester Central Library in March, which was well attended and we also attended at the Huddersfield Family History Society Fair in October 2022. This particular event was very well attended by the public, with over 400 people coming through the door and was well represented by a variety of groups as well as other family history societies.

The Oldham website has grown quite a lot with several interesting projects and stories being added. If you are unsure as to how to navigate the website, we are thinking of holding an informal meeting at some point this year to show you around.

We are still advertising our meetings on the Family History Federation Website.

Also in 2022 the Branch took the view that we should invest in some new equipment, particularly with the advent of Zoom. We therefore purchased the following:

**Major purchases:**

2021 June Projector ..... £370

2022 April 360 degree microphone.. £ 33

2022 July Acer Laptop ..... £600

2022 Cable covers (5) for the floor (Health & Safety requirement in the room) £78.00

Plus, a number of miscellaneous, necessary peripherals including software, Ethernet & hdmi cables.

**Still to consider for purchase :**

Sound system (2 microphones and a mixer/receiver) probably about £100 (none available in the library)

In September, we felt it appropriate to cancel our meeting on hearing of the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Our Speaker agreed and we said we would re-book him some other time. He was quite happy with this. An "emergency newsletter" was sent out and a notice was put on the website. I also went to the Library to inform people who did turn up that the meeting was

cancelled. They appreciated this gesture.

In December we arranged to get together with the Oldham Historical Research Group on Zoom and held a Christmas Quiz. This was well attended and everyone seemed to enjoy the evening.

In January and February 2023 we were unable to book any of the rooms at the Library as they were being used for Library events. The March meeting was cancelled because of the heavy snowfall and icy conditions under foot. We therefore held all those meetings on Zoom.

Enjoy reading the rest of this month's newsletter.

Best Wishes

Linda Richardson

Chairman, Oldham Branch

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

~~~~~

### **Editor's remarks.**

Hi Everyone,

Our April Branch meeting was the first of our 'library only' talks for 2023, and our return to the Library since our last meeting there in November. It was also the occasion of our Annual Meeting to take care of the 'nitty gritty' of organising the Branch activities. Happily, everything went to plan and there were no disaffected hecklers in our lovely audience! After the necessary 'bits' we passed on to a most interesting talk on '*Manchester Avro*.' Quite a number of us had a personal interest, having someone in our ancestry who was connected with the company. My own mother worked at the Avro's factory in Ashton-under-Lyne, during WW2, making components for the *Lancaster* bomber.

Our May Meeting sees a return visit by Douglas Jackson, with a talk on the Tiffany Windows. Douglas visited Oldham for our first hybrid meeting in 2022, to talk to us about a local man who was a designer for Tiffany Glass in America and was instrumental in saving a collection and bringing them back to Lancashire. If you missed the talk, the write-up of that talk is in the May 2022 newsletter and MLFHS members' Journal.

In the Mixed Bag we have more pages from *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men* ... this month, we can read further chapters on Church Street. We can also read more stories and anecdotes, from '*Short Stories about Failsworth Folk*' by Sim Schofield. However, I've left out one story of his about shooting sparrows that I found too difficult, to include, with our 21st century respect for animal welfare ... not that Sim was in favour of it - merely reporting life at the time.

As always, I have enjoyed transcribing the pages from both books and hope, as ever, you also find them enjoyable, informative and, perhaps, even useful!!

In the Postbag, I always look forward to receiving one of Julie Schwethelm's '*Random Recollections*' and this month I've included the one I saved from last month; this month we have '*Ballet Shoes and Brownie Berets*' to enjoy. Usually Julie's offerings nudge my memories but ballet and Brownies didn't impact on my own childhood! There is also a link to a collection of historical maps and oddities to browse online. Finally, from Sue Forshaw, we have a link to *Find my Past* which has published the Oldham Rate books 1841 - 1936.

In the updates section of the Branch website pages [HERE](#) you can find links to some new additions to the website, including, *The 1895 Register of People Entitled to Vote in St. Paul's Ward, Oldham*; '*Women's Suffrage : Biographical Sketches Of Miss Becker*', by Helen Blackburn pub. in 1902; '*Oldhamers at the Battle of Waterloo, in 1815*'; and, '*1799 ... residents of Oldham centre who might be considered for the Militia in the case of French Invasion*' Frank's talk, in April, was another fascinating and informative talk ... write up, as usual, in the

Branch section.

In the Gallery I've included a picture, from '*Short Stories about Failsworth Folk*', of the 19th century Failsworth Loyal Pole. It reminded me that I had a pamphlet from 1924, in which the dangerous state of the Pole was of concern and there was an appeal for contributions to replace it. I've included some of the contents, history and pictures from it. You'll also be able to see some photos, in the Gallery, from the MLFHS Family History Fair in March.

Finally, my chosen image, for the front page of the newsletter, is of Gill and Linda manning the Branch stall at the Fair.

Sheila

I am always very happy to receive articles, pictures etc., for the 'Mixed Bag' in the newsletter, copyright is always a tricky issue so do please make sure that you have the right to use any text or illustrations that you send! It is also helpful if you include mention of your source material.

You will retain copyright of any contributions that you send, whilst allowing MLFHS to re-use the material in an appropriate manner.

Editor reserves the right to edit any contributions before publication.

email me at : < Oldham\_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk >

**Please note**, regarding using the links to website pages or .pdf documents : if clicking on a link when the newsletter is viewed on the internet, 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.

~~~~~

## Oldham & District Branch

### *Monthly Meetings*

#### *Last Month's Meeting - April*

#### **The Branch's Annual Meeting**

The short Annual Branch Meeting was held before our talk on *Manchester Avro*, given by Frank Pleszak. The meeting was kindly chaired by David Muir, MLFHS Chairman, at the invitation of our Branch Chairman, Linda Richardson. The Minutes of the last meeting (2022) were read and accepted; Reports from Committee Officers were circulated and accepted; Committee Members expressing a willingness to stay were confirmed in office. The Annual Meeting closed and our Monthly (April) meeting, with Frank's talk about Manchester Avro was started.

After the meeting, Jan Costa, kindly expressed an interest in becoming the new Branch Secretary and will be co-opted onto the committee.

~~~~~



Saturday  
8th April  
at  
2 pm



Lancaster sections transported from Chadderton by road to Woodford for assembly

#### **Manchester AVRO**

*"Avro is one of the most famous names in the aircraft industry. It is synonymous with some of the most iconic aeroplanes ever built. As a company it was based around Manchester and the north west for its entire life; but we are very lucky that it was. My talk isn't about the various*

*fabulous aircraft that they produced, though some will get mentioned, but details the fascinating history of the company and its long association with our region."*

An illustrated presentation given by author Frank Pleszak

A library-only meeting in the Performance Space at Oldham Library.

Frank started off by introducing himself as an author and, unexpectedly, a bee keeper! A man with many interests, he came to Oldham to give us his talk on the history of the local aircraft manufacturing company, AVRO.

The founder of the company was Edwin Alliott Verdon Roe, the son of Dr. Edwin Roe and Annie Verdon, who was born in Patricroft, Barton upon Irwell, in 1877. He had three sisters and three brothers. Alliott (as he was to be known) spent some of his early years living in London with his family. When he was 14 he went to Canada, hoping to train as a surveyor, but found so little demand for surveyors that, a year later, he returned to the UK and served an apprenticeship with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, in Bolton. His real interest, at the time, became marine engineering and he subsequently applied to join the Royal Navy. His application was unsuccessful but he was undeterred and joined the Merchant Navy. During his time at sea, as an engineer, he saw the possibility of flight as he observed birds soaring above his ship.

In 1906, he had the good fortune to impress Charles Rolls (of Rolls Royce fame) when he applied for a job, at the Royal Aero Club. Rolls, who was the same age as Alliott, was also fascinated by the concept of flying machines and the two men were in touch with the Wright Brothers in America. Rolls bought a Wright aircraft but, in 1910, during a flying display in Bournemouth, he crashed and was killed.

After a brief period of time, whilst working as a draughtsman, in Denver, in the USA, Alliott resigned and returned to the UK following arguments over design and his salary.

In 1907, whilst using a location at Lea Marshes, near London, he won a Daily Mail competition for a model made from a design for an aircraft capable of sustained flight. His prize was the princely sum (at that time) of £75. He had entered three designs and, with the prize money and the support of his brother, Humphrey, who gave him the use of a barn at his home in London, Alliott built a full size aeroplane from his winning design. He tested the 'Roe 1 biplane' at Brooklands and made a successful, controlled flight in 1909. There were new difficulties in finding locations to build and test fly his aircraft, but he persevered and, in January 1910, he founded the A.V. Roe Aircraft Company, with Humphrey, which would then become Avro Aircraft. They based their manufacturing base in Humphrey's Brownsfield Mill, in Ancoats, Manchester.

The component parts of the aircraft were built in Ancoats, transported to London Road Station (now Piccadilly) and taken by rail down to Brooklands (then under new management) where the aeroplanes were assembled and tested. All the time, the company was needing more and more space for construction. In 1911, Roy Chadwick was employed as a draughtsman, as the construction business expanded and, in 1913 the company moved to Clifton Street, Miles Platting.

In 1914, Roy Dobson, joined the company and, with Roy Chadwick, they became a formidable design and construction team. The most popular design was the Avro 504 and more than 8,300 were sold, firstly to the Royal Flying Corps (later the Royal Air Force) mainly for use in training but, during the war, in combat situations. During WW1, the company, as always, was needing more and more mill and factory space to build the aircraft components. They used several locations, including those in an extension of the Mather and Platt works at Newton Heath and also Evans Bellhouse timber merchants at Failsworth. The Gorse Mill, on Broadway in Chadderton, was utilised and had a small airstrip at the side. The AVRO offices were in the nearby 'Boat & Horses' public house.

The first purpose built aerodrome, in the area, was at Trafford Park from about 1911 but, in 1917, a new site was chosen for the second, and Alexandra Park Aerodrome came into being in 1918. It was used, in the last months of the war, for the assembly, test flying and delivery of aeroplanes for the (RAF) built in the Manchester area by Avro. The sections were put together at Newton Heath and a National Aircraft Factory at Heaton Chapel, and then brought to the aerodrome for assembly and test flights.

With increasing orders, and limited suitable locations, nearby, from which to fly aircraft, Alliott envisaged an ambitious plan to find a location in which to build, and fly the aircraft but also include 450 new homes for the workers. He selected the Hamble, near Portsmouth so that he could also construct seaplanes. Sadly, wartime shortages and difficulties meant that his grand plan never came to fruition.

After WW1, orders dropped off and Avro had turn to other ways of keeping in business. The company ran air flights from Alexandra Park to Blackpool. They operated short pleasure trips from Southport, Blackpool and Windermere. They had already been designing aircraft that could take off from water and these were used for some of the trips. They operated 200,000 pleasure trips without an accident.

The company was struggling for investment and, in 1920, Crossley Motors, in need of more space for building their vehicles, acquired a controlling interest in Avro, whilst retaining the Avro name. In 1924, land use at Alexandra Park was changed and Avro was once again looking for another location. It was found at New Hall Farm at Woodford. A hangar, at Alexandra Park, was dismantled and re-assembled at Woodford. Component parts were still assembled at Newton Heath.

Four years later, in 1928, Crossley Motors sold their Avro holding to Armstrong Siddeley Holdings. In that same year, Alliott Roe sold his own holdings, resigned from the company and founded the Saunders-Roe Company, basing it at Hamble. After WW2 this company would develop innovative and radical designs for combat aircraft and seaplanes.

Back to the 1930s and Roy Chadwick remained with Avro at Newton Heath where aircraft for the RAF continued to be designed. In 1935, the Avro production company passed to Hawker Siddeley when the two companies merged. In 1938, Avro opened its factory at Greengate, Chadderton. The new aerodrome, at Ringway, Manchester, became operational in 1938, and a few months later Avro had an 'Experimental Department' and a new factory at Yeadon, near Leeds.

As the prospect of war loomed over the horizon, attention again turned to designing aircraft for combat. The Avro 'Manchester' was designed and built to carry a payload of bombs. The biggest of its problems lay with its two inefficient and unreliable engines. However, it was the forerunner of the 'Lancaster' bomber, with its four merlin engines, making it the iconic, famous and most successful heavy bomber of WW2.

The component parts for the Lancaster were built at multiple sites across innumerable towns in the region ... including Ashton, Audenshaw, Wythenshawe, Leeds, Failsworth, Royton, Middleton, Oldham, Dukinfield, Hazel Grove and many more. The components were assembled into the various sections at Chadderton, they were transported to Woodford for assembly then on to Ringway for testing.

Over 7,000 Lancasters were built and production was day in and day out, producing up to 5 aeroplanes each day during the war. The war years for the company weren't without their own disasters as, in 1940, the factory at Chadderton was hit by a bomb but, as it was a holiday, no-one was hurt but storage took a hit and rivets were mixed and scattered in all directions. How to sort them quickly? There was a call to Henshaw's School for the Blind and the students, with their superior dexterity, were able to rapidly sort them out again. In another bombing incident, much valuable archival materials including documents relating to the early years of the

company, were destroyed. In an attack, a bomb hit the factory and destroyed a production line and a prototype 748 Vulcan.

After WW2 Avro continued producing aeroplanes for the Air Ministry and Chadwick's attention was on civil aviation whilst overseeing designs for the Avro 'Vulcan'.

In 1947, Ray Chadwick died in an accident, whilst on a test flight, from Woodford, of a prototype for the Avro 'Tudor'. Sadly, it was as a result of some essential wiring being wired back to front; as a result, the pilot lost control of the aircraft which crashed.

The final years saw Avro aircraft continue being designed and built, with the Vulcan's distinctive design being the most memorable for many of us.

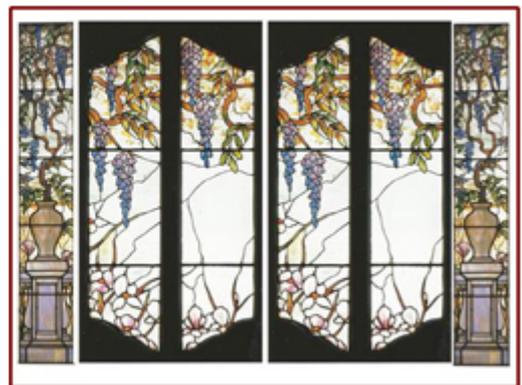
In 1963, there was another rationalisation of the aircraft industry and the Avro name finally disappeared when the company became Hawker Siddeley Aviation.

Many thanks to Frank for such an interesting and informative talk, packed with illustrations and a vintage newsreel clip.

~~~~~  
**Oldham & District Hybrid Meeting - May**



Saturday  
13th May  
at  
2 pm



**The Tiffany Windows**

An illustrated presentation given by Douglas Jackson

*"Douglas's latest talk for us is about Tiffany stained glass windows, in which Joseph Briggs, born in Accrington, Lancashire, specialised. The company, in America, produced over 5,000 windows and sold them all over the world. While only six came to Britain, they are all linked to a fascinating series of events, and of people both famous and infamous."*

Douglas Jackson, a journalist and writer, has made several visits to America to research the life of Joseph Briggs, and has produced a book on his work.

A Hybrid Meeting on zoom and in the Performance Space at Oldham Library.

\* Booking on Eventbrite is necessary for attendance on zoom and is free to members and non-members alike. [HERE](#)

\* No booking is necessary for attendance in the library. Free to MLFHS members and £3 for non-members.

~~~~~  
Details, of the 2023 programme of talks, are on the '*Meetings*' page of the Branch website [HERE](#)

**MLFHS Branches delivering their monthly meetings and talks**

**Anglo - Scots ... May**

|   |                              |                             |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| MLFHS,<br>ANGLO-SCOTTISH<br>BRANCH<br>MEETING | MAY<br>Coronation<br>Weekend | No<br>Meeting<br>this Month |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

Booking for zoom on [Eventbrite](#)

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



**Bolton ... hybrid meeting**

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| MLFHS<br>Bolton Branch<br>Meetings -<br>Hybrid | Wednesday<br>3rd<br>May<br>at<br>7:30 pm | <i>Bolton Wanderers<br/>a 100 years<br/>Anniversary</i><br>given by<br>Simon Marland |
|--|--|--|

**Hybrid Meeting ... on zoom and on screen in the venue**  
at Bolton Arena, Arena Approach Horwich BL6 6LB

Booking for zoom on [Eventbrite](#)

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



**MLFHS updates**

**Manchester Meetings in May**

All Meetings in May held in Manchester Central library ... Bookings on [Eventbrite](#)

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| MLFHS<br>aka<br>Manchester<br>Ancestors | Wednesday<br>10th<br>May<br>at<br>10:30 am | <b>Your DNA<br/>Results - Updated!</b><br>given by<br>Hilary Hartigan |
|---|--|---|

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>MLFHS<br/>aka<br/>Manchester<br/>Ancestors</p> | <p>Wednesday<br/>10th<br/>May<br/>at<br/>1:00 pm</p>  | <p>'Searching for<br/>Samuel - a<br/>fortune never made'<br/>given by<br/>Chris Tombs</p> |
| <p>MLFHS<br/>aka<br/>Manchester<br/>Ancestors</p> | <p>Friday,<br/>26th<br/>May<br/>at<br/>11:00 am</p>   | <p>'1921<br/>Census'<br/>given by<br/>Leslie Turner</p>                                   |
| <p>MLFHS<br/>aka<br/>Manchester<br/>Ancestors</p> | <p>Saturday,<br/>27th<br/>May<br/>at<br/>10:30 am</p> | <p>'The 1939<br/>Register'<br/>given by<br/>Barry Henshall</p>                            |

Keep an eye on the following pages, as some meetings may be added at short notice.

MLFHS Manchester,  
Website Events Page [HERE](#)

MLFHS Manchester,  
Eventbrite Bookings [HERE](#)

~~~~~  
**MLFHS Online Bookshop:** [HERE](#).

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

~~~~~  
**MLFHS Manchester & Branch e-Newsletters**

MLFHS Manchester and each of the MLFHS branches publish a monthly e-newsletter which provides useful news items and articles etc. The e-newsletters are free and available to both members and non-members of MLFHS Society. Members receive the Manchester newsletter automatically and non-members can browse the archive and download any they wish. You can sign up to receive the Branches' newsletter links monthly, by following the links, below. To sign-up, for a Branch newsletter, to be emailed each month, simply click the appropriate link below and complete the short form on the e-newsletter page, where you will also find copies of all past issues to browse.

[MLFHS \(Manchester\)](#)    [Bolton](#)    [Oldham](#)    [Anglo-Scottish](#)

~~~~~

**MLFHS Updates to the Great Database** (located in the Members' area of the Website) **Emails to the Members' forum**, from John Marsden (webmaster), listing the updates.

\* I have just added a new document to the online Reference Library - see main menu, Research, Reference Library or direct at

<https://mlfhs.uk/research/reference/reference-library>

This is a schedule of the key dates and changes affecting parish registers in England & Wales.

If anyone spots any errors or omissions, please let me know.

Special thanks to Gary Fisher for proof-reading (and improving) the text.

~~~~~

\* Another substantial addition to the Great Database:

Added 2,636 BMD announcements from Manchester Courier for 1845.

Transcribed by Linda Bailey, Laura Lewis, Chris Norcross and Chris Hall.

This impressive dataset now contains just over 55,000 entries. Well done to all concerned.

~~~~~

\* I have just added a further 859 references to streets and principal buildings relating to the Alan Godfrey maps for Pendlebury 1907 and Salford West 1931.

Thanks to Simon Harmsworth for these additions.

~~~~~

\* Manchester School for the Deaf & Dumb :

Although we had believed that this project was finished, a volume of admission documents for admissions 1849-1853 thought to be missing was found. These 53 admissions have been added to the Great Database.

Thanks to Jim Chadwick and his team for this work.

~~~~~

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

Added 35,807 Births for Bolton RD comprising:

Bolton A (2000-2007)

Bolton B (1999-2007)

Bolton D (1996-2007)

Thanks are due to Bob Winder and his team for these. This batch completes the indexing of Bolton births up to 2007, at which time registration was transferred to the online registration system. Congratulations to Bob and the many volunteers who have worked on his team and who have spent many years working on this project, indexing a total of 937,976 births, all of which include the mother's maiden name.

~~~~~

All MLFHS publications previously issued as CDs/DVDs have now been converted into downloadable files with consequent reductions in price and saving the ever-increasing costs of postage - particularly to purchasers outside the UK.

The full catalogue can be found at :

<https://www.mlfhs-shop.co.uk/collections/downloads>

~~~~~

**Meetings and Talks at other Societies &/or Venues**

**Please note ...**

**Please check society/group websites or organisers for updated information**

~~~~~

**Oldham Historical Research Group: ... on zoom**



**Information update ...**

Please keep an eye on the Eventbrite bookings page or sign up to 'follow' and receive a notification when an occasional new meeting is planned.

Everyone will be welcome ... More details and free booking will be on [Eventbrite](#)  
Your support for our meetings was, and still is, appreciated and, if you would like more information, please email me at < [pixnet.sg@gmail.com](mailto:pixnet.sg@gmail.com) >.

Website [HERE](#)

**Moorside & District Historical Society ... Monday 15th May at 7:30**

**Moorside & District Historical Society**  
**Monday 15th MAY 2023.**



Short AGM followed by

Times Past

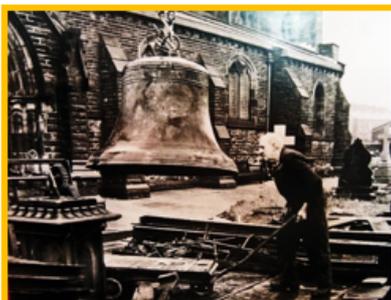
**"James Mellodew"**

Contribution to St Thomas' Church

150th Anniversary of the **Bells & Clock** etc.



illustrated presentation by Mike Smith  
Plus a tour of the tower may be possible.



**NOTE Venue**

**To be held in Moorside St Thomas' Church, OL1 4SJ**

7-30 p.m. all are welcome.

**Church, Lounge**

No meetings in the summer break July & August + December.

£2 including refreshment.

**Saddleworth Historical Society** ... Wednesday 10th May at 7:30

***"The Oaks Disaster (Black Snow) - A Batley Colliery Mining Disaster."***

an illustrated presentation given by Paul Darlow

7:30 at the Saddleworth Museum Gallery.

At this meeting Society members are free, but a charge to non-members is applicable on the door of £3. All are welcome. Refreshments are available.

Website [HERE](#)

**Saddleworth Civic Trust** has no meeting or event planned in May or June.

If & when this situation changes members of the Society will be notified directly and through the local Press.

~~~~~

**Library Events & Gallery talks at Gallery Oldham;** [HERE](#)

on [Eventbrite](#) and [Instagram](#)

~~~~~

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

See their website [HERE](#)

~~~~~

**Tameside History Club :**

Meetings on zoom.

Website and programme

&

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

Website and programme [HERE](#)

~~~~~

**Regional Heritage Centre :**

Website [HERE](#)

~~~~~

**'A Mixed Bag'**

Continuing the serialisation of:

***'Short Stories about Failsworth Folk'***

Reprinted, with additions, from the '*Oldham Chronicle*' & '*Manchester City News*'

by Sim Schofield pub. 1905

**p.17**

**HARD TREATMENT OF WEAVERS.**

The hand-loom weavers at one time were badly treated by some of the silk manufacturers. It got to be a custom with one or two to try and find some flaw in what had been woven, and for every such flaw they were fined, or what they called "bated." I have heard of a weaver having two very small holes in the cloth he had woven. The "putter out" told him he would be fined sixpence for each hole. The weaver inquired if the fine was the same whatever the size of the hole was. On being told that was so, he asked to see the cloth, which was handed to him. He then tore both holes into one, remarking as he did so, "That saves me sixpence."

There was one master who became such a tyrant with the weavers that they made an effigy of him, and hung it between two ash trees near Wrigley Head. I remember seeing the effigy, for it hung between the trees for some time. Many people came from far and near to see this effigy, and the farmer in whose field the trees stood offered half a crown to anyone who would cut it

down, in order to put a stop to the trespass on his land. Two men whom I knew very well undertook to cut the effigy down. One of these men went up the tree, and the other remained at the bottom, he being a very timid person. The one who went up the tree, knowing the weakness of his companion, and desiring to have a little fun with him, after cutting the rope, managed to let the effigy drop on the watcher.

“Owd Tum,” as he was called, concluding the effigy was “wick,” at once took to his heels, crying out as he ran across the field, “Murder!” The effigy was afterwards burned, and the two weavers shared the half-crown together.

#### **p.18**

So it would appear that the poor weavers managed to get some fun and enjoyment even out of their struggles and trials.

But the “putters-out” and masters were not all tyrants. There were some kind-hearted and feeling men amongst them. I remember once being at a warehouse when a weaver was told he would have to wait three or four hours before the warp would be ready for him. While he was waiting, the master came out, and said, “Will you go and have a bit of dinner with me while your warp is being got ready?” As I was waiting, too, for a warp, he turned to me and said, “Here’s sixpence for thee, lad; go and get something to eat whilst you are waiting.” I need not say how greatly such acts of kindness were appreciated, for I durst not have spent a penny of the wages my parents had earned with weaving, and I had not even tasted food that day- I can well remember buying sixpennyworth of broken biscuits at a shop in Swan Street with the money, and taking half of them home with me to share with my brother and sister. At that time I often had a craving for Eccles-cakes, but these were out of my reach, and I then thought that if ever I got “better off” I would have a royal feast of such dainties.

It was a common thing to see a weaver at the ripe age of eighty following his employment. There used to be a family in the district, and if any member of it died under the age of eighty the survivors would clamour for an inquest, whatever was the cause of death. Evidently they had an impression that the deceased had not lived his time, and that he had met with some foul play if death occurred under the age of eighty. That hand-loom weaving was a healthy occupation no one can deny, and certainly there

#### **p.19**

was a high tone of morality amongst them. Parents had their sons and daughters under their own observation, and were well able to check any wayward tendencies. Modern mill-life is far less conducive to morality than was the home-life of the weaver or hatter.

### **BRICKYARDS AND TRADES’ UNIONS.**

Often do we hear in these days persons denouncing trades’ unions, but never will I speak a word against them. I have every reason to feel thankful for what they have done in my behalf. During the “Cotton Panic,” parents were glad to get any kind of work for their children. At a very tender age I was sent to work in a brickyard. There were no fixed hours of labour at that time, and I have worked from four o’clock in the morning until nine in the evening, with but a few minutes’ stoppage for meals. I followed the arduous work of “carrying off” the wet bricks after being moulded, and often have I, when reaching home in the evening, been so tired and worn out that I have had to be lifted into bed, after supper and a wash. There is no easy work for anyone in a brickyard. In my time the Brickmakers’ Union adopted a rule that no moulder should work before six in the morning, nor later than eight in the evening. I cannot tell how gladly I welcomed such a humane rule, for it was simply killing work for any lad, previous to this rule coming into force. Not only did young lads work at this high physical pressure and these long hours, but the moulder, wheeler, and temperer did the same. Often have I known them to get “on the spree” as a mere excuse for physical exhaustion. Thanks to trades’ unions, for they put a stop to this kind of slavery.

### **BRICKYARD STORIES.**

But even in the brickyard we had some really fine, humorous characters. We had one or two good romancers who could spin yarns by the yard. "Jack Lawton" was one, and "Owd Dobbin" was another, and it was a rare treat to hear these two competing with each other in telling romancing tales. Of course the "brickies" were strong men, and prided themselves on their strength. The weavers and hatters used to come to watch us work in the brickfield. Just before one Whitsuntide I remember "Jack Lawton" telling the weavers and hatters that he and "Owd Dobbin" had been waited upon by a deputation from a certain Sunday school asking if they would carry the banner for them for half-a-crown each. "None of the weavers or hatters," Jack said, "were strong enough for the job." On another occasion Jack was telling the hatters of an adventure he once had with a balloon. He said he was up in the clouds, when "th' balloon burst, but happenin' to have some soft soap with him he soaped his clooas an' coom slidin' deawn a rainbow as nice as ninepence." "Owd Dobbin" one morning came into the yard saying to his mates, "There's a sad accident in this morning's pappur. Tichborne has bin liftin' hissel' up in a basket. Th' handles coom off, an' he has had an awful bump."

There is a good story told about "Owd Dobbin" once having a fight with a neighbour in the village. A person named Wright went between the fighters to part them. "Owd Dobbin" by accident gave the "peacemaker" a crack in the shins with his foot. This naturally exasperated Wright, and he called out to Dobbin's opponent, "Gie him a deaun right good heidin', Jammy." The day after the

### **p.21**

battle Dobbin went to Wright to apologise for what he had done at him. Wright said to him, "Thee-goo whoam an' tak' thi sorrow wi' thee, for it winno' cure my shins."

Another bricknaker we had in the village was one who resided not far from our house. One day, he and his wife were quarrelling and fighting in their house, and she was screaming "murther." The late Joseph Hibbert, a mild and peace-loving character, happened to be passing at the time. He rushed into the house with the object of separating the disputants, but he came out quicker than he went in, rubbing his shins, for the brickmaker had kicked him out. He came into our house telling us how he had been treated. Shortly after, the "brickie's" wife came in, and instead of sympathising with the "peace-maker" she said, "It sarves thee reet, theaw should never interfere between mon an' wife." Old Joseph replied, "An' that's o'th' thanks aw get for mi pains, but let me tell thee its tow't me a lesson; theaw'll never catch me tryin' to part yo' again. Aw shanno' soon forget heaw aw've bin trated." Old Joseph went limping home a wiser and a sadder man. I often used to say to him, when we met, "Well, Joseph, an' heaw are yo' gettin' on wi' yo'r peace-makin'?" but his only answer was a kindly smile.

... I remember one of the "brickies" kept pigs. On one occasion the landlord of the public house where he got his ale was looking at them. One of the mates of the "brickie" happened to make the remark - "Aw wonder what owd boniface is doin' lookin' at the pigs?" "Oh," I replied, "he's seein' if th' pigs are grooin' as fast as th' owner's ale score." There was quite an outburst of laughter at this remark of mine, and it got to be a common saying when anyone enquired about my mate's pigs - "Are they grooin' as fast as his ale score?" I had quite overlooked this incident, until a friend reminded me of it a short time since.

### **COPPERNOB'S FUNERAL.**

At one time there lived in Failsworth a person who was known as Coppernob. He was a distant relative of mine, and he was a "great feighter." He fought, not because he bore any ill-will to the one he fought, but because he liked fighting. When he fell ill he fought with sickness, but he was beaten, and he died. At the same time another noted fighter died. It was arranged to bury them both on one day, and to save expense one hearse was hired to take both bodies to

Ashton-under-Lyne. Walking behind the hearse was Coppernob's son. When the hearse was going up the steep brow at Waterhouses, near Daisy Nook, the coffins began to bump against the door of the hearse.

**p.24**

Eventually they burst open the door, and went rolling down the brow towards the brook. Coppernob's lad, who had inherited his father's love of fighting, exclaimed, "Aw'll bet my feythur's ut top. He could allus leather him." Strange to say, when they got to the coffins, Coppernob's was at the top.

### **OTHER STORIES ABOUT FUNERALS.**

Further referring to funerals, I have heard my father say that at one time many of the Failsworth folk used to bury their dead in Middleton Churchyard, and the way they had to take the bier was a distance of nearly five

**p.25**

miles. In those days it was a custom to engage some old pensioners to carry the dead, and pay them well for the job. On one occasion these pensioners were carrying a rather heavy corpse. It was a very warm day. Reaching a certain inn, one of the carriers said to the others, "I say, mates, let's stop here and have a drink." "A very good suggestion," said the others. So they set the bier down in the roadway, went into the inn, and had a drink each, whilst the mourners waited outside. This was repeated so often on the way that, by the time the party reached Middleton, most of the carriers were nearly drunk.

A Failsworth character, known as Duffy, once went to a funeral. At the house, after the burial, the tall silk hats got mixed up. "Owd Duffy" remarked, "Aw con tell mine. Eaur Dan's bin keepin' two sparrows in it for a week."

It is said that at one time there was a "burryin' suit" of clothes, which used to be borrowed for nearly every funeral about Wrigley Head. The clothes did not all belong to one person. The coat was owned by one, the vest and trousers by another, and the silk hat by a third. A queer character once borrowed this suit, and, getting too much drink at the funeral, he undressed himself on his way home, on Wrigley Head Green, calling out, "Neaw, then, come an' sooart yo're own eawt." There were some queer customs connected with funerals in the old days. The clock used to be stopped, and sprigs of rosemary were given to all the mourners, and the departed was thought not to be decently buried if he had not been "well washed down with good fourpenny ale." In those days attendance at a "burryin'" was said to be worth half a crown, and at "weddin's" five shillings.

**p.27**

### **COCK - FIGHTING**

In the old days, cock-fighting was a common form of sport in Failsworth. I have, myself, witnessed when a lad as many as six battles in one day on Wrigley Head Green. I followed the crowd, and went, not because I knew or cared anything for the sport, but simply because it was the general 'custom to go. So common was the sport in Failsworth at that time that cockpits were to be found connected with several of the public houses. I remember one in a room behind a beerhouse in Holebottom, kept at the time by a man named Smethurst. There was another at the back of the Grey Horse Inn, kept by one Jack o' th' Wright's. A little earlier bull-baiting was prevalent on Wrigley Head Green, and sometimes they would even have a bear bated. My father himself was a great lover of this sport, and kept some fine bulldogs.

Sometimes the bull, or bear, would break loose. When this occurred the cry would go forth: "Th' bull's broken loose." The villagers would then close their doors, afraid lest the bull should dart in and play havoc with their furniture. At the annual wakes, cock and dog fighting, bull-baiting, rushcarts, Morris-dancing, and drinking was the form of enjoyment the people had, and the only way most of the inhabitants had of spending their holidays. Many would eat, drink, and gamble

their savings away, and some would run into debt so far that it took them six months to get straight again. All this is now, thank goodness, changed, and when the annual wakes comes round the people have a far more sensible way of spending their savings and holidays. Now they may be seen going to the seaside and other places to recruit their health. Who shall say we

**p.28**

are not making progress, and becoming even more humane in these days of education and enlightenment? But cock-fighting in Failsworth died a very hard death, and it was only by the aid of the strong arm of the law that it was stopped. "Owd Dib," "Yep," and "Sim Pollitt" have passed away, and with them the sport they gloried in. They were the ones who used to fix the steel spurs, and set the cocks at each other. It was a cruel kind of sport, and I often wonder how grown men could take a delight in it.

I am reminded, in writing about sport, of a story told of a Wrigley Head resident once buying a young bear to bait on the village green. Next to his house there was a loom-house. For the convenience of the bear-baiting weaver there had been a brick or two taken out of the wall dividing one loom-house from the other. The bear was put in this place, and on the following morning when the family were coming down the stairs they were faced with the growling bear, which was making its way up the stairs. It seems the bear had got its paws into the opening and made such a gap that it had crept through, and was on its way to take a revenge out of its would-be tormentors. There was quite a scene in the house, bedroom doors being banged to and fastened, and eventually the family were got through the windows and liberated. Finally the bear was secured, and was baited in the usual way on the green.

**THE UGLIEST MAN IN FAILSWORTH.**

"Sim Pollitt," the noted cock fighter, was always said be the most ugly man in Failsworth. Whether it was that the brutalising sport he had taken part in all his life

**p.29**

had left its imprint on his features I cannot say, but certain it was that he was no beauty, for I remember his face well. Pollitt, even himself, was conscious of his ugly physiognomy, as the following story will show.

A brother cock fighter desiring Pollitt's assistance at a battle in another part of the country wrote for him. He knew that Pollitt lived in Failsworth, but that was all he did know of his address. He accordingly sent his letter, and addressed it "To th' feawist chap i' Failsworth." The postman was puzzled where to deliver this letter, for he concluded no one would like to acknowledge this description. Someone suggested to him to take it to "Sim Pollitt." This the postman did. Pollitt was weaving at his loom, and the postman called out what kind of a letter he had. "Sim" sang out, "Bring it in, lad, dunno' be feart, it's beaund to be mine." The letter was opened in the presence of the postman and read, "Sim" all the while saying, "Did nor aw tell thi it wurmine. Theaw sees it's a chap ut wants me to goo an' set a cock for him, for a wager he's made to feight his cock agen another." I knew most of the old cock-fighters, I mean the men who set them against each other, and strange to say none of them were handsome in feature.

**A TOSSING STORY.**

There was another form of amusement, or gambling, which at one time was very common in the district, viz., that of tossing with coins. I have myself seen large gangs of tossers near the Wrigley Head canal bridge. They came from far and near, and some of them even brought their dinners with them, thus spending their Sundays and savings.

**p.30**

When the police began to interfere with the game, even the women in Wrigley Head would come out of their houses, waving a red rag to warn the tossers of their approach. It was a rule with the gamblers that, when the police came, the man who stopped to pick up the money

which lay on the floor could claim it as his own. On one occasion the police got fairly close to the tossers before they were observed. The ring was formed on the canal embankment. One of the tossers, a tall man, stopped to pick up the coins. The police made a grab at him, but he sprang into the canal and waded across. When he had got to the other side, he called out, "Con yo' come?" The police answered, "No." "Well, dominoe, then," said the tosser. Eventually the police got the upper hand of those tossing gangs, and after one person had been sent to the prison for seven days without the option of a fine, tossing was practically put a stop to. I ought to say, in justice to the tossers, that some of them became converted and regular attendants at the Wesleyan Sunday School. Many of them became as good Christians as they were gamblers, and I am now pleased to count some of them as my best friends.

#### **STORY OF A CAMP MEETING.**

After the cock-fighters had been cleared off Wrigley Head Green, temperance and camp meetings took their place, and much good was done in this direction. But there was even humour to be got out of camp meetings. I remember once a converted man was holding forth. He was telling the crowd how wicked he had been; how he had ill-treated his wife by kicking her down the stairs, giving her two black eyes, and bruising her all over her body.

**p.31**

So much did he harrow the feelings of the crowd, that one of the bystanders, no longer able to restrain himself, cried out, "Theaw desarves hangin' for that yet." It is said the convert never repeated the description of his brutal conduct. It taught him a lesson which he never forgot.

#### **THE OLDEST PLACE OF WORSHIP IN FAILSWORTH.**

I should say that by far the oldest place of worship still standing in Failsworth is that of the Wesleyan Chapel, in Evening Street. It is now used as a workshop. John Wesley himself has preached in this building. Behind the place there was a little outhouse built, and there are few persons living who know the origin of this place. In the old days, the "Church and King party" were very powerful in Failsworth, and so strong was the feeling against Dissenters at the time, that the publicans were afraid to put up the horses of the preachers who came to this Wesleyan Chapel. In those days some of the preachers came on horseback to preach.

The Wesleyans, to their credit, were equal to the emergency, and, not to be put down by the "Church and King party" they erected this little place, in which their preachers could put up their horses. This now disused old Wesleyan Chapel has many cherished associations connected with it for some of the old inhabitants. My own mother received her early religious training within its sacred walls, and I shall ever feel grateful to those early and earnest Wesleyans for the religious instruction they imparted to my best earthly friend. No one can fully estimate the good

**p.32**

done by the Wesleyans of Failsworth in the bad old days of cock-fighting, drinking, and gambling.

#### **STORIES ABOUT LOCAL POETS.**

Failsworth has always been noted for its love of music and poetry. There are few places in Lancashire that have produced so many local poets as Failsworth. First and foremost we have our revered and renowned author, Ben Brierley. Then we have Elijah Rydings, John Rydings, Nathan Rydings, Ned Wright, Sam Collins, and a number of very minor poets. It is about one of these very minor poets that I wish to tell a story. Connected with one of the places of worship in the district there used to be a person who rejoiced in the name of "Uncle David." It seems that "Uncle David" was a musician, and played the violin. He not only played the fiddle. but he was the respected leader of the choir at the place of worship where he attended. His services as choirmaster were greatly prized, so much so that it was thought they ought to be immortalised in sacred song. His friends, therefore, gave a commission to a local Sunday school poet to sing his praises in verse, or otherwise adapt a hymn in which "Uncle David" should figure. This

minor poet adopted the second course, and adapted a hymn to sing the praises of “ Uncle David.” This was to be sung at the anniversary services. The hymn adapted was that which runs as follows :-

*“Oh, may our hearts in tune be found  
Like David’s harp of solemn sound.”  
The poet altered it to read : -  
“Oh, may our hearts be tuned within  
Like ‘Uncle David’s’ violin.”*

**p.33**

When the preacher came to the place he was told they had specially adapted a hymn to bring in the leader of their choir. Asking for the copy of the altered hymn, there was great consternation caused when it was found that the valuable manuscript had been lost. The local poet was sought for, and told that the copy had been lost. He was asked to pen another copy. He replied, "Well, aw really forgettun what aw wrote, but aw know it wur summat abeawt a fiddle. However," he said, "aw'll just try an' unbethink mysel', an' write yo' another copy." The poet put his wits together and wrote:-

*“Oh, may our hearts be hiddle diddle  
Like ‘Uncle David’s’ little fiddle.”*

It is needless to say that the praises of “Uncle David” were never sung, and that he died without his fame being chanted by his choir.

Another story told me about one of our very minor poets was one related by the late James Dronsfield. Dronsfield was the local correspondent for the “Oldham Chronicle,” and in his time he wrote some very racy sketches of the folk lore of the district, under the nom-de-plume of “Jerry Lichenmoss.” Dronsfield told me that a collier from Hollins once came to his house and said : - “Jim, aw’ve browt thee a poem,” which he called “An Ode to His Sweetheart,” “an’ aw want thee to put it i’ th’ ‘Chronicle.’” Dronsfield told him to leave it, and he would look it over. The ode was but a short one, and I will give it in full as given to me by Dronsfield. It was as follows:--

*“AN ODE TO MY SWEETHEART.  
Oh, Mary, take a walk with me,  
Where the hedges are budding,  
And the toads are rudding,  
And the birds sing on ev’ry green tree.”*

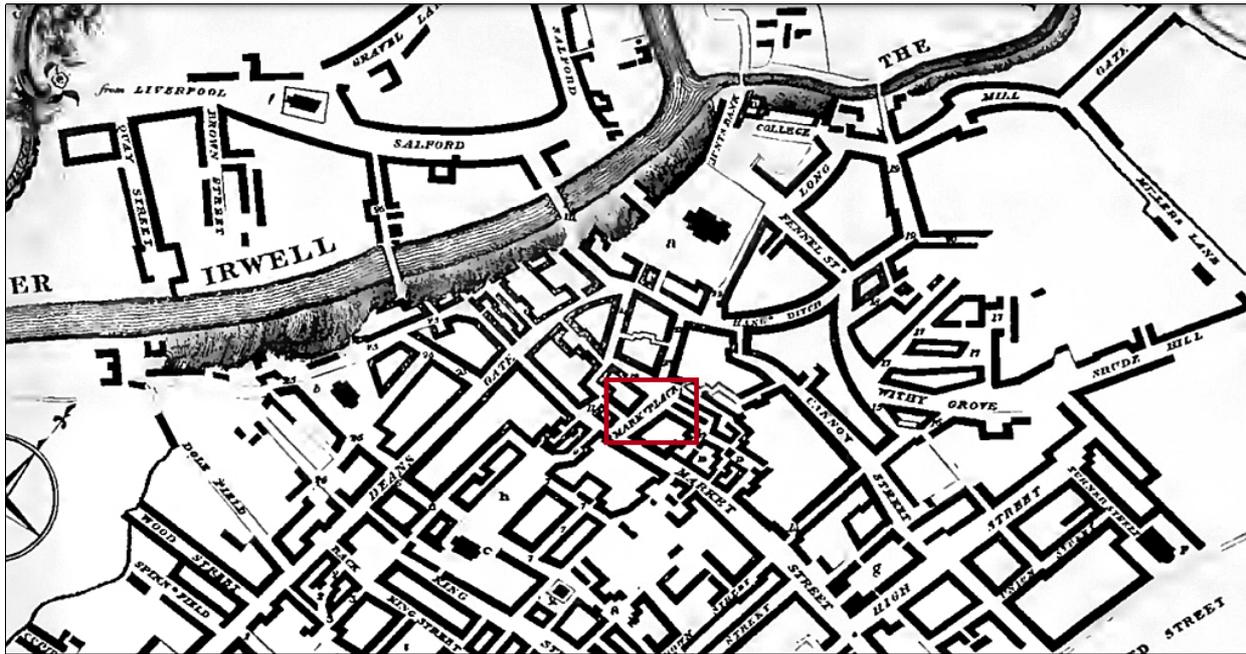
**p.34**

On the Saturday morning the “Chronicles” used to be delivered at Dronsfield’s newsagent shop by the mail cart, about five o’clock. The collier-poet was waiting outside for the mail cart, eager to see his ode in print. When the papers had been delivered he bounded into the shop, calling loudly out, “Let me have an ‘Owdham Chronicle.’” On getting the paper he began to scan it over to see how his ode looked in print. But, alas! it was not to be found. He thus addressed Dronsfield: “Heaw is it, Jim, that poem o’ mine is not i’ th’ pappur?” “Theaw great yorney,” said Dronsfield, “did theaw ever expect ’em printin’ sich like twaddle as that?” The collier returned home a sadder and wiser man, and ever after that the source of his inspiration was dried up.



**Our serialisation of *Manchester Streets & Manchester Men (3rd series)*** started in the newsletter for 2022-12, and through succeeding newsletters. Last month we read the first chapters relating to Church-Street, this month's transcription, below, concludes the chapters on Church-Street.

**Map of Manchester - Salford 1772, with Market Place** (Larger scale on website [HERE](#))  
from: *OLD MANCHESTER - A Series of Views ...* Drawn by Ralston, James, and Others  
Introduction by James Croston, Pub 1875



**CHURCH - STREET ANNALS.**

**PART IV.**

**J. & N. PHILIPS & Co.**

Few names have been better known to Manchester people for the greater part of a century than has been the honoured name of Philips. Not only has it been famous in commercial circles, but no public subscription list organised for any charitable purpose in the city for many generations past has seemed quite complete unless it included the well-known name; and from few indeed of such lists has the name been absent. Not only so, but for nearly a century one or another member of the Philips' family has been taking a leading part in public service in the interest of the citizens. In the ordinary course of things we are able to deal somewhat in detail with reference to many of the names that occupy our attention in the course of our rambles through our well-known streets. In the present case so many names claim our notice and so much is to be said that only brief summaries will be possible. In the first place let us trace the origin of the famous house and the story of its early growth. In 1737 Nathaniel Philips, of Heath House, Staffordshire, died, leaving a son John, who about the same time commenced a village industry at Tean in the same county. He engaged a Dutchman named Van Sanfort to teach the villagers the "art and mystery" of tape making. He was succeeded in the proprietorship of the successful

**p.56**

business thus inaugurated by his sons John and Nathaniel. In this way originated the title of the firm. Both brothers had been educated at the Manchester Grammar School, and when they took over the management of the business the younger brother came to Manchester periodically to purchase materials and to sell the manufactured tapes. Very early in the last century a further step was taken, and in the Manchester Directory for 1808 we find that J. and N. Philips were in business as tape manufacturers at 7, Somerset-street, a little street off Gartside-side. In 1826 the business had been removed to 57, Church-street, where premises of a modest description served the purposes of the embryo concern.

A few years later the first change in the nature of the business transacted by the firm took place, and from time to time since further innovations have been adopted. New departments

were opened in quick succession, until about half a century after the removal to Church-street, the various branches of trade engaged in, embraced most of the articles, apart from food-stuffs, required in the carrying-on of a household. The modest tape-manufacturing concern has become one of the greatest of our home-trade houses, whose employees are legions in number, and which has dealings with all parts of the world. Having thus roughly sketched the history of the concern, let us review some of the public services of the members of that great trading concern. John Philips, who did not come to reside in Manchester, was succeeded by his son, and later by his grandson, Sir George Philips. Nathaniel, on the other hand, settled

**p.57**

at Stand. His son, Robert, had two sons, Mark and Robert Needham, who played an important part in Manchester public life. From his other son, John, there descended another Manchester worthy, Herbert, whose death was so recently mourned. We shall refer to the names in the order in which they have been given, in order to give some appearance of chronological succession.

### **SIR GEORGE PHILIPS.**

Sir George Philips, M.P., the son of Thomas Philips, of Sedgley, was born on March 24th, 1766. He took great interest in political affairs, and in 1782 he issued a pamphlet on "The Necessity of a Speedy and Effective Reform in Parliament." It reads curiously to-day, when the champions of woman suffrage are becoming noisy in the land, that in 1782 the admission of women to the franchise was openly advocated, but such was the case, and George Philips was the champion of the cause. He afterwards entered Parliament, and in recognition of the services he rendered he was on February 21st, 1828, created a baronet. He died on October 3rd, 1847.

### **ROBERT PHILIPS.**

Robert Philips took an active part in many of the political movements that preceded the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. The demand for that reform was strongly supported in Manchester, and was endorsed by many of the leading townsmen. To a generation to whom political matters, except during the progress of a general election, do not appeal very successfully, it may be interesting to read how their grandfathers

**p.58**

thought and acted. Many meetings had been held at which the new Parliament were called upon to pass a measure which should confer political rights upon thousands who were entirely unrepresented under the then existing state of affairs.

The new Parliament met on December 6th, 1831, and six days later Lord John Russell brought forward a new Reform Bill. After a prolonged sitting, the measure passed its second reading in the early hours of Sunday December 18th, by a majority of 162. The committee stage was prolonged by many debates, but on March 22nd the Bill was sent to the House of Lords by a majority of 116. On April 5th it passed the second reading by the narrow majority of nine in a House of 359. It soon became evident that the majority were determined to mutilate the measure, and early in May the Government resigned. The Duke of Wellington was sent for, but the people rose, and from all parts of the country came demands for reform. The news of the resignation reached Manchester on Thursday, May 10th, and immediately a petition was decided upon. Placards were printed and posted, copies of the petition were distributed for signature and were afterwards collected, and within twelve hours of the receipt of the news a document bearing the signatures of twenty-four thousand inhabitants left Manchester in a chaise and four for London. As it became known what the nature of the errand was, great crowds cheered the passage of the vehicle through the towns en route, and seventeen hours after leaving our city the chaise drew up in Palace Yard. Not only so, but printed copies of the petition were distributed

**p.59**

in every town and village through which it had passed. In this way was the attention of the nation quickened to the importance of the situation.

On the following Monday a great meeting was held on St. Peter's Field at which 40,000 persons were present. The chair was taken by C. J. S. Walker (popularly known as Button-up Walker), whose father had suffered in the cause forty years before, and the first resolution was proposed by Robert Philips, and seconded by his son-in-law, Robert Hyde Greg. The resolution reads somewhat curiously to us. It was to the following effect :—

“That this meeting has heard of the virtual loss of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords, and the consequent resignation of Earl Grey and his colleagues with such sentiments as it becomes Englishmen to entertain when their best interests are basely sacrificed to the selfish views of a faction.”

The feeling in all parts of the country was intense, and it was only the timely intervention of the Sovereign that prevented what would probably have ended in a revolution.

The Bill passed, and Manchester as a result became entitled to two seats in the House of Commons. Mr. Philips' public services were so generally recognised that at the time of Queen Victoria's Coronation the Government of Lord Melbourne offered him a baronetcy, which, with the concurrence of his eldest son, he declined. Apart from political matters Mr. Philips never wearied in well-doing. He was one of the founders of the Manchester Deaf and Dumb School and Asylum, and supported by generous contributions and in many other ways every charitable institution in the town. For over

**p.60**

sixty years he was a member of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society ; and was also an active worker in connection with the Manchester New College, to which he contributed £500 and acted as president from 1834 to 1837. He died, full of honours, at the Park, Stand, on March 14th, 1844, aged 84, and was interred at the Stand Presbyterian Chapel.

#### **PART V.**

#### **MARK PHILIPS, M.P.**

Mark Philips, son of Robert Philips, previously referred to, was born at the Park, on November 4th, 1800. He received his education at Nottingham, and afterwards at the Manchester College, York, where he remained for three years, finishing at Glasgow University. He afterwards devoted himself to commercial matters, and at the age of twenty-five was appointed the chairman of the New Quay Company. Like his father, he held advanced Liberal views commencing his political career by taking part in a meeting held in Manchester on August 19th, 1826, called to express sympathy with the working classes in the sufferings they were enduring, and to denounce the iniquities of the Corn Laws. From that time forward the name was associated with every similar gathering held in the town, and when, under the Reform Bill of 1832, Manchester was enfranchised, he, along with C. P. Thomson, were selected as the Liberal candidates, the Conservatives selecting J. T. Hope, the Whigs S. Jones Lloyd, and the Radicals William Cobbett. In the end Mr. Philips headed the poll with 2,923 votes, his colleague being second with 2,068, and Cobbett being last with 1,305. At the general election of 1835 the members were re-elected, but Mr. Philips stood second. It may be noted that in those days the election extended over two days, that in 1832 taking place on December 13th and

**p.62**

14th. In 1837, and again in 1841, Mr. Philips was re-elected, heading the poll on the latter occasion. T. Milner Gibson taking the place of R. H. Greg, who in turn succeeded the Right Hon. C. P. Thomson, who had retired in 1839. In 1847 Mr. Philips retired from the representation of the city, and, purchasing an estate in Warwickshire, devoted himself to the duties of a country life.

One of the last of his public services to the city prior to his removal to Warwickshire was the

part played in the inauguration of our public parks. In August, 1844, a great public meeting was held in the Town Hall for the purpose of considering the matter. A subscription list was opened, to which Mr. Philips contributed £1,000, and as a result of the efforts made three estates were purchased. The Lark Hill estate was purchased from William Garnett for £5,000, the Hendham Hall estate from Jonathan Andrew for £7,250, and the Bradford estate from Lady Houghton for £6,200. The first named contained 32 acres, the second 30, and the third 31, and when on August 22nd, 1846, they opened with great rejoicings, they were named respectively Peel, Queen's, and Philips Parks. Mr. Philips' last public appearance in the city was in October, 1871, when he was present at the banquet held at the Free Trade Hall, to celebrate the opening of the Reform Club. He died at his residence, Welcombe, Stratford-on-Avon, on December 23rd, 1873.

### **R. N. PHILIPS, M.P.**

R. N. Philips was the younger son of Robert Philips. He was born at the Park in 1815, and received his education at Rugby and at the Manchester New College at

#### **p.63**

York. Having completed his education he entered upon a commercial career, becoming in course of time a partner in the Church-street house. Like his brother, he commenced taking an active interest in public affairs, entering the House of Commons in 1857 as the representative of Bury. After two years' service he was rejected in 1859, but in July, 1865, he was again returned to Parliament. On that occasion he declined to say or do anything in support of his own candidature, but so popular was he that he was returned by a substantial majority. He held the seat for twenty years, retiring in 1885. In Parliament he was not a frequent speaker, but for many years he exerted an influence equalled by few of his contemporaries. When Mr. Gladstone introduced his Home Rule Bill, Mr. Philips joined the Unionist section of the Liberal party, and his later years were marked by incidents which caused much bitterness in the minds of the more advanced members of the Liberal party. Generous to a degree, Mr. Philips was a supporter of many philanthropic movements and Institutions. Perhaps the Institution that ever had his keenest sympathy was Henshaw's Blind Asylum. On the death of his brother he succeeded to the latter's large fortune and estate of Snitterfield and Welcombe, in Warwickshire. As a landlord he was considerate and generous, providing schools for the young of Snitterfield and club buildings for the adults, and spending over £2,000 in draining the village. He also provided fine club buildings at Stratford-on-Avon. He died at Stratford on February 28th, 1890, and was buried at Stand Chapel.

#### **p.64**

### **HERBERT PHILIPS.**

Leaving the Stand branch of the family we turn our attention to John Philips, the eldest son of Nathaniel Philips, who succeeded to the landed property owned by his father in Staffordshire, whither he removed about 1809. John Philips does not appear to have taken a prominent part in public work. He was succeeded in the ownership of the estate at Heybridge by his son Robert, so named after his uncle. Herbert Philips, whose death occurred about a year ago, was a son of Robert Philips, and was born at Heybridge in 1834. He was educated at Harrow, and at the age of eighteen entered upon a commercial career at the Church-street house. Unlike the other eminent members of the family to whom reference has been made, politics, at any rate party politics, did not appeal to him very strongly. His public life - and few Manchester men have lived lives which have been fraught with so much benefit to the citizens as did Herbert Philips - was devoted to the furtherance of a number of philanthropic movements. The subject which demanded most of his attention was the provision of open spaces in densely populated districts, for the purpose of recreation. When the Manley Hall estate was in the market he organised a movement to induce the Corporation to purchase it. He failed in his object, and a

large portion of the estate is now covered with bricks and mortar. The same may be said with reference to the Ardwick Polygon. Mr. Philips endeavoured to secure that space for the purposes of a playground, not an ornamental park, and again failed. To-day all trace of that bit of

**p.65**

green has gone, and the children are still without their playground. In the case of the Polygon the result was particularly disappointing, because, although £9,000 was subscribed, legal difficulties intervened, and the money was returned to the subscribers. This branch of Mr. Philips' life's work brought into existence the Committee for Securing Open Spaces for Recreation, which, among other matters, was responsible for the building and furnishing of the gymnasium in Every-street, Ancoats.

As was only to be expected, the man who realised the value to a community of opportunities for out-door recreation fully appreciated the first importance of pure air to the residents in the city. Therefore, it was that he originated the Noxious Vapours Abatement Association, of which society he acted in the dual capacity of president and treasurer. The District Provident Society and the Young Men's Christian Association demanded a large share of his attention; and for many years he was treasurer to the Manchester Warehousemen and Clerks' Orphan Schools, honorary secretary to the Manchester and Salford Reformatory Schools for Juvenile Criminals, and was chairman of the Reformatory at Blackley. ,

Education in its various branches also secured his active sympathy, and for over forty-five years he was prominently associated with Owens College. In 1865 he was appointed one of the trustees of the new buildings; in 1870 he was one of the promoters of the Owens College Bill, and later in the Owens College Extension Act his name appeared as a life governor. Dumb

**p.66**

animals always had a true friend and protector in Herbert Philips, and their cause was one of the very few subjects -on which he would enter into public controversy. He was appointed magistrate for Manchester and the County of Chester, and the Manchester. Corporation honoured itself when on October 26th, 1897, it presented to him the freedom of the city. On the long roll of distinguished Manchester men few names shine with a brighter glow than does that of Herbert Philips.

## **PART VI.**

### **ST. PAUL'S CHURCH**

I have in previous volumes referred to Manchester's earliest churches. The building of each in turn showed the particular direction in which the town was extending at the time of their erection. Thus, so long as Manchester was nothing more than a large village, or a very small town according to modern ideas, the ancient parish church known as the Collegiate Church, sufficed to meet the requirements of the population that lived in the houses that clustered around the churchyard and the Market Place. By the opening decade of the eighteenth century the wealthier amongst the burgesses had built for themselves houses in the suburbs, with the result that in 1709 Lady Ann Bland laid the foundation'stone of the new church as St. Ann's Church was long known as. Following this came the filling-up of the land that lay between St. Ann's Church and Square and the river, and half a century after the building of St. Ann's came the consecration of St. Mary's. Whilst these events were developing, Manchester was growing in another direction. Market-stead Lane was rapidly becoming an important thoroughfare, and much of the land around High-street and Church-street was being covered with small houses. The result was that in 1765 a fairly large population was to be found there. For the accommodation of these persons a new church was projected and

**p.68**

built. The site selected was Turner's Meadow, which, of course, gave the name to Turner-street.

Aston tells us that the persons responsible for the building of the church were John Pickford, James Darbyshire, John Birch, Joseph Wood, Peter Pass, Simeon Newton, and Richard Fish. Little is known of these burgesses except that John Pickford was landlord of the Sun Inn in Shudehill, James Darbyshire was a joiner in High-street, John Birch was a gentleman residing in Turner-street, and Joseph Wood was a fustian manufacturer in High-street, to whose son Ottiwell reference has previously been made; Simeon Newton had a brickcroft in High-street; but of Richard Fish we have no record.

The church stood at the corner of Great Turner-street and Tib-street, and was built of brick. Aston, describing it, says that it was :—"In a most disagreeable manner closed-in (without a foot of churchyard) by the surrounding houses." We are also told that "in the consecration deeds of the church the minister was authorised to perform and administer in it, all the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England except the burial of the dead." The building was consecrated on July 28th, 1765, but thirteen years later considerable alterations were made and a stone tower erected, the church being re-consecrated after the completion of the work.

### **THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT.**

Twenty years after the re-consecration of the church, an Association of Sunday schools was formed, Churchmen, Dissenters, and Roman Catholics serving upon it. For about fifteen years this arrangement continued,

#### **p.69**

but in 1800 we are told that a fear arose in the minds "of many" of an undue influence on the part of the Methodists over the children in the formation of their religious opinions, causing a separation of the managers of the Sunday schools." The result was the division of the schools into two classes, "one for children whose parents belong to the Established Church, and the other for children of all denominations. The Church schools were attached to various churches, and in this way the Gun-street, Turner-street, Richmond-street, Dean-street, and Primrose-street schools became associated with St. Paul's Church. It will be seen that the Sunday School associated in the minds of Manchester people of to-day with St. Paul's, was not included in those handed over to it in 1805. The fact is, there was no Bennett-street school in those days. There was a school in George Leigh-street which was affiliated with St. Clement's Church in Stevenson Square. In 1818 that school was removed to Bennett-street to premises built for the purpose, and still standing. In 1824 the management of the school was transferred from St. Clement's to St. Paul's. An account of this interesting Institution must be deferred for the present; our immediate concern being with the church. For another half century services continued to be conducted in the building, although its surroundings had gradually changed in character. In 1875 the end came, and the site was purchased by Messrs. J. and N. Philips, under powers conferred by the Manchester Corporation Waterworks and Improvements Acts of that year, and after its removal warehouses were built upon the site. A

#### **p.70**

temporary iron structure provided accommodation for the congregation until the new building at New Cross was completed. The new church cost £18,000, and was consecrated in 1878. Mention may be made of several of the incumbents who, held the living, which is the gift of the Dean and Canons in succession to the Warden and Fellows of the Collegiate Church, during the period that it was in Turner-street. When the building was enlarged in 1778 the Rev. E. Ethelston was incumbent, and he contributed and collected the whole of the sum expended. He afterwards founded St. Mark's Church, Cheetham Hill, but died before its completion, which was carried out by his son, the Rev. C. W. Ethelston, who was incumbent from its consecration in 1794 to his death in 1830.

#### **REV. JOHN PICCOPE**

For many years the Rev. John Piccope held the living. He was exceedingly popular, and is

described by one who knew him as “though respectably dressed he was not so clerical in his appearance as clergymen now are, and might easily have been mistaken for a dissenting minister. He lived at 7, Charlotte-street, in the days when well-to-do people resided in that and the neighbouring streets. His son, George John, was born at Charlotte-street. The latter was educated at the Grammar School, and afterwards at Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1842 and M.A. in 1845. He was a well-known antiquary, and edited for the Chetham Society, “*Lancashire and Cheshire Wills and Inventories*” in three volumes. Although a man of more than average

**p.71**

ability, he never rose to a high position in the Church, and after occupying the curacy of Brindle from 1849 to 1864, he was preferred to that of Yarwell, Northamptonshire, where he died in 1872.

**REV. ROBERT LAMB.**

Another worthy of St. Paul’s was the Rev. Robert Lamb, who for more than twenty years preached sermons in the church, and in a manner that endeared him to all whom he came in contact with, carried out the duties of a pastor. He matriculated M.A. at Oxford in 1840, and after spending nine years in serving in two successive curacies he was appointed to St. Paul’s in 1849. Many of the sermons he delivered from the Turner-street pulpit were printed, and for some time had a considerable sale. One of my recollections of childhood is seeing my grandfather, who, although not resident in the parish, was a regular attendant at the church when Mr. Lamb was there, read a well-used volume of those sermons bound in blue cloth. One volume of his sermons was entitled “*Sermons on Passing Seasons and Events.*” The title denotes the man. He found the texts for his discourses in the incidents that were transpiring around him. Two other volumes were entitled “*The Crisis of Youth*”; but sermon-writing did not exhaust his literary powers. He was for many years a regular contributor to “*Fraser’s Magazine*,” where his nom-de-plume “*A Manchester Man*” was well-known to the readers. In later years he published “*Free Thoughts*,” being selections from articles contributed to

**p.72**

“*Fraser’s Magazine*,” in two volumes. He resigned the living in 1871, and died at Haycarr, near Lancaster, on December 24th, 1872.

~~~~~

**From the e-Postbag**

The second of the very welcome '*Random Recollections*' from our reader, Julie Schwethelm in Germany ...

***Ballet Shoes and Brownie Berets***

Maureen and Pauline. They must have been in their early twenties, at the most, but for a six year old that is just Old. Maureen and Pauline ran a dancing school on Seymour Road in the Scouts' hut on Saturday mornings. They looked exactly how young girls looked in the early nineteen sixties with their back-combed hair and mini skirts. I think it was Jean who first started going to dancing classes, followed by Linda. Then me. Tap and ballet, but definitely no blocks. Not yet. Our ballet shoes were just boring canvas slipper-like things and there was no way you could even begin to imagine standing on your toes in them.

Every Saturday morning we would prance about in the Scouts' hut learning various steps. In ballet, the five positions, pliés (pronounced 'plea-yay'), in tap 'tap-step-ball-change', 'shuffle-down, shuffle-hop-step'. I could still do the tap version of 'Me and my teddy bear' if I had the right shoes to hand. That's all I remember though. We must have done more than that, because we put on what was known as a 'display' with studied dances.

That too was in the Scouts' hut, but this time with a stage and audience. The building was part

of Clayton Methodist Church on North Road, and if I remember rightly, the Scouts' hut was a prefab building to the right of the church. As the name would suggest, it is where the Boy Scouts used to meet.

The displays involved a great deal of preparation and active participation by our mothers. Costumes had to be designed and sewn, tap and ballet shoes had to be uniform in colour. That was rather unfortunate because I had lovely red leather tap shoes which had to be painted white with Chinese lacquer for the display. Our tap sing and dance routine was 'If I Knew You Were Comin' I'd've Baked a Cake', for which we wore short pink gingham dresses, white aprons and mob caps, tap-step-ball-changing our way back and forth on the stage. The ballet number was 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' (Maurine and Pauline must have had an affinity for teddy bears), involving a quick change of shoes, casting aside of aprons, and replacement of mob caps by gingham hair ribbons. The bears were played by the 'littl'uns', dressed in furry costumes and not being required to do much in the way of intricate dancing. That was my first and only display at dancing class.

There were two girls who left a lasting impression of those early dancing days. Karen who was a few years older than us and lived near Jean. Karen was not exactly sylph-like and she seemed to gallop rather than move gracefully. Lynne, on the other hand, was the ultimate ballerina. She had hair down to her waist and seemed to spend her entire life in a black leotard and real ballet shoes, complete with blocks and ribbons. I knew I could never aspire to Lynne's heights – my hair was simply too short.

By the time I had turned seven I had already decided that my future was not in dancing. Linda continued going to dancing class for several years and graduated to doing solos at displays. I left and joined the Brownies. Instead of Saturday mornings it was Monday evenings, but as the Brownies and Girl Guides belonged to Clayton Methodist Church, the location was almost the same. The Third Droylsden and Clayton Pack. The Sunday school I attended at Edge Lane Methodists only had a Boys' Brigade, and that wasn't really of much interest to little girls. Every Monday evening I would don my cotton Brownie uniform, in winter on top of my other clothes, position the brown beret on my head and go with my mother to the adjoining Sunday School. My mother used to come and pick me up when it was over. It wasn't far, but walking down North Road in the evening was dangerous on account of the traffic.

Brown Owl, the traditional name for the main leader of a Brownie unit or pack, was a plump lady who used to pronounce 'hospital' as 'hospickle'. Tawny Owl, who is a sort of deputy leader, was slim and reminded me a very little of my Auntie Winnie but I don't know why. We learned a lot of very useful things at Brownies and I really enjoyed it. I made my Brownie Promise and received my Brownie badge which I polished eagerly with Brasso until it shone. Brownies work and play in small groups called Sixes, each Six being named after fairies or woodland creatures. A Six is led by a Sixer and has a Second who acts as deputy. Every Monday evening each Six would dance around the toadstool, singing its rhyme, and place the tuppence "subs" into the owl-shaped dish. I seem to recall starting my early Brownie career in Gnomes - "here we are the laughing Gnomes, helping others in their homes". As it was the nineteen sixties, we may have sung the version "helping mother in our homes". I don't remember. The badge displayed a white gnome with a black broom. When I was old and skilful enough to take on responsibility as a Second, I had to transfer my loyalties to the Little People. There was another Julie just three weeks older than me and equally skilled. She became the Second, and ultimately Sixer of Gnomes. I had to make way for her and replace my Gnome badge with the yellow and green diagonal stripes of the Little People. "We, though known as Little People, aim as high as any steeple". I found this rhyme less inspiring, maybe too abstract, and anyway the diagonally striped Little People did not appeal to me as much as the cheerful Gnomes. Maybe it didn't happen like this at all. To a certain extent we had a choice about which Six we

wished to join. I had decided to be a Gnome and nothing else. Perhaps I was bundled into Little People from the start because the other Julie had first choice. In the interests of long-term personnel planning on behalf of Brown Owl, I was shunted into Little People because I was the right age to become a Sixer in a couple of years. Whichever version is the true one, the other Julie's father was one of the Big Noises at church. No doubt that was a decisive factor and a taste of what was to follow.

Sixers wore two broad yellow braid stripes on their left sleeve, and Seconds one stripe. My right sleeve had plenty of room for other badges, and I eagerly awaited being enrolled for what was called a 'proficiency badge', nowadays 'interest badge'. I learned first aid and how to bind our complicated Brownie tie as a sling, excelled in folding clothes, I could knit much more than a dish cloth, I could polish shoes until you could see your reflection in them.

What was holding Brown Owl back from entering me for a badge? I kept asking her when I could do one of the badges for which I had been practising for so long. Other girls already had an arm full of badges, especially girls whose fathers were 'Big Noises' at Clayton Methodists, my mother remarked astutely. The Sixer of Gnomes, for example. The other Julie. And a girl called Janet, a whole year younger than me but with a father who must have been the Biggest of Big Noises. Why not me? It simply wasn't fair.

Eventually I got tired of waiting and being told 'soon' every time I asked Brown Owl the 'when' question. I decided, shortly before I was due to move up into the Girl Guides, to quit. I stopped going to Brownies after almost four years. Before long, Brown Owl came to our house, wanting to know why I no longer turned up. I should have told her the reason, explained how eager I was to do the tests to obtain my proficiency badges, how other Brownies my age and even younger already had badges. Ask her why I was always just consoled with a 'soon'. But I couldn't find the words. I just cried bitterly, feeling the weight of the injustice but not being able to express it. Brown Owl finally left, none the wiser. 'Why didn't you tell her?' my mother wanted to know. That just made me cry more. I still don't know. Maybe it was some fear of authority, maybe I was unsure of my own capabilities. I certainly didn't want to drop the names of the favoured girls with their Big Noise fathers. I shall never know the reason behind Brown Owl's hesitance, but then I suppose I never gave her the opportunity to explain her way out of a situation of which – to give her the benefit of the doubt - she might have been blissfully unaware.

Many thanks, Julie, for this new trip down memory lane.

~~~~~

**an email from our reader Sue Forshaw ...**

letting us know that Find my Past has published the Oldham Rate books 1841 - 1936. They can be seen [HERE](#)

Many thanks, Sue.

~~~~~

Maps got a mention last month and they feature this month in an email update I received from the Internet Archive (my own 'go-to' online reference library!). One example in the Gallery. To quote ...

*"Cartography lovers unite! The David Rumsey Map Collection is home to more than 100,000 historic maps, atlases, charts, and diagrams, dating from the 16th century to the modern day. First founded in 1985, this massive collection was donated to the Internet Archive for preservation purposes in 2022. Ever wanted to explore Egypt circa 1935 or see what the English county of Lancashire looked like in the early 17th century? This collection is home to thousands of maps from around the world and throughout history ... Maps are for much more than just finding your way around ... maps are also useful for*

more frivolous purposes, such as a rhyming children's map of London ... Whether you study historical cartography or just want to browse some unusual charts, the David Rumsey Map Collection is full of hidden gems. Have fun exploring, and enjoy the archive!

[BROWSE HERE](#)"

~~~~~

## MLFHS FACEBOOK PAGE

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

since the last newsletter :

\* The fascinating history of Anita Street in Ancoats!

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* How to read old handwriting

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* Toothpaste find linked to Lake District Holocaust survivors

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* Oldham Coliseum

Though the Coliseum is closed, we're still committed to being as transparent as possible. In this blog, Chair@MrMadrigalOBE discusses investigations and conversations taking place, in the first in a series of updates on the future of the organisation.

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* Migration Museum Marmite: the quintessentially British brand... made by a migrant

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* Northern Roots is creating the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park on 160 acres of stunning green space in the heart of Oldham, Greater Manchester. A unique new community asset and visitor destination. Vision: Harnessing urban green space to benefit people, planet and place.

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* How to find adoption records in the UK

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* From 1692 until 1955, all Army pensions were administered and paid from the Royal Hospital Chelsea, which is why all Army pensioners tended to be known as Chelsea Pensioners.

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* Five accessible castles and battlefields to explore in Scotland

[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* BFI ... Urban utopia beckons in this idealistic vision of postwar Manchester - fascinating to revisit as Northern Powerhouses and city devolution return to the agenda. Sponsored by the city council, it's very ambitious for a local government film. Under the soaring, sweeping direction of Paul Rotha, it takes in themes of industry, energy, leisure and housing, present, past and future.

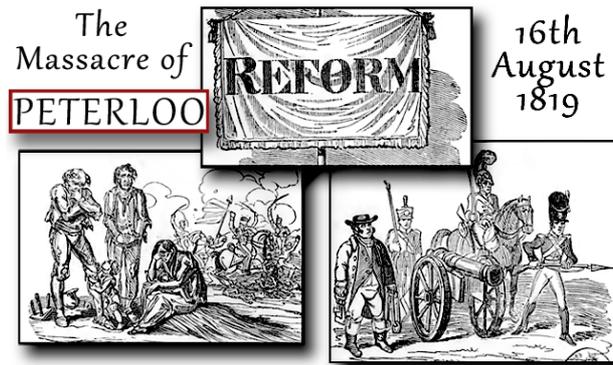
[HERE](#)

~~~~~

\* For many 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](#)

## Need Help!

### Oldham Local Studies and Archives

**Opening hours are as follows:**

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 10am-5pm; Tuesday 10am-2pm; Saturday 10am-4pm.

Although it will not be essential to book your place as has been the case previously, we encourage you to consider booking in advance as this enables us to get everything ready in time for your visit, particularly if you wish to view archives. To order archives please visit :

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/forms/form/891/en/local\\_archives\\_document\\_order\\_form](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/forms/form/891/en/local_archives_document_order_form)

If you wish to use PCs to access family history websites or to use microfilm readers, we advise you to book a place by contacting us at:

[archives@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:archives@oldham.gov.uk) or telephone 0161 770 4654.

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

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.**

[Oldham Council Heritage Collections](#)

There are regularly changing displays in the Local Studies Library.

[Opening hours](#) and contact details.



## 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](#)

Regiments & Corps of the British Army (Wayback machine) [HERE](#)

Special Collections on Find My Past [HERE](#)

FmyP - The Manchester Collection [HERE](#)

Goat fire insurance maps of Manchester [HERE](#)

Cheshire Parish Register Project [HERE](#)

Huddersfield Exposed [HERE](#)

### Some Local Archives

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



Illustration, Page 16, from :

**'Short Stories about Failsworth Folk'**

by Sim Schofield pub. 1905



**THE PRESENT FAILSWORTH POLE.**

(1905)

p. 16 ... *The Present Failsworth Pole*



No doubt, when Sim Schofield penned his short stories of *Failsworth Folk*, he imagined that the Pole would stand long after he had died, but it wasn't to be ...

## Proposed New Pole

## Appeal for :: Contributions



CORONATION DAY, 1902.

**FAILSWORTH POLE COMMITTEE.**

---

**Chairman and Hon. Treasurer:**—Councillor J. HIBBERT, J.P.

**Joint Hon. Secretaries:**—Mrs. E. A. WHITEHEAD,  
Miss A. M. BROOME.

**General Committee:**—County Councillor E. TAYLOR, Councillors  
W. DUNKERLEY, TOM GARLICK, A. HENSON, G. E. HOLLAND,  
B. MURCOTT, R. STOTT, E. WHITEHEAD, Rev. J. SMITH,  
Mrs. ROYLE, Mrs. LUMLEY, Miss WHITTLE, Messrs. F. S.  
BARROW, A. EARDLEY, J. FARRINGTON, J. P. HEATLEY, R.  
KENNERLEY, L. LUMLEY, A. ROYLE, J. E. TIMMS, F. TURNER,  
H. WHALLEY, J. WHITTLE, JOSEPH WOOD, R. WHITEHEAD,  
H. C. BROOME, and J. W. E. BROWN.

---

TOWN HALL,  
FAILSWORTH,  
*February, 1924.*

SIR OR MADAM,

At a Meeting convened by me, and held at the Town Hall, Failsworth, on the 24th January last, it was unanimously decided to open a Subscription List with a view to raising funds for the purpose of erecting a New Pole on the site of the one which has recently been taken down owing to its unsafe condition.

A Committee has been appointed to deal with the matter, and they estimate that a sum of **£300** will be required to provide and fix a Pole equal in every respect to the last one, and worthy of the district.

The Pole Committee believe that the townspeople of Failsworth are desirous of restoring this old landmark, and in bringing the matter to your notice do so in the hope that it will receive your approval and support.

The envelopes will be delivered and collected by the official Collectors who have been appointed by the Committee.

Yours faithfully,

**JAMES HIBBERT,**  
*Chairman and Hon. Treasurer,*

---

Fiskog, T.U. Printer, Canal Bridge, Failsworth

[P.T.O.]

**Appeal for Contributions, February 1924**

~~~~~

Transcript of a clipping from the *Daily Dispatch*, August 11th, 1924:

## FAILSWORTH POLE

### Ancient History Recalled by New Landmark

The erection of the new Failsworth Pole yesterday, in place of the one recently dismantled, which has withstood the ravages of time and weather until it could no longer maintain its proud uprightness, was witnessed by a crowd drawn not only from the district but from as far as Derbyshire.

Among the spectators were several aged residents, who had witnessed the erection of the two previous poles.

Operations were commenced at 4:30 in the morning, and the Pole was placed in position shortly before 11:30am. Some people stayed up all night to watch the operations.

Before it was finally planted, so to speak, the ceremony of baptising the cock, which stands at its peak, was solemnly gone through. A councillor undertook this office and the cock received its baptism - in champagne!

The history of the pole is veiled in antiquity. When the 'Loyal' party erected a Pole on February 1, 1793, to 'overawe the Jacobins', it but took the place of one that had stood there from time immemorial. In all probability the first pole was the village maypole.

The Loyalists' monument was blown down on October 7, 1849, and was replaced by a ship's mainmast on August 24, 1889, and on that occasion the famous cock - which stands 2ft. 9in. high, and measures 2ft. - was kept crowing all day, having been primed by current from an electric wire.

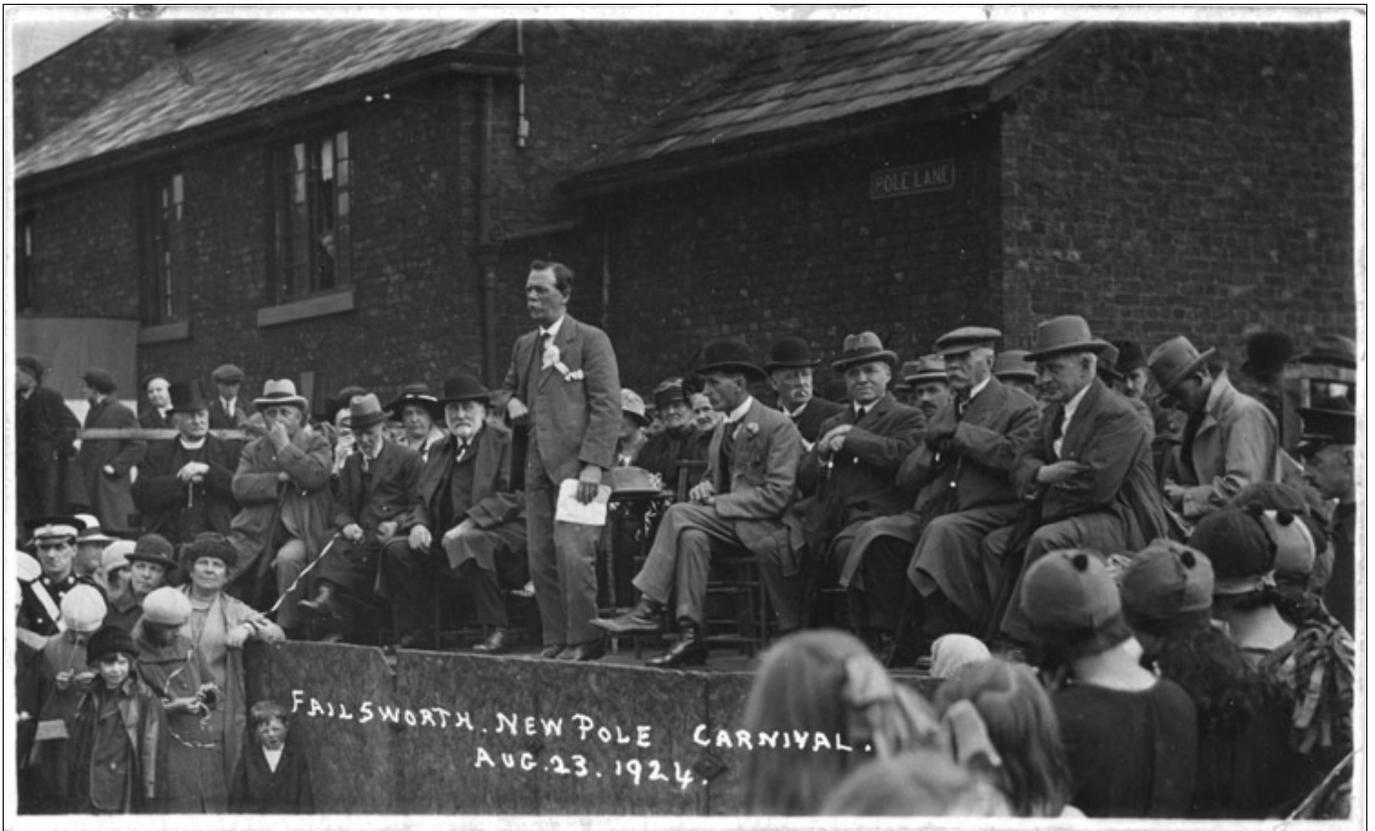
The Pole will be unveiled on August 23, when a carnival is to be held, in honour of the event.

~~~~~



*The new Failsworth Pole arrives in 1924*

~~~~~



*Failsworth New Pole Carnival August 23rd, 1924*

~~~~~

## MLFHS, Family History Fair,



Manchester Library, March 2023

