

Oldham and District Branch of the Manchester and
Lancashire Family History Society

Newsletter
March 2017

oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk



Branch News

Last Meeting

Saturday 11th February

Love and Romance in Victorian Lancashire by Sid Calderbank

Sid always gives us a highly entertaining and informative talk with plenty of opportunity to participate and he didn't disappoint this time.

He explained that he was asked to prepare a February talk for a group on *Love and Romance* and decided that love isn't all about love for a woman or a man but could be love for a place, a child, or a way of life. He set about researching the subject and consequently the poems and songs which he performed reflected the wider meaning of Love and Romance and also gave us an insight into the life of our Victorian ancestors.

Sid drew his material from a number of Lancashire dialect writers including Edwin Waugh, Robert West Whalley, Ralph Ditchfield, John Trafford Clegg and Ammon Wrigley from Saddleworth. The recitations ranged from the serious, *Here's to My Native Land* by Rochdale's Edwin Waugh to the amusing *Love In A Swill Tub* by the same author. The songs ranged from John Trafford Clegg's song about a man's love for his work in *Happy Weavers Song* to Robert West Whalley's song *Pendle Sally* about love for a girl from Pendle.

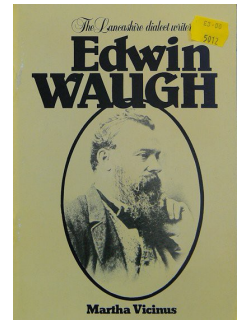
We were also given the opportunity to join in enthusiastically with *She's a Lassie From Lancashire*, which was written for the music halls and was made famous by Florrie Forde, and *It's A Long Way To Tipperary* written by Jack Judge in Staylbridge for a 5 shilling bet.

I am sure the thirty people at our talk enjoyed it thoroughly.



Sid will be appearing at the Saddleworth Folk Festival on Saturday 15th July.

If you want to read more about Edwin Waugh we have a book for sale in our online shop for £3.00



Next Meeting

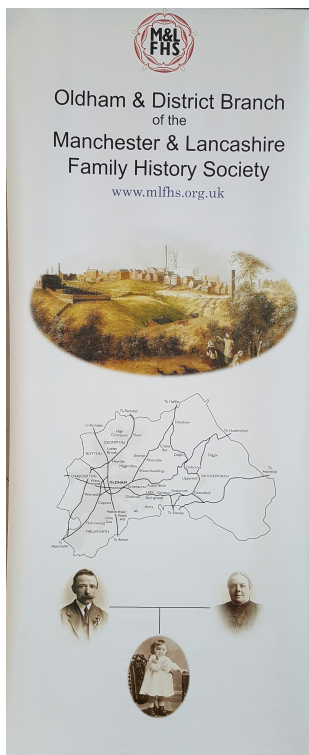
Our next meeting will be on **Saturday 11th March at 2.00pm** and will be a talk given by **Alan Crosby on the Poor Law in 1834.**

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 completely transformed the system of poor relief which had operated since 1601. It centralised administration, created the massive union workhouses so feared by our Victorian forebears, and turned a comparatively humane system into a draconian one where deterrent was the key word (in other words, make the workhouse so unwelcoming that people will be deterred from applying for assistance). The aim was to cut the welfare budget. Sounds familiar? It didn't work, especially not in Lancashire and Yorkshire, but it was a fundamental aspect of Victorian society. If your ancestor was a pauper, this is the system they had to deal with.

**This meeting will be held at 2pm in the Education Suite, Gallery Oldham.
(nearest tram stop - Oldham Central).**

Talks are free to Members but there is a charge of £2.50 to non-members

Our Banner



Our banner shows a painting by James Howe Carse from 1831 and is called *Oldham From Glodwick Fields*. It shows Oldham at a time of change, when hand based weaving was in decline and factories and chimneys were changing the landscape of Oldham.

It is held by Gallery Oldham.

The map shows Oldham and the districts of Chadderton, Faisworth, Lees, Shaw and Crompton, Saddleworth and Royton.

We display our banner at our meetings.

20th Annual London Research Visit – July 2017

Accommodation has been booked at *College Hall*, Malet Street, WC1 for this year's research trip to London. The dates are Monday 17th July to Saturday 22nd July. As usual we leave travel arrangements to London up to each individual. The cost will be £263 per person for 5 nights' bed and breakfast.

College Hall offers simple but comfortable accommodation in a central and safe location. It is within easy walking distance of Euston Station and is convenient for bus and Tube connections to all the main places of interest in Central London.

We will be going to the National Archives at Kew, as usual, on the Tuesday to introduce any newcomers to the wealth of records there. All their on-line records are available to view free of charge and print at 25p a page.



We have seen the heron most years!



We will also be visiting the British Library Sound Archive, where we will be shown around by a new member of staff who has just transferred from Manchester Archives. Details will be available later.

If you would like to come with us on this visit to London please email me at mary@magic-cats.fsnet.co.uk for booking details or further information.

Mary Pendlebury

THE OLDHAM BRANCH NEEDS YOU

As our Treasurer and 2 other Committee Members are standing down at the Oldham Branch **Annual General Meeting**, to be held on **Saturday 8th April** at 2pm (directly before the talk by Tony Foster entitled "And In Flew Enza") we need **3** new Committee Members.

As a member of the Committee you will have a say in how the branch is run and choosing our speakers for next year. We usually only meet about every 2 months and meetings do not usually last longer than one to one and a half hours, so it is not an onerous task. If you would like to know more about becoming a member of the Committee please email us at oldham@mlfhs.org.uk or approach one of the existing Committee (someone wearing a name badge) at the next Branch Meeting on Saturday 11th March. Ian Etchells is happy to speak to anyone about the Treasurer job. His email is ianetchells78@gmail.com

Oldham Books in our online shop <http://www.mlfhs-shop.co.uk/>

There are a number of books, maps and CDROMS on an Oldham theme for sale in our online shop. We have Godfrey maps at £2.50, various CDs of Church records and other records. Please visit our online shop for more information.

Oldham data on the MLFHS web site member area

Don't forget to take a look at the Oldham data in the member area. It includes **Oldham Absent Voters List 1918** compiled by Dorothy Bintley and **Oldham Mill Managers, Secretaries and Salesman 1891**.

Society News

Saturday 4th March, 10.30am: Beginner Talk - Census Records

10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Michael Couper looks at the reasons for and method of taking census together with the varied information each census gives. Also discussed will be methods of finding your ancestor when errors of transcription have occurred.

These talks are aimed at people new to family history research or those who simply wish to refresh their knowledge. Talks will normally be held in the Performance Space on the ground floor of Manchester Central Library on Saturday mornings from 10.30am until approximately 12.30pm. The talks are free to Society members but non-members are most welcome to attend for a small charge of £3.00 (refundable for anyone who joins on the day).

Booking is recommended and helps in planning. An online booking facility is available on our web site at www.mlfhs.org.uk (Click on the 'Eventbrite' link) or alternatively telephone us on 0161-234 1060 or e-mail office@mlfhs.org.uk

The Society Help Desk will be open after the event. The desk is located on the ground floor of Manchester Central Library on the far side of the main entrance.

MLFHS Help Desk

The desk is normally open **every week day** from 10.30 to 3.30. A team of MLFHS volunteers will assist you in your family history research. It would be helpful if you had a Manchester library card which can be applied for online.

Local News

Oldham Local Studies and Archives

84 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DN.

Phone: 0161 770 4654

Email: archives@oldham.gov.uk

Oldham Local Studies and Archives is run by Oldham Council and is not part of our society. The archives date from 1597 and cover an enormous range of subjects and activities. However it is advisable to check on the archives website for coverage. http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200539/archive_collections

Monday 10.00am-7.00pm

Tuesday 10.00am-2.00pm

Wednesday 10.00am-5.00pm

Thursday 10.00am-7.00pm

Friday 10.00am-5.00pm

Saturday 10.00am-4.00pm

Staff will assist with family history enquiries at any time during the week but if you need extended one-to-one advice a family history expert is available between 2pm and 4pm every Monday and Wednesday. There is no need to book, just drop in.

The Women's Peace Crusade Project

Volunteers and Academics from across Greater Manchester have been researching the Women's Peace Crusade of 1917-1918.

Two of our members, Dorothy Bintley and Sheila Goodyear, have been heavily involved with the project which has just been completed.

The result of the project is a book written about the amazing women who led the crusade and a short film.

There will be a screening of the **film and a talk by Ali Ronan, on International Women's Day, Wednesday 8th March at 7pm. at Oldham Library & Lifelong Learning Centre, OL1 1AL**

Phone: 0160 770 8000

Admission is FREE but advance booking is essential.

Further Information on the project can be found **HERE** on the web site of the Oldham Historical Research Group. Photographs of the launch can be found **HERE**

Talks by Other Groups (which are not part of our society)

Chadderton Historical Society

Themed Party: Normans 1066-1485

At Chadderton Football Club, Andrew Street at 7.30pm on **Thursday 2nd March**

Royton Local History Society

George Caley, Naturalist and Explorer

A Talk by Rob Trueblood at Downey House, Church Street, Royton at 7.30pm on **Monday 13th March**

Saddleworth Historical Society

Power, Privilege and Politics: the Medieval Honour of Pontefract

A talk by Dr Sarah Rose at Saddleworth Museum at 7.30pm on **Wednesday 8th**

March.

Oldham Historical Research Group

The History of Hartford Mill

A talk by John Burlison at Oldham Local Studies and Archives at 7pm on **Wednesday 15th March.**

Moorside and District Historical Society

John Hogan VC The man behind the medal.

An illustrated talk given by Glynn Hogan at St Thomas' Church Lounge, Moorside at 7.30 on **Monday 20th March.**

Thomas Steele VC

Thomas Steele was born on the 6th February 1891 in Springhead, Yorkshire. He died on the 11th July 1978 aged 87 in Springhead, Greater Manchester.

At the age of 26 he was a Sergeant in the 1st Battalion Seaforth Highlanders. On the 22nd February 1917 he found himself near Sannai-y-Yat in Mesopotamia. Here he helped a comrade carry a machine gun into position and kept this gun in action until he was relieved. As a result he was mainly instrumental in keeping the line intact. During the afternoon Indian troops to the right of the Seaforths moved forward but later had to give ground during a counter attack by the enemy which led to them re-capturing a portion of the trench. Thomas rallied the Indian troops, encouraging them to stay in the trenches, then led a number of them forward and helped to re-establish our line. This action took place under heavy artillery and rifle fire but this time he was severely wounded.

For this action he became the recipient of the highest and most prestigious award for 'Gallantry in the face of the enemy' that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth Forces. He was invested with his Victorian Cross by King George V at Buckingham Palace on the 10th April 1919.

His full medal list reads:

- *Victoria Cross
- * 1914 Star + clasp '5th Aug - 22 Nov 1914'
- * British War Medal 1914 -20
- * Victory Medal (1914 -19) + MiD Oakleaf
- * Defence Medal (1939 - 45)
- * War Medal (1939 - 45)
- * King George VI Coronation Medal (1937)
- * Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal (1953)
- * Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal (1977)

Thomas Steele VC died at his home in Springhead. He was cremated at Oldham Crematorium, Hollinwood, and his ashes interred in the family grave at St Anne's Church, Lydgate.

On Wednesday 22nd February 2017, the 100th anniversary of this most brave event, over 200 people gathered at St Anne's Church led by the Mayor of Oldham Councillor Derek Heffernan for a service and unveiling of a commemorative paving stone to Thomas Steele VC. The service included readings by Shashi Mohandas-Oldham Indian Association, pupils from St Anne's Primary School, Lydgate, Knowsley Junior School, Springhead, Fazal Rahim Oldham Inter-Faith Forum, Lieutenant Colonel Colin Gilmour MBE DL of The Queen's Own Highlanders (which includes the Seaforth Highlanders), and the Pipes played by pipe Major MacGregor. Members of Thomas's family were Guests of Honour.



The stone at St Anne's, Lydgate.

By Joan Secker-Wlodarczyk

Other News

Oxford Dictionary of family names in Britain and Ireland

From John Marsden:

Manchester Central Library have taken up an account to provide online access to the Oxford Dictionary of family names in Britain and Ireland.

An ultimate reference work on family names of the UK, covering English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Cornish, and immigrant surnames. It includes every surname with more than 100 bearers, or more than 20 bearers in the 1881 census.

Each records includes the different spellings of the name, an explanation of its origins and how the meanings have changed throughout history, lists of early bearers showing evidence for how it formed and continued down to the 19th century, geographical distribution.

Where relevant it also gives genealogical and bibliographical notes, making this a fully comprehensive work on family names.

How to access:

You need to register with the online library to access this resource. Do this at

www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200062/libraries/78/join_the_library

I have created a more memorable link as the URL is cumbersome so:

Go to **www.oxford.mlfhs.org.uk** (this is also on the toolbar menu under Misc-Reference)

The Guardian 1821- 2003, the **Observer** 1791- 2003 and **The Times Digital Archive** are also available online with your Manchester library card.

Irish Research

<https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/2016-family-history/welcome>

This website contains a step-by-step guide to researching Irish ancestors. It was created by the National Archives of Ireland. It has eight learning modules (Hints & Tips, Surnames, Placenames, Census, Civil, Church, Property and Military) which can also be downloaded as a PDF document from the site.

Leicestershire Records on FMP

The Leicestershire Collection on FMP comprises records of baptisms, banns, marriages and burials.

The collection also includes 173,000 wills and probate records from 1500-1939, plus browse-only electoral registers from the across the region spanning 1836-1974.

That's all for this month. We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter. Thank you to those of you who have been in contact with us.

We value your comments.

oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk

Sue Forshaw, Newsletter Editor

Assisted by Irene Whitby

