

## Newsletter April 2018

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### **Branch News**

#### **Our Last Meeting Saturday 10th March**

##### **The Battle for Kinder Scout**

Speaker: Keith Warrender

The presentation centered around the mass trespass of Kinder Scout in 1932. The leader of the trespass was Benny Rothman who lived in Timperley.

Keith focused on the sequence of events leading up to the mass trespass, the history of the area, the meetings and disagreements prior to the trespass, the day itself, the consequences for those taking part and the legacy. The battle for Kinder Scout was a hard fought victory and the presentation was a tribute to the brave people who partook in the trespass on that day.

Kinder Scout was the forbidden moor. Prior to the enclosure act of 1840 it had been common land however when the act came into being the land was allocated to wealthy landowners. The moor itself was of poor quality and the landowners brought in Grouse so that shoots could be held which made the land profitable. Ordinary people were kept off the moor by gamekeepers and claims were made that any person trespassing would be beaten and/or bitten by dogs. Kinder Scout was trespassed on by ramblers from Sheffield and James Watts placed an advert in The Manchester Guardian offering a £5.00 reward for the names of people who had trespassed, however he got little response as the trespassers were from Sheffield.

In 1932, in and around Manchester, over 300,000 people were living in poverty in grim conditions at work and at home so their only escape was on the moors on their day off. The train companies ran a "Hikers Special" which stopped at Hayfield. However they often found the way barred and the ramblers became increasingly frustrated. Claims were made that they caused damage to the moors. Attempts in Parliament had been made since 1884 to allow ramblers to walk on the moorland but it never made the statute books - a situation which the landowners were happy with.

The British Sports Federation (linked to the Labour Party) believed that the moors should

be free to access for all and they had tried to gain access to Bleaklow but the group had been met by keepers and were denied access. The group came up with new tactics which was to be a mass trespass at Kinder Scout. Leaflets were made and distributed asking interested people to congregate on a given day to access Kinder Scout. The Ramblers Association were against the trespass and urged their members to boycott the rally.

The trespass was organised for Sunday the 24th April 1932.

The police were waiting at Manchester railways stations to stop people from boarding. The main group assembled at Bowden Bridge Quarry where a meeting was held but the main speaker backed out and it was left to Benny Rothman to lead the meeting and address the crowds. It was stated that the crowd was in good humour with some heckling. The aim was to demonstrate peacefully. There were approximately 400 people from 15 rambling clubs including 2 from Sheffield. The instructions were to walk 4 abreast in tight groups to stop the police from separating them. In the crowd were 3 people who were to become people of note, they were the Historian A.J.P.Taylor, the composer Sir Michael Tippett and the Speedway rider Clem Beckett (Clem was from Oldham and died in Spain during the Spanish Civil War).

At William Clough the group were met by 8 keepers. The leader of the group made 3 blasts on a whistle which was the signal to advance and spreadout. Scuffles ensued and one keeper was injured. The march proceeded to Ashop Head where the protesters met with the Sheffield ramblers.

Most of the group returned via William Clough. When they arrived in Hayfield the police were waiting for them and arrested 5 members of the group. The arrested men were moved to New Mills police station where they were charged with Unlawful Assembly and Breach of the Peace as Trespass was not a criminal offence but a civil one.

The trial was held in Derby where the charges were changed to the more serious charge of Riotous Assembly and Assault. In court most of the accused represented themselves. Benny Rothman made a 9 page speech which lasted over an hour. At the end of the trial the judge instructed the jury to consider the evidence. It took the jury just 45 minutes to reach guilty verdicts. The sentences ranged from 2 to 6 months.

The Ramblers Association was shocked by the sentences and asked the government for clemency, however it was refused.

What did the trespass achieve?

It focused public attention on the right to roam however it was a slow progress. It took 17 years until 1949 and the Access to National Park Act. Finally the Countryside Right of Way Act was passed in 2000. In 1982 a commemorative plaque was unveiled at Bowden Bridge Quarry. The National Trust now manage William Clough.

By Joan Harrison

## **Our Next Meeting**

**Saturday 14th April**

**Edwin Waugh**

Speaker : Sid Calderbank

A presentation on the life and works of Edwin Waugh, Lancashire's most respected and prolific 19th century author. This presentation will be illustrated by songs, stories and poems.

Sid is a member of the Edwin Waugh Society and the Lancashire Society.

The talk will be preceded by the **AGM**.

Nominations can be made for committee members.

We need a new Secretary and a Vice Chair.

The branch is in danger of folding if we don't get the officers to serve on the committee, so please support us if you can.

This meeting will start at 2.00 pm in The Lees Suite, Civic Centre, Oldham.

Free to members

Non-members £2.50

Free car parking on Oldham Civic car park for 3 hours but please get a ticket.

For more information see our website.

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

## **Society News**

### **Saturday 7th April 10.30am: Beginners' Talk - Pre Registration of 1837**

Jean Newman will explore parish records before 1837. The talk will cover the following:

- The importance of the Parish to our ancestors
- Baptisms and Burials 1813-1837
- Marriages 1754-1837
- Earlier Registers.
- Pitfalls and problems - ideas for solving them.
- Other Parish Records

These talks are aimed at people new to family history research or those who simply wish to refresh their knowledge.

This talk will be held in the Performance Space at Manchester Central Library and is free to members. A fee of £3.00 will be charged to non-members but this is refundable if the individual joins the Society on the day of the talk. Booking is required. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to book.

**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.

## **Celebrating our Female Ancestors**

In the centenary year, when we celebrate some women getting the vote, 5 members of our Society are writing a series of blogs about our female ancestors in partnership with Archives+ at Central library.

Three have been written already. These are "Tracing Our Female Ancestors and the Law" by Leslie Turner, "Tracing Our Female and the 1911 Census by Sue Forshaw and "Tracing Our Female Ancestors - A Look at Life Prior to the Suffrage Movement" by Leslie Turner.

<https://manchesterarchiveplus.wordpress.com/category/family-history/>

Look out for other blogs by Carol Wells, Dorothy Bintley and Rita Greenwood over the next year.

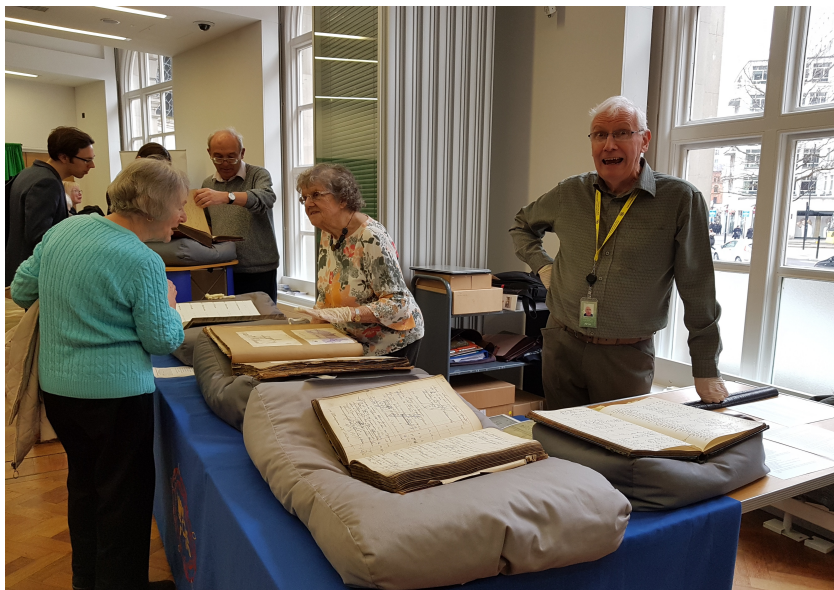
## **Archives + Partnership**

Our Society recently celebrated our partnership with Archives Plus over the past four years at Manchester Central Library.

The work of each of the partners was highlighted as well as some news given about projects over the next couple of years. A cake was cut by The Lord Mayor of Manchester.

The partnership received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund from 2013 to 2017

Our Chairman, David Muil, gave a presentation about the work of our Society and some of our members manned a handling table on which samples of the Prestwich Asylum records, Pepperdine Funeral Directors' Books and the Owen manuscript could be viewed.



The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust spoke about their project called " Coming in From the Cold."

<http://www.racearchive.org.uk/community/coming-in-from-the-cold/>

Other partners presented their projects including the North West Film Archive who showed an extract of a film called "Calling Blighty" -a film made in 1944-46, showing servicemen (and a very few women) in the Far East recording a message to be seen by their wives and families in local cinemas back home.

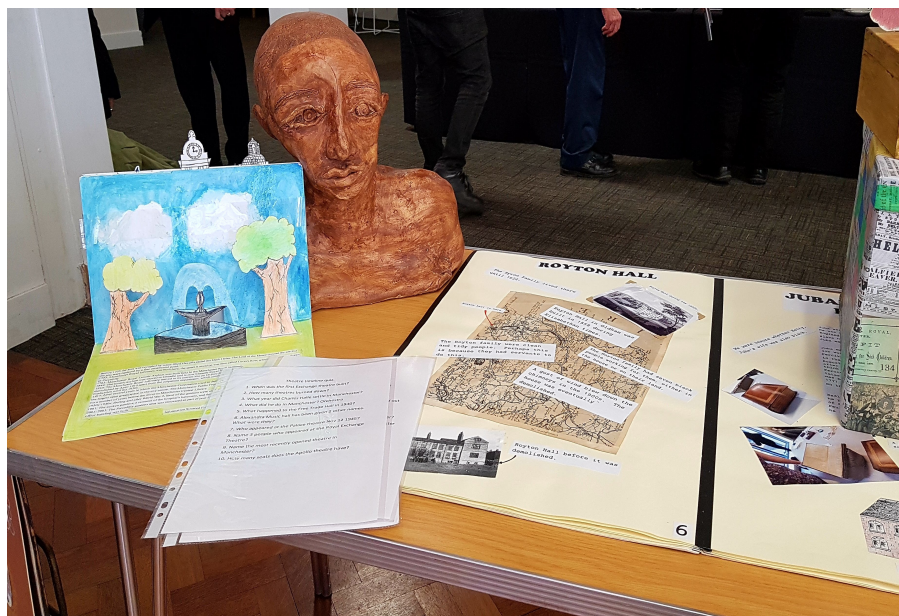
<https://www.nwfa.mmu.ac.uk/blighty/index.php>

You can watch extracts of films in the pods at Central Library which are open Monday-Thursday, 09:00-20:00, Friday-Saturday, 09:00-17:00

<https://www.nwfa.mmu.ac.uk/>

The Archives + team organise outreach to schools and have been involved in many projects with schools including a study with the students at Loreto College, Manchester of Juba Thomas Royton a black person living at Royton Hall and baptised at St Paul's Royton in 1761.

<http://revealinghistories.org.uk/what-evidence-is-there-of-a-black-presence-in-britain-and-north-west-england/objects/photograph-of-royton-hall.html>





## Local News

Annie Kenney ( 1879-1954)

To mark International Women's Day on the 8th March 2018 a short play was performed in Oldham telling how a local mill girl became a leading suffragette. The play took place on a plinth in the place where they are taking public subscription to erect a statue as a permanent memorial to Annie.



The play told how she started work in the cardroom of a local mill aged 10 as a part timer. By the age of 13 she was a full time cardroom hand. She went to a Women's Suffrage meeting and was so impressed that she joined the Women's Social and Political Union. She worked very closely with the Pankhurst family particularly with Emmeline and Christobel. She was arrested, imprisoned and endured hunger strikes many times for the cause.

By Joan Secker Wlodarczyk

## Women in World War 1

This article has been written by Sheila Goodyear of the Oldham Historical Research Group about Catherine Payne a remarkable woman who worked in Oldham.

### **DR. CATHERINE PAYNE**

**Head Surgeon at Oldham Infirmary**

**then**

**Resident Assistant Medical Officer, at the Oldham Poor Law Institution**

**Vice-President of the 'Oldham Society for Women's Suffrage' during 1916 and 1917.**



Dr. Catherine Payne was a remarkable woman in more ways than one. At the turn of the century, in 1902, she decided to study medicine and become a doctor. In 1915, she answered the call for aid workers in the Typhus epidemic in Serbia, and joined Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's Field Hospital. At this time women who pursued a career or carried on into further and university education did so in the face of great opposition. These were the days when no woman could vote in General Elections; equal opportunities or pay in the workplace were unheard of and dismissed as ridiculous if even mentioned. The Women's Suffrage movement was alive but with a changing ethos as it became more attractive to the working women who saw that women's suffrage could expedite changes for women in the workplace; and Mrs. Pankhurst was yet to found the Women's Social and Political Union (W.S.P.U.) in 1903, with the Motto, 'Deeds not Words'. Through their militant actions they would become 'tagged' as 'suffragettes' in a newspaper in 1906. In Oldham there was an active Women's Suffrage Society, the President of which was Marjory Lees whom Catherine would have known through her post as Medical Officer with the Poor Law Institution. Marjory Lees was on its board. Catherine was also one of the Vice-President's of the Oldham Women's Suffrage Society during 1916 and 1917 (ref. the AGM reports for the Society).

Catherine was born on the 14th December 1876, in Monks Eleigh, Suffolk, near Lavenham. Her mother was Amelia Payne, nee Hodges, and her father was Charles Payne, by occupation a draper. She had an older brother, Roger, born January 27th, 1874 and a younger sister Alice, born at the end of 1880. On the 1881 census the family were living on High Street in Monks Eleigh. By the time of the 1891 census both baby Alice and Charles Payne had died, and the widowed

Amelia had married Henry Wostear in the first quarter of 1891. Henry's occupation was recorded as a Machine Engineer and the family was living in Luton Road, Chatham. Seventeen year old Roger was a 'Chemist's Apprentice', living in Saffron Walden.

On the 1901 census Roger and Catherine are recorded as 'boarders' on Up Bedford Place, Bloomsbury, and 'Living on own means'. According to the biographical notes in a pamphlet published in America by Roger, in 1920, he "... served an apprenticeship to the drug trade and obtaining some experience as a clerk, he studied at the School of Pharmacy, London."

Was it whilst she and Roger were living together in London, that Catherine first found an interest in medicine? We can't know for sure but in September 1902, when she was 25 years old, she filled in an application form for admission to the London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women. It's possible that she may have already completed a course of study at the Royal Holloway College as her application form shows a recommendation, for admission, from a person at the college. She completed her training in 1907 and came to Oldham in 1910.

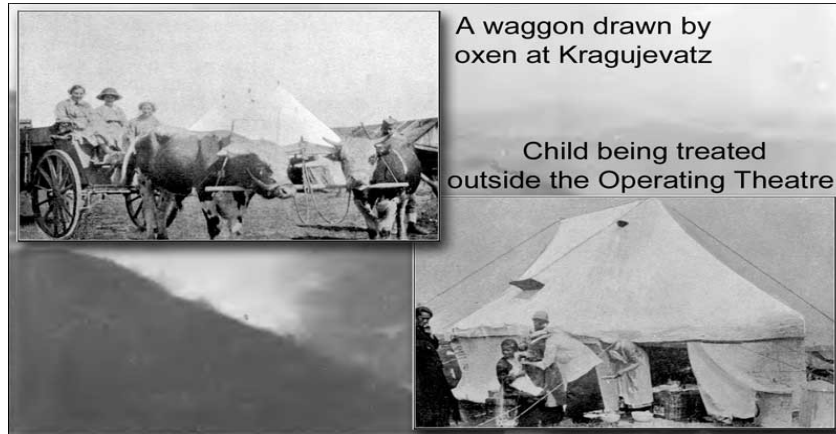
By the time we come round to the 1911 census, Catherine is recorded as the Head Surgeon at Oldham Infirmary on Union Street. Soon afterwards she would take up a post with the Oldham Poor Law Union where she would stay until she resigned in 1915 in order to go to Serbia. The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Union, for 17th March 1915, record that 'It was moved by Miss Lees, seconded by Mr. Philip Buckley and resolved: That the board having received and accepted the resignation of Miss Catherine Payne M.B.B.S. of the appointment of Resident Assistant Medical Officer at the Oldham Poor Law Institution do place on record their esteem, regard and high appreciation of the valuable services rendered by her to the Sick Indoor Poor during the period she has held the position and do express their sincere hope that in Serbia whither she is about to proceed she may be given the health to continue the practice of her profession with that skill which has hitherto characterised her efforts.'

Just over two weeks later she was on board ship with Mrs. Stobart and en route to Serbia. We know from a diary kept by Monica Stanley, a V.A.D. with the Field Ambulance unit, that it was not the most enjoyable trip, "...it was a horrid boat, not at all clean and the sanitary arrangements were terrible." and, to make matters worse, the weather became stormy ... and they were all given tickets for the lifeboats, in case of attack from submarines!"

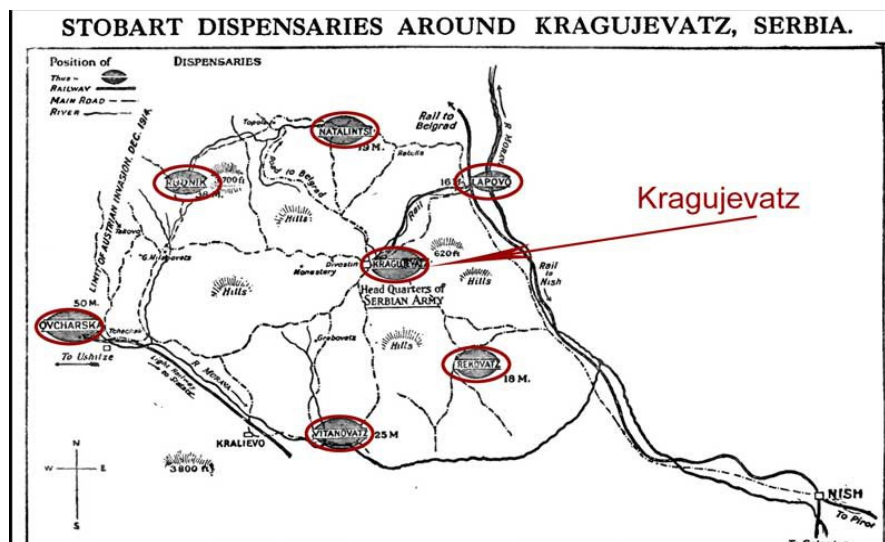
We know a great deal about this particular unit's activities as Mrs. Stobart wrote a book about it, called 'The Flaming Sword' which was published in 1916. Briefly ... when they reached Salonica they discovered that their final destination was to be



Kragujevatz, about 60 miles from Belgrade. Less than three weeks after they had left Liverpool, they had reached Kragujevatz, found a suitable site for their tented hospital, pitched the tents and installed the equipment. The staff were virtually all women + a number of Austrian P.O.Ws. to do the heavy work.



Within days it was realised that they were not only needed to treat sick and wounded soldiers but that there was also a desperate need for a Dispensary for the civilian population. Mrs Stobart wrote, "... we immediately pitched a bell tent at the outer edge of the hospital encampment on the roadside, improvised a notice board from an old packing case and, with the help of an interpreter, wrote, in Serbian, words to the effect, that if folks would bring their own bottles, medicine and medical advice would be given gratis. A doctor, a nurse, and an interpreter took charge of the tent dispensary and we waited with eager curiosity to see what happened. The result was that within a few weeks 12,000 people, men, women, and children, came to this roadside dispensary either in ox-wagons or walking, from distances of fifty, sixty, even seventy miles, ill with typhus, diphtheria, typhoid, smallpox, tuberculosis and every conceivable and inconceivable form of disease."



So successful was this initiative that it was decided to establish a ring of the dispensaries within a 30 mile radius of the hospital. The necessary funds were again raised by the Serbian Relief Fund and extra staff and equipment were sent out. A total of 6 dispensaries was set up. However, their subsequent existence was to be short-lived. In September Bulgarian troops were massing to the east and Austrian and German forces to the north, preparatory to invading Serbia. As the Serbian Army mobilised, Mrs. Stobart was asked to organise a Flying Field Ambulance (Hospital) to accompany the army to the front. Catherine was one of the two doctors selected, along with a group of nurses, a cook, a couple of orderlies, a dispenser, 6 drivers, interpreters and sixty Serbian soldiers who would be used as ambulance men and drivers ... the remainder of the hospital staff and doctors would remain at Kragujevatz but the Dispensaries would have to close. Their equipment, tents and stores were packed into 30 wagons and these, in turn, were loaded onto railway wagons and all left for Pirot, and the front.



Early October, and they hardly had time to erect the hospital tents before wounded Serbian soldiers started to arrive and news came that enemy forces were advancing and the Serbian Army, with the Field Hospital, was forced to retreat. The next 3 months would see not only the army retreating but also the refugee civilian population, as they abandoned their homes in the path of the oncoming enemy. They were constantly on the move, along roads that were barely passable; over high mountain passes and past the dead, both human and animal, on all sides; winter set in; food, both for themselves and the horses, donkeys and oxen, was almost impossible to find. In spite of all the difficulties and hardships, the hospital unit still managed to look after the sick and wounded, that came to them for help, throughout those three terrible months.

Even when they reached the coast there were problems in finding a boat to take them but, eventually, they found one to take them to Scutari, then it was on to

Brindisi and then by train through Italy to Paris and finally London. Catherine's story was almost ended now. She returned to her post in Oldham but within a few months became ill and was unable to work. The staff of Mrs. Stobart's hospital unit were all awarded a Serbian Bravery Award but, by that time, Catherine was too ill to know of it. She died on February 4th, 1918, age 41, in the Nursing Home, Union Street West. Her death certificate gives the cause of death as '(1) carcinoma of the breast and (2) metastatic growths.' She is buried in Chadderton Cemetery. Her epitaph reads, 'They rest from their labours and their works do follow them.'



By Sheila Goodyear

If you want to know more about Dr. Payne's story, visit her page on the website where you'll find a number of links. <http://www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg/World-War1/women/payne-catherine/a-catherine-payne.html>

(case sensitive)

**Sources:** All linked from Catherine Payne's page on the website

AGM reports of the Oldham Society for Women's Suffrage

The '*GM 1914 : The First World War in Greater Manchester*', blog, 'The Oldham Doctor in Serbia' (Research by Dorothy Bintley)

Mrs Stobart's book, 'The Flaming Sword' published in 1916

Monica Stanley's Diary published 1916

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

**Royton Local History Society**

**Excavations at Mellor**

A talk by Donald Reid about an archaeological excavation in north Cheshire. At Downey House, Church Street, Royton on **Monday 9th April** at 7.30pm.

**Saddleworth Historical Society**

**The Crusades and the Society of the Medieval North West**

An illustrated presentation given by Dr Kathryn Hurlock at Saddleworth Museum on **Wednesday 11th April** at 7.30pm.

All welcome but a charge of £3.00 on the night for non-members. Refreshments available.

Also Saddleworth Historical Society's new book, "William Pownall's Uppermill" is still available for sale at £9.95. per copy from Charles Baumann, 19, Ravenstones Drive, Diggle, Saddleworth OL3 5JU by letter request, enclosing payment direct, or by visiting the Museum Shop in Uppermill with your payment.

**Oldham Historical Research Group**

**Celebrating the Centenary: Votes for Women**

**Campaigners around Oldham.**

A talk by Jill Liddington, writer and historian. At Oldham Local Studies and Archives on **Wednesday 18th April** at 7.00pm.

**Moorside and District Historical Society**

**AGM followed by The Three Great Mellodew's Houses**

An illustrated presentation by Ray Entwistle at St Thomas' Church Hall Lounge, Moorside on **Monday 16th April** at 7.30pm.

**That's all for this month.**

**Written and edited by Sue Forshaw**

Assisted editing by Irene Whitby