

'e-Owls'



Part of Manchester & Lancashire
Family History Society

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AUGUST 2019

MLFHS - Oldham Branch Newsletter

Where to find things in the newsletter:

Oldham Branch News :	Page 2	From the e-Postbag :	Page 14
Other Branch Meetings :	Page 3	Peterloo Bi-Centenary :	Page 15
MLFHS Updates :	Page 3	Need Help! :	Page 17
Societies not part of MLFHS :	Page 6	Useful Website Links :	Page 19
'A Mixed Bag' :	Page 7	For the Gallery :	Page 20

Branch News :

Following April's Annual Meeting of the MLFHS Oldham Branch :

Branch Officers for 2019 -2020 :

Chairman : Linda Richardson
Treasurer : Gill Melton
Secretary & Webmistress : Jennifer Lever
Newsletter Editor : Sheila Goodyear
Technical Support : Rod Melton

Chairman's remarks :

As the Chairman of the Oldham Branch I want to thank you for your attendance at our meetings over the past few months, since I took over from Rodney.

To help improve our meetings, please take a couple of minutes to tell us what you think of the those you have attended so far. I appreciate your interest in our activities and want to make sure that we meet your expectations.

In order to try and improve our meetings please share with us the things we can do better or differently. This will allow us to develop programmes to meet your own research needs and interests.

1. How much do you enjoy the meetings?
2. Was there a meeting you particularly enjoyed?
3. Are there any topics you would like to see included?
4. Do you have names/contact details of a speaker you would like to recommend?
5. Do you have any other comments or suggestions.

Linda Richardson

Oldham Branch Chairman

Please email your responses to me at chairman-oldham@mlfhs.org.uk

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### Editor's remarks.

This month is all about the Peterloo Bi-Centenary as far as I'm personally concerned! For several years I've followed the activities of the Peterloo Memorial Campaign and then Manchester Histories, as it became more involved when the Campaign Group's events attracted thousands of participants instead of dozens! Photos from some of the past years' meetings are on my [Peterloo Manchester](#) website and also on the Campaign's website [HERE](#)

There is so much happening in the area during this month that in the Bi-Centenary section below, I've just tried to point you in the direction of where searches can be made for specific events, dates or places. I just hope this will be of help in getting the most out of what will be a one-off Peterloo celebratory month in the history of our region.

In the 'Miscellany' section I've included two transcriptions ... the first is from the Oldham Chronicle in 1884, reporting on the Veterans of Peterloo reunion (the picture that accompanies it is seen all over local exhibitions at the moment. The second is a few pages from '*Historical Sketches of Oldham*' by Edwin Butterworth (Pub. 1856) writing about the reformers before Peterloo and afterwards.

Sheila Goodyear.

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

You will retain copyright of any contributions that you send unless you decide to waive that right, at the time of sending.

Editor reserves the right to edit any contributions before publication.

email me at [Oldham\\_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:Oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk)

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Next Oldham Branch Meeting :

There will be no Oldham Branch Meetings in July and August.

The next meeting will be :

Saturday 14th September, at 2pm,
in the Performance Space, Gallery Oldham

'Funny you should say that!' (Origins of everyday sayings), a talk by Peter Watson.

Members of the committee will be available to assist anyone for a further half hour following the speakers talk.

Refreshments on arrival.

Entry free to members (donation always gratefully accepted) and non-members £2.50

(Note: Council Car park is free for three hours on Saturday, but make sure you get a ticket)

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### **Bolton Branch :**

**Wednesday, 7th August**

Alan Davies, Miner & Mining Museum Curator will talk about:

**'The Pit Brow Women of the Lancashire coalfield.'**

Tea /Coffee will be available from 7.00pm

Meeting starts at 7.30pm,

Montserrat Room [1st floor], Old Links Golf Club, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, BL1 5SU.

All MLFHS members are welcome to attend our meetings.

Visitors are also welcome to attend the meeting @ £3

Website link [HERE](#)

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Anglo-Scottish Branch,

There will be no Anglo-Scottish Branch meetings in August.

The next meeting will be :

Saturday 21st September, at 2pm.

L. Bruce Keith will give a talk entitled, '**Bridgescapes**'

"With the opening of the Queensferry Crossing in September 2017, it is apposite to celebrate the long and illustrious history of bridges within Scotland and the contribution Scottish engineers have made to bridges around the globe. Many of these are not only significant engineering achievements, they also make a major statement in terms of architectural design and form part of Scotland's cultural, historic and landscape heritage.

Bruce Keith's new book, "*Bridgescapes*", is a personal journey through history, celebrating Scotland's bridge building heritage. It is primarily intended for those with an interest in Scottish history and geography - its people and its landscape. Many of the architects and engineers are from Scottish families with a long and illustrious pedigree and Bruce will pay due respect to many of these characters in his illustrated talk."

This meeting will be held at Central Library in PS1

'E Scotia' <https://anglos Scots.mlfhs.org.uk/> on the MLFHS website.

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## MLFHS updates

### **August 2019**

There will be no events or meetings, etc., at MLFHS, Manchester, during August.

The Help Desk will be manned as usual.

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July 17th was the MLFHS Peterloo Events Day, in place of the more regular Quarterly meeting with two speakers.

This isn't intended as a review of the day ... that will no doubt be found in the next journal. Suffice it to say that in the morning session we had an interesting talk on Manchester at the time of Peterloo, given by Chris Makepeace.

We were out of the Performance Space promptly for 12 noon, when the Oakenhoof Friends (website [HERE](#)) arrived to entertain visitors to the library with folk music and dance for the next 45 minutes or so.

Initially, they performed their morris dancing sets in the foyer and then moved into the library, under the Oculus, to give a performance of folk music and song. They were watched by a very appreciative audience and applauded enthusiastically at the end.



Oakenhoof Friends

Photos:

Joan Secker-Wlodarczyk & Sheila Goodyear



Just before 1pm, those of us that had volunteered to help, with the archives handling sessions moved back into the performance space and set up the three stations for the afternoon. One was on the history of cotton manufacture, another on the John Owen Manuscripts and the third on documents and books from the era of Reform up to 1832.

The archivist had brought out a beautiful set of 12 coloured lithographs showing the different processes in the manufacture of cotton fabric.



Reeding or Drawing



Printing

Whilst we were in the Performance space for the archive handling session, the Folk duo, 'Free Radicals' were singing songs of radical reform and Peterloo. Spectators could either just sit and listen to the performance or actually come and look at the artefacts on display. at the same time.

Linda and I were helping out with the Reform era material and it was a real thrill to see and handle them (very, very carefully!). We had the Borough Reeve's Letterbook. In it was a letter about allowances for the infantry, from December 1819; and one about pistols and 'ball cartridges' to be sent to Manchester for arming the Watch and Ward, which was also from December 1819. There was a collection of documents concerning the Reform Bill Parade in Manchester, in August 1832; a Church Leys (land given over to grass) Book, including entries for Failsworth, Newton and Denton etc., with the amounts paid ... looking at family names and trying to fit them into our own family tree was exciting; and finally, we had examples from the Manchester Township Surveyors' Records.


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## MLFHS Branch e-Newsletters

Each of the MLFHS branches publishes a monthly e-newsletter which provides useful news items. The e-newsletters are free and available to both members and non-members of MLFHS. To sign-up, simply click the appropriate link below and complete the short form on the branch e-newsletter page, where you will also find copies of past issues.

[Anglo-Scottish](#)    [Bolton](#)    [Oldham](#)

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Meetings and Talks at other Societies &/or Venues

Oldham Historical Research Group:

Wednesday, 21st August, 7pm

'The Working Class Revolt in Ashton and Oldham, 1917-1922'

An illustrated talk by Dr. Neil Redfern, author of *'Social Imperialism : The Lancashire Working Class and Two World Wars'*

At Oldham Local Studies & Archives, Union Street, Oldham. Door opens 6:30 for 7pm start.

All welcome ... no membership subscription, or entrance fee on the door.

Oldham HRG Programme [HERE](#)

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### Gallery Oldham : Free Lunchtime Talks:

Wednesday 14 August, 1pm

Explore the stories of Oldhamers at Peterloo.

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Wednesday 11 September, 1pm

Take a stroll along the Oldham Panorama as part of Oldham Histories Festival.

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Saturday 11 September, 1pm

A last chance to explore the Waterloo to Peterloo exhibition with our social history curator.

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Lunchtime talks are free, informal and last around 40 minutes with time for a discussion and questions afterwards.

Talks are given by gallery staff or guest speakers.

All talks are drop in, no need to book. However, if with a group of more than 5, please let the Gallery know in advance. Phone: 0161 770 4742

Programme April to October [HERE](#)

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### Gallery Oldham : Author Talk

Wednesday August 14 , 6:00pm

#### ***"Peterloo: The Story of the Manchester Massacre"***

Dr Jacqueline Riding is the author of *'Peterloo: The Story of the Manchester Massacre'*. She specialises in eighteenth-century history and art. Former curator of the Palace of Westminster and Director of the Handel House Museum, she is now an author and film historical adviser, including *Jacobites: A New History of the '45 Rebellion* (Bloomsbury 2016) and Mike Leigh's *Mr. Turner* and *Peterloo*.

To commemorate the anniversary of Peterloo, Jacqueline will be in conversation with Amy

Concannon - Curator at Tate Britain responsible for art of the period 1790–1850. Amy is an expert on JMW Turner and John Constable and is co-curator of the forthcoming exhibition on William Blake. Born in Oldham, where her fascination for the nineteenth century began, she has worked at the Wordsworth Trust, Cumbria, and Dulwich Picture Gallery, London.

**Tickets £5**

Booking on Eventbrite [HERE](#)

This special event will be followed by a free screening, at 7:15, of Mike Leigh’s film *Peterloo* with which Dr. Jacqueline Riding was involved as historical adviser.  
Booking for the screening is essential [HERE](#)

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Saddleworth Historical Society
There is no Meeting in August.

Next Meeting, Wednesday 11th September 2019 at 7.30pm.

An Illustrated Presentation by Dr. Gervaise Phillips entitled "*The American Civil War, Lancashire & the Cotton Famine.*"

At the Saddleworth Museum, High Street, Uppermill.

All welcome. Society members free but a charge on the day to non-members of £3.
Refreshments available.

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**Saddleworth Civic Trust: -**

There is no meeting of the Civic Trust in August

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Family History Society of Cheshire : Tameside Group meeting
There will be no meeting of the Tameside Group in August

Meeting in the Community Rooms of Old Chapel Dukinfield, opening our doors at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Refreshments are served on arrival.

There is an entry charge of £2.00 for members and £2.50 for non members.
See their website [HERE](#)

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**'A Mixed Bag'**

**Still thinking about Peterloo!!**

When I first started to become interested in the Massacre, almost the first thing I did was find out on which day the 16th of August fell, in 1819. I was a little surprised to find that it was a Monday. 60,000 people not going to work on a Monday? It seemed a little odd. Just this week, I came across references to this and why Monday was chosen. Apparently, Mondays were known as 'Saint Monday' but very little seems to be known, with any certainty, as to when this first became common, or even when its popularity declined. Many published academics, researching leisure time as opposed to working days etc., appear to have different opinions, depending on what research their studies have been based. However, there seems to be agreement that Monday was considered, by artisans and craftsmen frequently working from home or small establishments, as a 'day off', and the time made up with longer working days. It's considered that, as more men moved to work in the larger mills, which needed more formal working hours, the practice of taking Monday off started to disappear.

## A NIGHT WITH PETERLOO VETERANS

(FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)



If there is one class of people whose company I enjoy more than another it is that of the old and sturdy Reformers who, in dark, bygone days have figured in history and have helped to make it by the part they have played in the noble struggle for the charter of human rights and liberty. There is something strangely fascinating in old age when it has ripened in historic events and associations of nearly a century. It seems as if you were holding converse with the very germ, or the makers of history itself.

The present reform agitation suggested to a political friend of mine the idea of entertaining

at tea all the Peterloo Veterans now living in the district of Failsworth. A few days since this suggestion was carried out, and by special invitation I was present at the interesting gathering. Eleven of these old veteran Reformers met at my Failsworth friend's house. They were mostly residents of Failsworth, and their ages averaged 82. On meeting the assembled guests I was pleased to find that a prominent member of parliament was also with them as a special guest. He seemed quite at home amongst them, and sat relating incidents he had heard of in connection with the Peterloo massacre. Of these eleven old veterans seven were men and four women. As I sat and gazed at their hoary heads, and wrinkled faces, and trembling forms, and listened to their weak and quivering voices, I could not help but feel moved. The tear of gratitude flowed as I thought of the liberties we now enjoy, and how they had been fought and struggled, aye, and suffered for by these political heroes. The reminiscences of the veterans will perhaps be of interest to many in the present crisis.

It was after the hearty singing of the song, "Henry Hunt and Liberty" by one of the aged Reformers, that the patriotic veterans opened their hearts and became communicative by giving vent to their feelings in reference to their persecution in bygone times. The chorus of the song was :-

O, God bless Hunt and Wollesley,  
With them we'll take a part;  
To gain our rights and liberty  
We'll join both hand and heart.

Addressing the singer when he had done, I asked him if he had a good recollection of the Peterloo event, "Remember it!" he should think he did. He nearly got killed that day. When the yeomanry rushed upon them he made his escape, and took refuge in a cellar, where a lot of his fellow Reformers followed. In the bustle he was thrown down, and trampled on, and badly hurt. It was with great difficulty he got home. "Forget that day! Nay, never while life lasted. There were many horrible things done then that never appeared in the newspapers. There were no free press then." There were more butchers together that day nor he had ever seen since. A few of the Yeomanry were from the district, but they were ever after ashamed of the part they had played. The regular soldiers behaved themselves nobly in comparison to the Yeomanry, and if it had not been for them there would have been more killed than there were. "Eh! It was a barbarous thing." Here the old man burst out singing a song descriptive of the massacre.



The song finished, another veteran commenced to narrate his experience. He lost his hat and shoe in the struggle, and was glad to get away so well. Coming home through Newton Heath some time after the massacre he met a man carrying a bundle of shoes and hats. These he had picked up after the field had been cleared, and with them he was supplying everyone he met who had lost such things. Our narrator said, he tried shoes and hats until he was fitted, and on leaving the hat and shoe distributor he was told by him to tell all who had lost such head and foot gear that they might have any he had that would fit them. That kindhearted soul came from Copster Hill, Oldham, we were informed. The question was asked, "Were there a great many at Peterloo from Failsworth?" an old man answered in the affirmative. Continuing he said, "Amongst the Failsworth contingent there were twenty four young women dressed in white garments." With a touch of deep emotion our informant said he was sorry to say that some of these fair damsels were hurt in the struggle. One of the young women, Mrs. Dunkerley, carried a banner, and had the stave cut out of her hands three times by the Yeomanry. Each time she picked up the banner and cried, "Hunt and Liberty for Ever!" some of those wild and mad Yeomanry were drunken upon their horses. He was told they met in St. James's Square and were made drunken there before they could do their dirty work. He had watched the Tories from 1816, and could remember a time when they kept grain in store at Liverpool until it was spoiled, and the people were nearly starved to death at the time. This was done to get up the prices of the grain. Large quantities were spoiled, and had to be destroyed. Flour was up at 6s. a dozen, and he remembered fetching sixpennyworth in a basin. Wages were low then, and provisions high. What with the press being gagged it was difficult, nay almost impossible, to get any redress. They would not let the nation become wealthy when it might have done. Everything you touched was taxed. They could scarcely stir without being taxed. If they washed their faces the soap was taxed. When they went to the looking glass that was taxed, too. If they even put a clean collar on the very starch that had stiffened it was taxed. In those days they used to fetch thin starch, ready made, from a house, where it was retailed out in a custard form at so much a lump. On being asked how they spent their leisure time then he replied he could hardly tell. He had a distinct recollection of fourteen of them one Christmas day, for want of something better to do, arranging to join at making treacle toffy. But when they came to put their money together they found, to their dismay, that they had not sufficient to purchase a pound of treacle, the price being so high. These were the "good old times" that the Tories were so fond of talking about. At this stage of the proceedings an old dame of 83 promised to sing a song if someone would try to keep her pipe in. The song was commenced, and it was of the usual old fashioned length, about 15 verses. As the singer was finishing her song she observed that the person who had volunteered to keep her pipe lit had become so fascinated with her vocal powers that he had failed in his promise. This drew forth the remark, "Come, John, fire up, fire up, or that pipe will go out." A recitation was next given by a hale old dame of 88 summers, in which a very remarkable feat of memory was shown. Afterwards the old topic of conversation was again resumed. It was asked if any of them had ever suffered imprisonment for their opinions. "Aye, aye," replied a veteran Radical. "I was put in, and was shaved, powd(hair cut), and robbed whilst there." It transpired that the old man had been robbed of the oakum he had picked by a fellow prisoner during a short absence from his work. Another of the veterans said he had a brother arrested and tried for a capital offence. The chief witness against him was a local spy, and if the mean scoundrel had had his own way his brother Ben would have been hung dead. But his brother proved beyond a shadow of doubt that he was in Quebec at the very time he was said to be committing the offence. He was immediately dismissed on the production of this evidence. "Eh, those were hard and trying times," continued the old man. "They could hardly tell who were friends and who were foes and spies." He could mention spies who hid pikes and other arms, and then went with the law officials in search of the arms, and found what they themselves had secreted. There were spies that would have sworn anyone's life away for a sum of money - "blood money" they called it in those days. If they had the newspapers then

that they have now such things would not have been tolerated, but the press they had was gagged, and durst not speak out. The old lady singer here chimed in - She could remember going to the White Moss before four o'clock one morning to drill. They had sticks instead of guns. This was only done to frighten Parliament to give them their rights. They never intended fighting. Henry Hunt urged them, before going to Peterloo, to take nothing with them, not even sticks, except they were lame. But she should never forget the scene at Peterloo that day. They never gave them a chance to get away. The drunken Yeomanry came rushing upon them without even waiting until the riot Act was read. They meant to take Hunt with them, come what might. It were both cruel and barbarous to do as they did that day. the regular soldiers behaved themselves like gentlemen compared with the Yeomanry. She believed the attack was arranged days before it was made, as there was not a stone to be found anywhere about. We were informed by another old man that four of his brothers were present at Peterloo. His father, on hearing what had taken place, went to meet his sons. On his way he met several Reformers returning with their faces sprinkled with blood, and amongst the number one man had a tall silk hat cut in two. There was one poor fellow coming through Failsworth bleeding freely from the wounds he had received. He could name three or four Tories, if he liked, who actually came out of their houses and laughed in the face of this wounded and almost fainting Reformer, and told him it served him right. With them party politics were stronger than human sympathy. Fortunately, however, none of his brothers were hurt. This old man also narrated a very interesting incident -. He remembered, shortly after the Peterloo Massacre, standing with his father and a Radical Reformer, best known by the name of 'Billy Quick'. They were near Quick's house, in the old road near Wrigley Head, Failsworth, and were talking about reform, when Billy saw in the distance a number of mounted soldiers approaching. "Those are after me," Billy said. No sooner had he thus spoken than he took off his clogs, and darted quickly across a field, down the valley leading to Moston, and through a culvert. The soldiers joined in the pursuit, but Billy was too 'quick' for them. By dodging and twisting, in the manner stated, he got clear away, and never was captured. The soldiers returned, remarking that they did not call this bold and daring Radical 'Billy Quick' for nothing; he was quick by name and quick by nature. "What had Quick done?" was asked. "Done? Nothing. His crime was daring to be a Radical"

Such are a few of the simple and unvarnished incidents related by the Reformers of 1819. What a wonderful change has taken place since those times. Many of the reforms advocated by these hunted down and presecuted veterans have now been secured, They laboured, and we are enjoying the fruits of their labours. We honour and bless them now for having fearlessly done their duty, and for having been, 'persecuted for righteousness sake'.

My notes:

Photograph : The Reformers are, from the back: David Hilton (79)  
next row: Thomas Chadderton (81), John Davies (78), Thomas Ogden (81), Jonathan Dawson (82).  
next row: Susannah Whittaker (81), Mary Collins (83), Catherine McMurdo (88), Richard Waters.  
Front row: Thomas Schofield (81) father of the author, Alice Schofield (79)

The reunion of the Veterans was an initiative by Failsworth reformer Sim Schofield ... and it was he who arranged for the photograph to be taken. It seems quite likely that he wrote the above article for the Chronicle. His own father is seated on the far left.

Sim Schofield, author of *'Short Stories About Failsworth Folk'*, was married to dialect poet Samuel Laycock's daughter, who was the subject of her father's poem, *'Welcome, Bonny Brid'*. You can read more of Schofield's own stories of reformers, and a larger copy of the photo [HERE](#)

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There is a new article on the Peterloo-Manchester website, called :
'William Fitton - The Lost Reformer' by Anna Mayall. You can read it [HERE](#)

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Transcript of pages 167 - 174, from '**Historical Sketches of Oldham**' by Edwin Butterworth (Pub. 1856), which include his account of what led up to Peterloo, the Massacre and the days following :



"... When peace had arrived, a few of the last years of the war having brought the nation to a state of exhaustion, both the foreign and the home markets became languid, trade was at a low ebb, prices and wages were reduced, and the manufacturing classes involved in deep distress. These evils were imputed by a numerous body of politicians to a defective state of the national representation, and a radical reform in the constitution of the Commons House of Parliament was demanded by the labouring classes in all the principal towns. Political associations were very generally formed, in furtherance of this object; and in Lancashire the call for annual parliaments and universal suffrage was extremely loud and importunate.

The first public meeting held in Oldham for the furtherance of

these doctrines, took place on Bent green, September 23, 1816, Mr. John Earnshaw, surgeon, in the chair, and Messrs. John Haigh and William Brough, of Oldham, and Robert Pilkington, of Bury, speakers. After voting resolutions favourable to radical reform, the multitude separated in an orderly manner. The extremely high price of provisions, principally attributable to the corn bill of 1815, caused considerable distress amongst the poor, and subscriptions for their relief were entered into at a public meeting held for the purpose, at the Angel Inn, on the 31st of the following month, October.

On the 3rd of January, 1817, an unusually numerous radical reform meeting was again held on Bent green, when a large banner, bearing radical mottoes, and a band of music, imparted peculiar animation to the events of the day. A third radical reform meeting, taking place on Bent green, February 10, 1817, the authorities became alarmed, and a number of special constables were appointed on the 8th of the same month. In addition to the civil power, a body of soldiery of the 54th Regiment of Foot, 104 in number, were stationed in a temporary barracks in Fog lane, which they first occupied on the 3rd of March. At an early hour on the morning of the 10th of that month, a party of the radical reformers again assembled, some of them furnished with blankets slung round their shoulders, with the intention of marching to Manchester, and thence to London, to lay their grievances before the Prince Regent and parliament. The special constables and foot soldiery, with a party of the 13th Light Horse, which had arrived from Huddersfield, were on duty; but as the crowd proceeded to Manchester, the civil and military powers abstained from interference. It is recorded by a writer of no slight graphic power, and a participator in the events of the day, Mr. Samuel Bamford, that, '*at this time the writings of William Cobbett suddenly became of great authority; they were read on nearly every cottage hearth in the manufacturing districts, and their influence was speedily visible. Riots soon became scarce, and from that time they have never obtained their ancient vogue with the labourers of this country. The Sunday schools of the preceding thirty years had produced many working men of sufficient talent to become readers, writers, and speakers in the village meetings for parliamentary reform.*' Immediately after the meeting of the 10th of March, the country was distracted by rumours of treasonable discoveries, and the apprehension of alleged traitors. Open meetings being suspended, secret ones assembled under various pretexts, ensued. The proceedings of Oliver, the spy, gave a new impulse to secret meetings, and plots became rife. On the 28th of March, eleven of these misguided conspirators were apprehended at a public house in Manchester, two of whom were William Kent of Street bridge, and a person

named Taylor, of Roundthorn. Edward O'Connor publican, of Chadderton, voluntarily surrendered himself the following day, to answer a charge of suffering secret meetings in his house. On the 29th, Mr. Nadin, deputy constable of Manchester, accompanied by a party of dragoons, visited Chadderton and Royton, in search of suspected persons, having Mr. Bamford in custody at the time. Whilst at Royley, near Royton, a labourer, named George Howarth, was apprehended for using threatening language to the officers. The prisoners were conveyed to Manchester, through Oldham, which was in a state of great excitement during the day. Kent was imprisoned in Chelmsford goal, O'Connor liberated, and Bamford discharged on his own recognizance. With the restoration of the Habeas Corpus Act, in February, 1818, the agitation for reform was renewed. Numerous meetings followed in various parts of the country, one of the largest of which was held on Bent green, Oldham, April 18, 1818. In September, 1818, the political fermentation was increased by a turnout of the weavers, for an advance of wages, and by almost daily processions of the workmen, who refused to continue their labour at the prevailing rate of wages. Whilst the cotton weavers were either unemployed or working for scanty earnings, the spinners were in a state of comparative prosperity. The wages of spinners were 32s. per week, while weavers could not earn on an average more than 8s. or 10s. within the same period. On the 3rd of September, a large meeting of the weavers of Ashton, Oldham, and Stockport, was held on Ashton moss, when resolutions demanding an advance of wages were passed. In a few days some of the employers complied with the wishes of the operatives. A troop of yeomanry cavalry, which had been formed by a few of the principal inhabitants, in September, 1817, was fully organised in the latter part of 1818, and placed under the command of John Taylor, Esq., of Hargreaves, hat manufacturer. On the 4th of January, 1819, another large radical reform meeting, held on Bent green, terminated as usual, in an orderly manner; and these meetings were resumed in June and July, when they were frequently held in the radical reform room, Bent. The radical reformers, being determined to be as orderly in their movements as possible, formed themselves into drilling parties, and selected the hills and other remarkable spots as places of exercise. On the 30th of July, several troops of horse and foot soldiers were quartered at Oldham, and royal proclamations appeared prohibiting illegal assemblages. Although it is not my province to describe the memorable meeting which took place on St. Peter's field, Manchester, on the 16th of August, 1819, it will be necessary to allude to the connection which that event had with Oldham. The numbers assembled on that occasion amounted to 140,000, of which the processions from Oldham, Royton, Lees, Mossley, and Saddleworth, seemed to have formed a proportion of about 15,000. Mr. Henry Hunt, afterwards M.P. for Preston, acted as chairman, and immediately after he had commenced speaking, the Manchester yeomanry cavalry dashed into the meeting, and forcibly dispersed the multitude; hundreds were trampled upon by the horses, and wounded by the sabres of the cavalry; three or four persons were found dead upon the field, amongst whom was John Ashton, of Cowhill, near Oldham. In the whole, eight persons lost their lives, and from four to five hundred were bruised or wounded. Of these, twenty-one individuals were from the parish of Oldham. Mr. Hunt, and most of the intended speakers, were apprehended, and subsequently imprisoned.

Attempts were made to prosecute the yeomanry and the magistrates, but they were unsuccessful. Hopes were, however, entertained, that by means of the death that had ensued, the conduct of the Manchester authorities would be exposed, if not censured. On the 8th of September following, the attention of all England was directed to a judicial inquiry, which took place in Oldham, arising out of the death of John Lees, a cotton spinner, who had died the previous day, and which proceeding was called emphatically the Oldham Inquest. The deceased, a son of Mr. Robert Lees, master cotton spinner, of Bent, while in attendance at the Manchester meeting, had received several bruises in different parts of the body, and a sabre wound upon his arm; to these injuries he had not paid proper attention, in consequence of which mortification ensued, and produced death. To ascertain the cause of death, an inquest was summoned by Mr. Batty, the clerk of Mr. Ferrand, the coroner for the district, the principal



being at that time from home on his professional duty, at the assizes at Lancaster. The jury on this memorable occasion were Messrs. John Jackson, foreman, Thomas Jackson, Joseph Dixon, and John Newton, of Oldham; James Coates, John Kay, Thomas Wolfenden, and George Booth, of Royton ; and John Ogden, George Dixon, Henry Wolstenhulme, and Thomas Booth, of Chadderton. After an investigation commenced at the Duke of York public house, Bent, and continued by adjournments, at the Angel Inn, partly in the presence of the coroner, and partly in that of his deputy, for several weeks, the proceedings were adjourned on the 7th of October, to the Star Inn, Manchester, where they were resumed, and continued on several occasions in the spirit of those unhappy times. Ultimately, the entire inquiry was rendered nugatory by a decision of the Court of King's Bench, November, 1819, which determined that the inquest was illegal, because it was not originally held by the coroner, but by his deputy; and though the coroner had caused the body to be disinterred, that it might be viewed by him in the presence of the jury, yet, as he had not re-sworn the jury, after the inspection, the defect of the original holding was not remedied. Under these circumstances, the jury was dismissed, without being called upon for their anxiously expected verdict.

On the evening following the extraordinary occurrence at St. Peter's field, Manchester, disturbances were apprehended at Oldham, and, in consequence, some troops of the Cheshire yeomanry cavalry were on their way thither, but fortunately no riot whatever took place, and the military returned.

Mr. William Fitton, surgeon, of Royton, a practical and comprehensive advocate of parliamentary reform, delivered his first public address at the county meeting, held at Preston, February, 1817, for the purpose of voting an address to the Prince Regent, on the atrocious attempt which had just previously been made on the royal person. In August, 1819, Mr. Fitton was indicted for taking part in an alleged seditious meeting held at Blackburn; but it does not appear that he was imprisoned for that offence. This popular speaker was the chief adviser of 'a small but firm band of radical reformers at Oldham, who proved themselves the truest supporters of the cause of radical reform of any party in the county.' These individuals ultimately became the leaders of one of the principal political parties in the borough, adopting as the bases of their views the opinions of Mr. Cobbett. On the introduction of the reform bill, in the House of Commons, in 1831, Mr. Fitton was mainly instrumental in taking such measures as ultimately secured the inclusion of the three townships of Crompton, Royton, and Chadderton within the borough of Oldham. Mr. Fitton died November 15, 1840.

Mr. John Knight, an ardent and resolute radical reformer, was for several years an inhabitant of Oldham. At the assizes at Lancaster, August 27, 1812, Mr. Knight, then a manufacturer in Manchester, and thirty-seven others, amongst whom were Messrs. John Haigh, of Lord's gate, and John Newton, of Roundthorn, Oldham, were charged with having administered unlawful oaths in connection with a political association at Manchester, but evidence being adduced proving the accusations to be false, the parties were acquitted. Mr. Knight took part in the St. Peter's field meeting, August 16, 1819, and was imprisoned a short time in consequence, but was not brought up for judgment. In August the same year he was indicted for participating in a seditious meeting at Blackburn, and held to bail. In December, 1819, he, George Dewhurst, and Nathan Broadhurst were committed to Lancaster castle on a charge of high treason, but at the spring assizes, 1820, the charge was altered to misdemeanour, and the defendants sentenced to two years' imprisonment for the offence. Mr. Knight was a frequent speaker at public meetings, and continued during his life firmly attached to the principles of extreme radicalism. He died September 5, 1838, and his funeral, which took place on the 9th of the same month, was attended by 2000 persons. Messrs. Joseph Taylor, of Bent, Oldham, hatter, and John Kay, of Royton, cotton manufacturer, were also prominent radical reformers in those critical times. The former was a most intelligent but diffident individual, and the latter "an imperturbably placid being - a real philosopher in humble life."

The country remained in a disturbed state several months subsequent to the extraordinary meeting at Manchester, and on the 13th December, 1819, the Oldham yeomanry cavalry were not only placed on duty for a month, but a number of special constables commenced night duty, which was Watch and Ward. "For a time a portentous gloom took possession of the public mind, and the spirit of party animosity reigned triumphant; but the revival of trade, and the consequent improvement in the condition of the manufacturing population, abated the ardour of political feeling, which, in the course of the ensuing year, was moderated down to the usual standard." On the 24th of April, 1820, a party of soldiers, some of the 7th Dragoons quartered in the town, had a dispute with a number of the radical reformers, whilst sitting with them at a public house in the Market place. In the evening of the following day a serious affray occurred betwixt another party of soldiers quartered at the Bull's Head public house, in George street, and some of the inhabitants, which terminated in a desperate contest. A young man named Jonathan Buckley was severely wounded with a fire shovel, a youth was deeply wounded by a large kitchen poker red hot, the furniture in the public house was demolished, whilst another party of the military from the barracks had a fight with the populace in the streets, which resulted in upwards of 18 individuals being wounded. An aged man, named Armstrong, had one of his ears cut off. The deputy constable of the town and his assistants were driven from the streets and severely assaulted in their attempts to restore order. The House of Commons was petitioned for redress, and on the 1st of the following month, the unpopular body of soldiery was removed to Carlisle. At the Salford quarter sessions, however, held July 17, 1820, two persons named Winterbottom and Whittaker, were sentenced to two years' imprisonment, for assaulting the soldiery, and another of the name of Cheetham was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment for a similar offence. At the succeeding quarter sessions two persons named Buckley and Wild, were sentenced to one year and nine months' imprisonment, for attacking the soldiers in the same affray."

You can read a full transcript of the book [HERE](#)

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From the e-Postbag

Query: Coldhurst Lodge / Hollow? :

An email request for information from our reader, Anne ...

Does anyone know exactly where Coldhurst Lodge was?

It is given as the home of Ann Barlow, one of the women badly injured at Peterloo. It is cited in the '*Report of the Metropolitan and Central Committee appointed for the Relief of the Manchester Sufferers*'... in 1820, published in London.

Other Peterloo sources refer to her living at Coldhurst Hollow – which is where some of my own ancestors lived – which is why I am interested.

Is it just a typo/misinterpretation/mistake by a London printer, or was there such a place as Coldhurst Lodge? Coldhurst Hollow appears on old maps but I cannot see Coldhurst Lodge anywhere.

If you can help Anne at all, please email me at < Oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk > and I will forward your emails.

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#### **Family of Robert Lees :**

An email request for information from our reader, Frances ...

I am researching my family tree and have come across a Lees family who were cotton manufacturers in Oldham. Henry Lees (1837-61 Master Cotton spinner employing 74? in 1861)) married my 2nd gt grandmother. He was a son of Robert Lees (1803-1855 Cotton Spinner

employing 121 in 1851)) and his wife Ann.

All born in Oldham, they lived at Priory House(s) Oldham in 1851, and Lower King St and Union St. respectively in 1861. I cannot find them in the 1841 census.

I have looked at your website, and my 'Lees' do not seem to figure in the information on there for the 'Lees' so far.

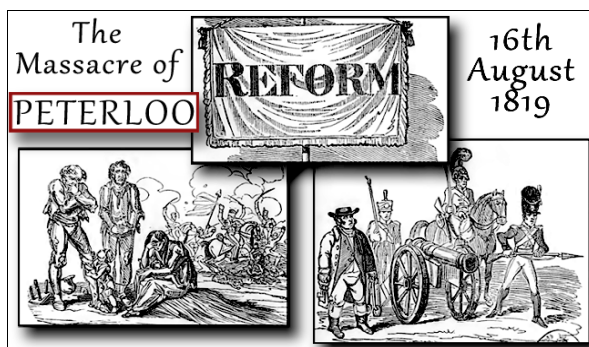
Is there anyone in your Society who would know which branch of the family they originate from? Or which mill they had? Any information would be appreciated.

If you can help Frances at all, please email me at < Oldham\_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk > and I will forward your emails.

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PETERLOO : the Bi-Centenary

Visit the website for **The Peterloo Project** with particular reference to Oldham at [Peterloo-Manchester](#)



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There are just so many Peterloo related events, talks, walks etc., planned during August that it is virtually impossible to list them all!

You can make searches on websites such as :

**Manchester Histories - Peterloo 1819** ... Manchester Histories have created a website which publicises all that is happening around the region in the weeks leading up to the anniversary on 16th August, information and exhibitions.

Visit their website [HERE](#) and search for the event dates wanted in August eg. for the 16th - 18th with the 'Peterloo Picnic', at HOME; 'From the Crowd', and much more [HERE](#)

**Book at Eventbrite** ... for most Peterloo related events needing to be booked. Search with filters, for example ...

Peterloo + Manchester + 1st August to 31st August [HERE](#)

For more specific searches, for eg., replace the subject with a speaker's name, or a different location eg. Rochdale.

Other talks or activities may need to be booked on the website of the organisation or gallery hosting or organising an event.

**Peterloo Memorial Campaign Group** ... to find out more about the memorial etc. and the plans for the 16th & 17th August organised by the Memorial Campaign Group, visit their website [HERE](#) and their Facebook page [HERE](#).

To find out more about the proposed rally with 'Liberty Caps', and how to make them, visit their website 'Rise' [HERE](#)

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The following entry was sent to us with a request for inclusion in the newsletter ...

1819 - Mossley Remembers Peterloo - 2019

(from Saturday 3rd August until Saturday 31 August 2019)

Open Saturdays 10am – 4pm and Sundays 12 noon – 4pm

A Special Exhibition Commemorating Mossley's Involvement with Peterloo :

Venue:

St George's Church, Mossley, Stamford St, Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL5 0LP

No booking required.

Discover Peterloo and Explore the Mossley Connections, Stories, and Timelines.

The Display Boards cover six main themes:

- * Who were witnesses at the trial of Henry Hunt?
- * Where is John Knight buried?
- * Which Controversial figure preached his oratory sermon?
- * Who carried the Saddleworth, Lees, and Mossley Union Flag at Peterloo?
- * Who led the Mossley contingent?
- * What did Rev. Robert Hay do on the moors above Mossley?

The answers to all of these questions will be found in the exhibition. There is so much more information and detail on their 'Peterloo1819' website page [HERE](#)

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**The following entries are for PETERLOO exhibitions on-going for several weeks :**

#### **Oldham Gallery**

Website [HERE](#)

May 25th to September 21st

***'From Waterloo to Peterloo' ...***

#### **Working Class Movement Library**

Website [HERE](#)

May 31st to September 19th

***'Peterloo: News, Fake News and Paranoia' ...***

#### **People's History Museum**

Website [HERE](#)

March 2019 to February 2020

***'Disrupt? Peterloo and Protest'***

#### **Touchstones Museum & Art Gallery, Rochdale**

Website [HERE](#)

May 18th to November 2nd

***Protest & Peterloo***

#### **Manchester Craft & Design Centre**

Website [HERE](#)

May 23rd to September 7th

***Misshaping Peterloo***

#### **John Rylands Library**

Website [HERE](#)

March 21st to September 29th

***Peterloo, Manchester's fight for Freedom***

#### **Manchester Central Library**

website [HERE](#)

June 7th to September 28th

***'The Hidden Tableaux's Peterloo Massacre 1819'***

*'Hidden'* is an on-going series of photographic tableaux by



Red Saunders, artist and founder of 'Rock against Racism'

"The 'Hidden' project shines photographic light on great moments in the long struggle of working people for democracy and social justice. The aim of the project is to reproduce important historic scenes involving the dissenters, revolutionaries, radicals and non-conformists who have so often been hidden from history."

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Need Help!

The MLFHS Family History Help Desk

Don't forget if you hit a wall, the Society has a help desk at the Central Library.

It is located on the ground floor of Manchester Central Library at St. Peter's Square. Our location, from the main entrance, is to the right, beyond the cafe.

The Help Desk is open every weekday, Monday to Friday, except for Bank Holidays, between 10.30am and 3.30pm.

Central Library is adjacent to the St. Peter's Square Metrolink station with direct services from Altrincham, East Didsbury, Eccles, Bury, Oldham, Shaw, Rochdale and Ashton under Lyne and with easy connections from other lines.

Many bus services from South Manchester stop at the Oxford Street end of Portland Street, which is a five-minute walk from the library. Other services may arrive at Shudehill Interchange or Piccadilly Bus Station. Shudehill is about 15 minutes and Piccadilly about 10 minutes' walk from the library. There are Metrolink connections adjacent to both bus terminals.

If you can avoid coming by car then do so! There is no parking at Central Library, even for disabled parking.

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### Oldham Archives and Local Studies

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

There are regular Family History Advice Sessions every Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 2-4pm.

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

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

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

- Sports, entertainment and leisure records
- Personal, family and property records
- Society and Association records
- Records of Oldham communities


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Health in Oldham Before the NHS


The NHS came into being on 5 July 1948. Medical care was then free for everyone... but how did the people of Oldham manage their wellbeing before this?

This exhibition looks at how local people coped with illness and infirmity and what kind of care they could expect.


- Where did you go for medicines?
- What hospitals were in the area?
- How qualified were local physicians?
- What did you do if you had toothache?
- Where would you get spectacles from?
- What was Phrenology?



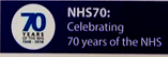
Public information leaflet, distributed in 1948, advises on the concept of the new NHS for Britain.



Operating theatre at Boundary Park General Hospital c.1948



Aneurin Bevan on the first day of the NHS, 5 July 1948



NHS70: Celebrating 70 years of the NHS

There are regularly changing displays in the Local Studies. The current one is : **'Health in Oldham Before the NHS'.**


Self-medication

At a time when many people in Oldham could not afford to consult a doctor the market for proprietary preparations claiming to cure every ailment known to man was huge. Newspapers were full of advertisements making outrageous claims for products and local druggists or chemists placed prominent adverts in the trade directories. Taking these preparations was a dangerous business as throughout the Victorian period they were unregulated. The 1875 Sale of Food and Drugs Act made it an offence to sell an article falsely labelled. It also reduced the medical licence duty and the number of vendors of these medicines increased from over 12,000 in 1874 to 20,000 in 1895. Many remedies contained opium and morphine and could be highly addictive. However, preparations were not always made by charlatans. Many were developed by medical men with others established over many years. Pharmacists made their own versions of patent medicines.



Some poisons were made with poisons such as strychnine - which was used in tonics to stimulate the appetite. A 'cure' for head lice in children contained bichloride of mercury that came with the warning 'this lotion must be used with caution as it is deadly poison if taken in the stomach'.

Qualified medical men did not approve of many patent medicines and certainly not the 'quacks' who dispensed them. Whether this was due to the fear that patients might not be getting the best treatment or because they disliked the idea of losing out financially is debatable.




JOHN S. GLOVER,
Chemist and Druggist,
244, MANCHESTER STREET,
WERNETH, OLDHAM.

PREPARATION OF
GLOVER'S RHEUMATIC MIXTURE,
AND FEMALE PILLS.

Top right: 'Quick Doctor' illustration from Michael's Compound Syrup, 1898
Above: Advertisement from the 1875 Oldham Trade Directory

Apothecaries and Chemists


The Apothecaries Act of 1815 confirmed apothecaries as general practitioners who left others, the druggists and chemists, to sell and supply medicines. Many druggists sold a huge variety of produce from medical preparations to horse and cattle medicines, fresh roast coffee and varnishes. Some were also known as 'dysalsters' who dealt in a range of other chemical products such as glues, dyes and colourings. Others were seedsmen and some specialised in preparations made from herbs, roots, barks and other botanic ingredients. The Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain was set up in 1841 and the Pharmacy and Poisons Act of 1868 made it unlawful for any person to keep open a shop or use the title Chemist, Druggist, Pharmacist or Dispensing Chemist unless registered under this Act. Two years later it was ruled that the word 'person' in this Act did not include corporate bodies, allowing companies to not only use restricted titles but also sell poisons provided they were sold by a qualified person. Boots the Chemist Ltd. was established in 1849 but the first Oldham trade directory in which it is mentioned is 1905 when it was based at 42 Mumps.



ORANGE QUININE WINE
Prepared according to the
BRITISH PHARMACOPŒIA 1908

Dose: One wineglassful 2 or 3 times a day. Each glassful contains one grain of pure hydrochloride of quinine.

Chemists often advertised various brands of tonic wine. Quinine was a popular additive, not only because of its supposed health-giving qualities but also because of its bitter flavour.



SEIDLITZ POWDERS
ALEX. PARSONS, MANCHESTER.

Seidlitz Powder
This was the generic name for a commonly known laxative marketed and sold under a variety of names. Ingredients were tartaric acid, potassium sodium tartrate and sodium bicarbonate. While the powder could be somewhat helpful as a laxative, its use could be fatal in patients with conditions such as hernia, bowel obstruction or other ailments.

[Opening hours](#) and contact details.

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.

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### 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)  
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](#)

### Some Local Archives

Barnsley Museum & Discovery Centre – [www.experience-barnsley.com](http://www.experience-barnsley.com)  
Birkenhead – [www.wirral.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives)  
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](#)  
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)  
York – [www.york.ac.uk/borthwick](http://www.york.ac.uk/borthwick)

Four illustrative engravings from :  
*"History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain..."*

by Edward Baines Jnr. Pub. 1835



Cotton Factories, Union Street, Manchester

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The Exchange, Manchester

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**Power Looms**

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Mule Spinning