

# 'e-Owls'



Part of Manchester & Lancashire  
Family History Society

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**SEPTEMBER 2019**

**MLFHS - Oldham Branch Newsletter**

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## Branch News :

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

### Branch Officers for 2019 -2020 :

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

## Chairman's remarks :

Hello again,

I hope you had a good summer even though the weather hasn't been too great. For those of you who come to our monthly meetings, you will notice that for September, we are in the Performance Space at Oldham Library. I am going to try and arrange a meeting with the Library Staff to try and find out when the building works are due to start and if they will still be able to accommodate us somewhere in the Library when our next programme of meetings begins in January 2020.

## INVITATION TO THE MAYOR OF OLDHAM'S AFTERNOON CREAM TEA :

Three members of the Oldham Branch of the MLFHS (including myself) attended this event which was held in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Oldham. It turned out to be quite a pleasant afternoon, with an opportunity for mixing and chatting with other representatives from various charities in the Oldham area. The Mayor, Councillor Ginny Alexander, passed from table to table chatting with as many people as she could. A raffle was also held with the proceeds

going to the Mayor's chosen charities. At the end of the event, the Mayor thanked everyone for attending and said how proud she was that so many people had turned up and that she looked forward to her tenure of the Mayoral Office over the next twelve months.



Photo courtesy Joan Secker-Wlodarczyk

### **Gillian and Linda at the Mayoral 'Do'**

I look forward to seeing you at the September meeting.

Linda Richardson

**Oldham Branch Chairman**

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

#### **Peterloo 1819 - 2019:**

Friday 16th August 2019 arrived and the weather on the date this year couldn't have been more different from that warm, sunny day 200 years ago ... this year it rained and rained and rained! I can't remember being so completely soaked for many years! However, despite the rain there were hundreds present, on the ground at the front of the Convention Centre on Windmill Lane, to commemorate the occasion and hear the reading of the names of those who died. Always a melancholy, reflective moment.

In previous years, Maxine Peake, John Earnshaw and Christopher Eccleston had been prominent and active participants but this year the names were read, in turn, by different people. Film makers Mike Leigh ('Peterloo'), and Danny Boyle were there, as were the author Robert Poole, Paul Fitzgerald (originator of the Memorial Campaign and co-creator of the graphic novel), Manchester's Mayor and others including those who were descendants of Peterloo victims.

The thought provoking and beautiful memorial itself, unfortunately the subject of a great deal of bitter controversy, had been quietly revealed, without any fanfare, earlier in the week; the hoardings were removed, and the surrounding area cleaned. So sad that, instead of being celebrated for it's innovative concept as a public memorial, it has become the 'elephant in the room' due to the furore over the lack of accessiblity, to the top, for wheelchair users.

Sadly, in August, daily hospital visiting, to a family member, meant that I missed many of the commemorative events in which I had planned take part ...

but I did get to see Professor David Olusoga in conversation with Hannah Barker, on the subject of '*Black and British*', part of the theme of '*Democracy*', on the 17th at Manchester Art Gallery.



Not surprisingly, there was a large and very appreciative audience most of whom, after the talk, descended on the bookshop to buy his book of the same title and get it signed by him. There was a long queue to buy (and it sold out!) then a long queue to get it signed (the first time I have ever thought it worth that particular effort! And it was!)

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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### **Oldham Branch Meeting :**

**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 speaker's 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 & Scottish Branches**

### **Bolton Branch :**

**Wednesday, 4th September**

A talk by Phil Stringer.

Phil will talk about the GENUKI (Genealogy UK and Ireland) website, and about the latest developments on this invaluable site.

GENUKI functions as an online virtual reference library with a vast amount of information about local resources for each county in the UK and Ireland .

Guests and potential members are sure of a warm welcome.

From 7.00pm tea & coffee are available in the room, and drinks are available from the bar.

Unwanted genealogy magazines and CDs can be swapped/collected at the meetings.  
At the end of every meeting there is a Help Desk, manned by experienced researchers, available to assist you with your genealogy problems.

Meeting starts at 7.30pm,

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

The meetings are free for members of the MLFHS and £3 for non-members. There is no need to book

Website link [HERE](#)

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**Anglo-Scottish Branch,  
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

The talk is open to both members and non-members. Please book on Eventbrite [HERE](#)

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**MLFHS updates**

**Stretford Family & Local History Fair :**

**Saturday 7 September 10am - 4pm.**

MLFHS will have a stall at this event at St. Matthew's Church Hall, Chester Road, Stretford, M32 9AJ.

Admission is £2.00 and there is free parking in the Stretford Precinct car park for 3 hours.

There will be two talks on family/local history and stalls from several family and local history societies and commercial suppliers offering books, CDs, maps, ephemera etc.

Website [HERE](#)

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**The Cheetham Festival**

**19th-22nd September**

**Manchester Central Library celebrates the Cheetham Festival**

MLFHS will have a presence in the activities on:

**Saturday 21 September, 1pm-4pm**

Archives+ Ground Floor, and Wandering Jewish Museum Lower Ground Floor, Manchester Central Library, St Peter's Square.

"Manchester Jewish Museum has moved temporarily into Manchester Central Library! In celebration of this, Manchester Central Library is celebrating the Cheetham Festival. There



will be archive handling sessions, family activities and behind the scenes tours of Manchester Central Library. Join us before or after you head up Cheetham Hill Road where the main festival sites and activities will be happening."

[Twitter](#) where you can download a full programme

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### **MLFHS Online Bookshop:**

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

Visit the [Online Bookshop](#) to see what is available.

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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 18th September**

***'Peterloo - The Aftermath' ... the 10 years or so that followed.***

An illustrated talk by Sheila Goodyear

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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### **Oldham Library:**

**Monday 30th September**

***'Peterloo - The Aftermath' ... the 10 years or so that followed.***

An illustrated talk by Sheila Goodyear

At Oldham Library, 7pm.

Admittance free but please book on Eventbrite [HERE](#)

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### **Gallery Oldham : Free Lunchtime Talks:**

**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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### **Saddleworth Historical Society**

**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 lecture in September 2019 by the Saddleworth Civic Trust.

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

**September AGM and Members' Evening**

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'**

Taking a break (short!) from thinking about social and political change following Peterloo, I was reading '*Lancashire Folk-Lore*' by John Harland & T.T. Wikinson, published in 1867, and came across some stories of Lancashire Boggarts ... extracted from pages 49 to 62 :

### **BOGGARTS, GHOSTS, AND HAUNTED PLACES.**

What is a Boggart? A sort of ghost or sprite. But what is the meaning of the word Boggart? Brand says that "in the northern parts of England, ghost is pronounced 'gheist' and 'guest'. Hence 'bar-guest', or bar-gheist'. Many streets are haunted by a guest, who assumes many strange appearances, as a mastiff-dog, &. It is a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon 'gast', spiritus, anima." Brand might have added that bar is a term for gate in the north, and that all the gates of York are named "bars," so that a 'bar-gheist' is literally a gate-ghost; and many are the tales of strange appearances suddenly seen perched on the top of a gate or fence, whence they sometimes leaped upon the shoulders of the scared passenger. Drake, in his '*Eboracum*', says (*Appendix*, p.7), "I have been so frightened with stories of the 'barguest' when I was a child, that I cannot help throwing away an etymology upon it. I suppose it comes from Anglo-Saxon 'burh' a town, and 'gast', a ghost, and so signifies a town sprite. N.B. - 'Guest' is in the Belgic and Teutonic softened into 'gheist' and 'gest'." The "Boggart Hole" therefore means the hollow haunted by the bar-gheist or gate-ghost.

### **BOGGART HOLE CLOUGH.**

"Not far from the little snug, smoky village of Blakeley or Blackley, there lies one of the most romantic of dells, rejoicing in a state of singular seclusion, and in the oddest of Lancashire names, to wit, the 'Boggart Hole.' [In the present generation, by pleonasm, the place is named "Boggart Hole Clough."] Rich in every requisite for picturesque beauty and poetical association, it is impossible for me (who am neither a painter nor a poet) to describe this dell as it should be described; and I will, therefore, only beg of thee, gentle reader, who, peradventure, mayst not

have lingered in this classical neighbourhood, to fancy a deep, deep, dell, its steep sides fringed down with hazel, and beech, and fern, and thick undergrowth, and clothed at the bottom with the richest and greenest sward in the world. You descend, clinging to the trees, and scrambling as best you may, and now you stand on haunted ground! Tread softly, for this is the Boggart's Clough, and see, in yonder dark corner, and beneath the projecting mossy stone, where that dusky sullen cave yawns before us, like a bit of Salvator's best, there lurks that strange elf, the sly and mischievous Boggart. Bounce! I see him coming; oh no, it was only a hare bounding from her form; there it goes - there!" Such is the introduction to a tale of a boggart, told by Crofton Croker, in Roby's 'Traditions of Lancashire'; but which, if memory serve us faithfully, is but a localized version of a story told of an Irish sprite, and also of a Scotch brownie; for in all three tales when the farmer and his family are "flitting" in order to get away from the nocturnal disturbance, the sprite pops up his head from the cart, exclaiming, "Ay, neighbour, we're flitting!" Tradition, which has preserved the name of the clough selected by the Lancashire boggart for his domicile, has failed to record any particular pranks of this individual elf, and we can only notice this charming little clough, as conveying by its popular name the only remaining vestige of its lost traditions. Perhaps the best story of this clough is that graphically told by Bamford [*Passages in the Life of a Radical*, vol. i. p.130] of three friends seeking by a charm (consisting in gathering three grains of St. John's fernseed there), to win for one of them the love of a damsel who was indifferent to him.

### **BOGGARTS OR GHOSTS IN OLD HALLS.**

There is scarcely an old house, or hall, of any antiquity in Lancashire, that cannot boast of that proud distinction over the houses of yesterday, a ghost or boggart. 'Radcliffe Tower' was haunted by a black dog; perhaps in commemoration of the Fair Ellen of Radcliffe, who, by order of her stepmother, was murdered by the master cook, and cut up small, and of her flesh a venison pasty made for her father's dinner!

'Smithells Hall', near Bolton, was formerly haunted by the ghost of the martyr George Marsh, whose stamped footstep indenting a lagstone, is still shown there.

'Ince Hall' stands about a mile from Wigan, on the left-hand of the high road to Bolton. It is a very conspicuous object, its ancient and well-preserved front - one of those black and white half-timbered facades now almost confined to the two counties palatine of Lancashire and Cheshire - generally attracting the notice and inquiry of travellers. About a mile to the south-east stands another place of the same name, once belonging to the Gerards of Bryn. The manor is now the property of Charles Walmsley, Esq., of Westwood, near Wigan. The two mansions 'Ince Hall' and 'Ince Manor House', are sometimes confounded together in topographical inquiries; and it is not now certain to which of them properly belongs a tradition about a forged will and a ghost, on which Mr. Roby has founded a very graphic story, in his 'Traditions of Lancashire. There are the Boggart of 'Clegg Hall', near Rochdale; the 'Clayton Hall' Boggart, Droylsden; the 'Clock House' Boggart, in the same neighbourhood; the 'Thackergate' Boggart, near Alderdale; and many others: indeed; they are too numerous for us to attempt a full enumeration. Mr. Higson observes [*History of Droylsden*, p. 67] that few sombre or out-of-the-way places, retired nooks and corners, or sequestered by-paths, escaped the reputation of being haunted. Many domiciles had their presiding boggart, and 'feeorin' [fairies] swarmed at every turn of the dark old lanes, and arch-boggarts held revel at every "three-road-end." After dusk, each rustle of the leaves, or sigh of the night wind through the branches, to the timid wayfarer heralded the instant and uncereemonious appearance of old wizards and witches, "Nut Nans," and "Clapcans," or the terrific exploits of headless trunks, alias "men beawt yeds," or other traditional "sperrits," hobgoblins, and sprites, or the startling semblances of black dogs, phantoms, and other indescribable apparitions. Aqueous nymphs or 'nixies', yclept [named] "Grindylow," and "Jenny Green Teeth," lurked at the bottom of pits, and with their long, sinewy arms dragged in and drowned children who ventured too near. On autumnal evenings, the flickering flame (carburetted hydrogen, spontaneously ignited) of the

"CorpseCandle," "Will-o'-th'-Wisp," or "Jack" or "Peg-a-Lantern" (for the sex was not clearly ascertained), performed his or her fantastic and impossible jumps in the plashy meadows near Edge Lane, to the terror of many a simple-minded rustic. Fairies, also, were believed to commit many depredations; such as eating the children's porridge, nocturnally riding out the horses, loosing the cows in the shippin, or churning the milk whilst "calving," by the fireside, and stealing the butter; and hence, behind many a door, as yet observable in Clayton, both of dwelling and shippin, was carefully nailed a worn horse-shoe, believed to be a potent counter-charm or talisman against their freaks and fancies. There were certain localities in the township of Droylsden notorious as the rendezvous or favourite promenades of boggarts and feeorin', which after nightfall few persons could muster pluck sufficient to linger in, or even pass by, for -

*"Grey superstition's whisper dread,  
Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread."*

Manifestly pre-eminent was "th' owd Green Lone," which "Jem Hill, th' king o' Dreighlesdin," used to assert "swaarmt wi' fairees, witches, un' boggerts, un' which nob'dy could mester bur hissel'." The boggart located at Thackergate, near Alderdale, has well-nigh scared many a sober person out of his senses. Herds of four-footed boggarts used to issue from a pit at East End, in form resembling "great big dhogs, wi' great glarin' een, as big as tay-cups." The boggart at the croft-tenter's lodge (South) Clock-house, as fancy dictated, stalked through the chamber and stripped the bedclothes off the sleepers; or, assuming gigantic proportions and snow-white vestments, perched in the solemn yew-tree, a startling object by contrast. At last, being exorcised by an array of divines, it was laid for a time, beneath its favourite tree. A field-path from Fairfield to Ashton Hill-lane was nightly traversed by a being of another world, mostly representing a shadowy-lady, draped according to whim, either in a loose white robe, or in rustling black silk. For a certain distance she glided in advance of the pedestrian, and then, by suddenly vanishing, most likely left his hair standing on end. At one of the Greenside farms a murder was said to have been committed in the shippin: and the exact spot was supposed to be indicated by the impossibility of securely fastening a cow in one particular boose [cow stall]; for, however carefully its occupant was chained overnight, next morning she was sure to be found at large, and once was actually discovered on the shippin barks. Thither, it was believed, the cow had been carried by supernatural agency; but, be that as it may, it was necessary to lower her cautiously down, with the aid of ropes and blocks. At a cottage adjoining, a boggart varied its amusements by drumming on the old oaken chest, still preserved; or, growing emboldened, shook the hangings of the bed, or rustled amongst the clothes; the alarmed occupants sometimes in despair rolling up the coverlet, and unavailingly whirling it at their invisible tormentor. At a neighbouring farm-house, amongst other vagaries, the boggart would snatch up the infant, whilst asleep between its parents, and, without awakening them, would harmlessly deposit it on the hearthstone, downstairs. "Clayton Ho" [Hall] was of course honoured with a boggart, which at dead of night diversified its pranks by snatching the clothes from the beds, trailing heavy iron weights on the floors, or rattling ponderous chains through the crazy apartments. These pranks becoming insufferable, the help of a clergyman from the parish church was obtained; and fortunately, with the aid of counter-spells and incantations, he succeeded in laying the spirit for ever, declaring that,

*"Whilst ivy climbs and holly is green,  
Clayton Hall Boggart shall no more be seen."*

Even yet one room in the mansion is named "the Bloody Chamber," from some supposed stains of human gore on the oaken floor planks; which, however, in reality are only natural red tinges of the wood, denoting the presence of iron. Even since the formation of the new road, J. W——, the last of the ancient race of boggart-seers in the township, used to combat with feeorin' between East End and Droylsden toll-gate; but as he died a few years ago without bequeathing his gift, he (happily) carried with him his mantle to the grave. At a period just within memory, oft, after sunset, has the weary and tardy pedestrian quickened his speed on



approaching some lonely place, by remembering how its tutelar spirit or Boggart could assume at will the shape of a rabbit, dog, bear, or still more fearful form. On its appearance, of course, the wayfarer fled in affright, and from fear and unwonted exertion, often reached home utterly exhausted. Next day the story would be widely circulated through the thinly populated district, detailing at length (and of course gathering minuteness and improvement in its transmission), how "Owd Yethurt o' Grunsho," or "Lung Tum woife," "th' neet afore wur welly ta'en by a great black Boggart, wi' great lung hurms, un' a whiskin' tail, un' yure as black as soot, un' rowlin' e'en as big as saucers." The decadence of all these old superstitions is to be attributed to a variety of causes. Straight, well-paved roads; increased intellectual activity in useful channels, informing the minds of one locality with the ideas of another, the publication of scientific works; and lastly, according to one aged unbeliever, the introduction of "Owd Ned [the steam-engine], un' lung chimblies; fact'ry folk havin' summat else t'mind nur wanderin' ghosts un' rollickin' sperrits." The same authority archly declared as a clincher, "There's no Boggarts neaw, un' iv ther' were, folk han grown so wacken, they'd soon catch 'em." [Mr. John Higson's '*Notices of Droylsden*']

### **HOUSE BOGGARTS, OR LABOURING GOBLINS.**

These humbler classes of boggarts are by turns both useful and troublesome to the farmers of the district where they choose to reside. Syke Lumb Farm, near Blackburn, is reputed to be still visited by one of these anomalous beings, and many of his mad pranks are still talked of and believed in the neighbourhood. When in a good humour, this noted goblin will milk the cows, pull the hay, fodder the cattle, harness the horses, load the carts, and stack the crops. When irritated by the utterance of some unguarded expression or mark of disrespect, either from the farmer or his servants, the cream-mugs are smashed to atoms; no butter can be obtained by churning; the horses and other cattle are turned loose or driven into the woods; two cows will sometimes be found fastened in the same stall; no hay can be pulled from the mow; and all the while the wicked imp sits grinning with delight upon one of the cross-beams in the barn. At other times the horses are unable to draw the empty carts across the farm-yard; if loaded, they are upset; whilst the cattle tremble with fear, not at any visible cause. Nor do the inmates of the house experience any better or gentler usage. During the night the clothes are said to be violently torn from off the beds of the offending parties, whilst invisible hands drag these individuals down the stone stairs by the legs, one step at a time, after a more uncomfortable manner than we need describe. Hothershall Hall, near Ribchester, was formerly the scene of similar exploits; but the goblin is understood to have been "laid" under the roots of a large laurel tree at the end of the house, and will not be able to molest the family so long as the tree exists. It is a common opinion in that part of the country that the roots have to be moistened with milk on certain occasions, in order to prolong its existence, and also to preserve the power of the spell under which the goblin is laid. None but the Roman Catholic priesthood are supposed to have the power of "laying an evil spirit," and hence they have always the honour to be cited in our local legends. Sometimes, too, they have the credit of outwitting the goblins; and many an old farm residence has the reputation of having thus been freed from theseimps of darkness till they can spin a rope from the sands of the Ribble. The mansion at Towneley does not escape the imputation of having its "Boggart," although its visits are now limited to once in seven years, when its thirst for vengeance has to be satisfied by the untimely death of one of the residents at the Hall. A Sir John Towneley is supposed to have injured the poor of the district, nearly four hundred years ago, by "laying-in" a considerable portion of common to his park, and, as a punishment for this offence, his soul is said to haunt the scenes of his oppression. The peasantry still aver "that the old knight's spirit, being unable to rest, wanders about the mansion, and may be heard over the very parts taken in, crying, in most piteous tones -

*"Be warned! Lay out! Be warned! Lay out!  
Around Hore-law and Hollin-hey clough :  
To her children give back the widow's cot,*

*For you and yours there is still enough."*

[*Pictorial History of Lancashire*, p. 189, and Whittaker's *History of Whalley*, p. 342]

The popular story of "The Boggart Flitting" is common to both Lancashire and Yorkshire; and indeed to most of the nations in the North of Europe.

Of boggarts the Rev. William Thornber observes, [*History of Blackpool*, p. 332] " that there were several different kinds, having their haunts in that part of the Fylde near Blackpool; as, for instance, the wandering ghost of the homicide or the suicide; that of the steward of injustice, or that of the victim of a cruel murder; again, the lubber-fiends, the horse-boggarts, and the house-boggarts, or industrious, yet mischievous imps, haunting dwellings. He names, "The headless Boggart of White-gate Lane," as a sample of the first class. So was "The Boggart of Staining Hall," near Blackpool, said to be the wandering ghost of a Scotchman who was murdered there near a tree, which has since marked the deed by perfuming the soil around with a sweet odour of thyme. Of another kind were those whose appearance was the forerunner of death in some families. The Walmsleys, of Poulton-le-Fylde, he adds, were haunted by a boggart of this description, always making its appearance with alarming noises before the decease of one of the family.

Of the lubber-fiends, house-boggarts, or brownies, so strikingly described by Milton, Mr. Thornber [*Pictorial History of Lancashire*] mentions the ancient one of Rayscar and Inskip, which at times kindly housed the grain, collected the horses, and got them ready for the market; but at other times played the most mischievous pranks. The famous "Boggart of Hackensall Hall" had the appearance of a huge horse, which was very industrious if treated with kindness. Every night it was indulged with a fire, before which it was frequently seen reclining; and when deprived of this indulgence by neglect, it expressed its anger by fearful outcries.

#### **BOGGARTS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.**

Having fallen into conversation with a working man on our road to Holme Chapel, we asked him if people in those parts were now ever annoyed by beings of another world. Affecting the 'esprit fort', he boldly answered, "Noa! the country's too full o' folk;" while his whole manner, and especially his countenance, as plainly said "Yes!" A boy who stood near was more honest. "O, yes!" he exclaimed, turning pale; "the Boggart has driven William Clarke out of his house; he flitted last Friday." "Why," I asked; " what did the Boggart do?" "O, he wouldn't let 'em sleep; he stripp'd off the clothes." "Was that all?" "I canna' say," answered the lad, in a tone which showed he was afraid to repeat all he had heard; "but they're gone, and the house is empty. You can go and see for yoursel', if you loike. Will's a plasterer, and the house is in Burnley Wood, on Brown Hills."\*

Edwin Waugh, in his story of "The Grave of Grislehurst Boggart," [*Sketches Qf Lancashire Life*, p. 192] says, the most notable boggart of the hilly district towards Blackstone Edge, was the Clegg Ho' Boggart, still the theme of many a winter's tale among the people of the hills above Clegg Hall. The proverb, "Aw'm heere agen, like Clegg Ho' Boggart," is common there, and in all the surrounding villages ... Boggarts appear, however, to have been more numerous than they are now upon the country side, when working people wove what was called "one lamb's wool" in a day; but when it came to pass that they had to weave "three lambs' wools" in a day, and the cotton trade arose, boggarts, and fairies, and feeorin' of all kinds, began to flee away from the clatter of shuttles. As to the Grislehurst Boggart, here is part of the story as told to Waugh, or by him : - "Whau it isn't aboon a fortnit sin' th' farmer's wife at the end theer yerd seed summat i' th' dyhed time o' th' neet; an' hoo war welly thrut eawt o' bed, too, besides - so then " ... "Th' pranks 'at it's played abeawt this plaze at time an' time, 'ud flay ony wick soul to yer tell on ... unyawkin' th' byes, an' turnin' carts an' things o'er i' th' deep neet time; an' shiftn' stuff' up and deawn th' heawse when folk are i' bed; it's rayther flaysome yo may depend."

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### ***The Biographical Dictionary of Greater Manchester Architects, 1800-1940***

Committee member, John Curnow, forwarded this email he received from Steve Roman, Victorian Society Membership Trustee, as it may be useful in our family research ...

Hello local history groups and civic societies,

I have great pleasure, on behalf of the Manchester Group of the Victorian Society, in sending you information about ***The Biographical Dictionary of Greater Manchester Architects, 1800-1940*** which is now live on-line, [HERE](#), providing details of over 1,000 architects, 400 partnerships and 10,000 buildings.

The title "*Biographical Dictionary*" is important as it is essentially a text-based resource dealing with architects known to have been born, trained, lived or worked in Greater Manchester between 1800 and 1940.

The resource is searchable by name or location of architect, practice, or building. Architects based in the Greater Manchester area have their known works catalogued as fully as possible. Details of architects based elsewhere in the United Kingdom are included insofar as their commissions relate to the Greater Manchester area. Likewise, the works of architects who were born or trained in Manchester but practised elsewhere in the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, and the USA are less comprehensively catalogued.

Information is mainly based on contemporary newspaper reports and, from 1843, *The Builder*. Much detail has then been cross-referenced to civil records of Births, Marriages, Deaths and Census Returns ..."

'Victorian Society - Manchester', website [HERE](#)

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### **Marjory Lees ... 50th anniversary of her death**

I've been contacted by Jeremy Sutcliffe (ex-Oldham Councillor and Secretary of the Oldham Labour Party Local Government Committee), and been reminded that 2020 is the 50th anniversary of the death of Marjory Lees. Jeremy is keen that this anniversary should be marked with a blue plaque and has asked the council to give his request due consideration. Personally, I totally agree ... from her early years, Marjory Lees worked tirelessly alongside her mother, Dame Sarah Lees, for both social and political reform and most of it without any fanfare of self-publicity. After the battle for women's suffrage, on the same terms as men, was finally won, in 1928, she was an active campaigner for women's rights in the workplace, and for improved social, educational, health and living conditions throughout the rest of her life.

I have added my voice to Jeremy's request and, if you wish to support this yourself, he suggests that you contact the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sean Fielding, email address, [Sean.Fielding@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:Sean.Fielding@oldham.gov.uk)

I have a great deal of respect for the memory of Marjory Lees ... I first started looking at her life when I began researching Women's Suffrage in 2013, in particular the NUWSS Pilgrimage, and then carried on, realising just how much she did to better the quality of life for women everywhere, not just Oldhamers.

You can read a little about her suffrage activities on the Oldham HRG Website [HERE](#)

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### **Oldham Histories Festival & Heritage Open Days**

#### **9th September to 5th October**

Pick up a printed copy of the programme

in Gallery Oldham, local libraries or the Local Studies Library.

It will also be available, soon :

\* to download as a free .pdf copy of the 16 page programme from the Oldham Council website,

\* or view all pages on the Programme & News Page of the Oldham HRG website [HERE](#)



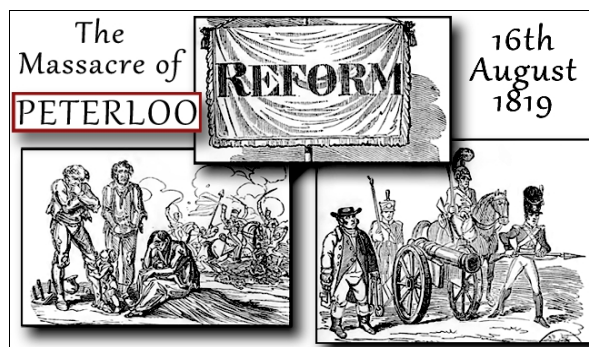
Front cover



Page 4  
16 pages of event details

## PETERLOO : the Bi-Centenary

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



Although the long-anticipated Bi-Centenary has come and gone, there are still some exhibitions to be visited, if you have missed them, and the Peterloo websites are still active with news, photos and reports.

You can make searches on websites such as :

**Manchester Histories - Peterloo 1819** ... Manchester Histories have created a website which publicises all that is happening, or has happened, around the region.

Visit their website [HERE](#)

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

**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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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.**

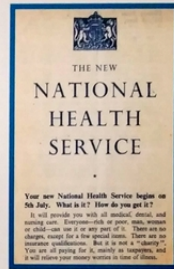
# Health in Oldham

## 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?

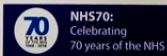


Public information leaflet, distributed in 1948, advises on the concept of the new NHS for Britain.



Operating theatre at Boundary Park General Hospital c.1948

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



There are regularly changing displays in the Local Studies Library. 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 potions 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.

### 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 products from medical preparations to horse and cattle medicines, fresh roast coffee and varnishes. Some were also known as 'dryasters' 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 botanical 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 'poison' in the 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.

Drinks like orangeade 2 or 3 times a day with penicillin capsules one or two of pure hydrochloride of quinine.

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 iodine 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.

## Website Links

### Other Society Websites

- Catholic Family History Society – [www.catholicfhs.co.uk](http://www.catholicfhs.co.uk)
- Cheshire Local History Association – [www.cheshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.cheshirehistory.org.uk)
- Chadderton Historical Society (archived website) – [www.chadderton-historical-society.org.uk](http://www.chadderton-historical-society.org.uk)
- Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society - <https://www.lfhhs.org.uk/home.php>
- Lancashire Local History Federation – [www.lancashirehistory.org](http://www.lancashirehistory.org)
- Liverpool and South West Lancashire FHS – [www.lswlfhs.org.uk](http://www.lswlfhs.org.uk)
- Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society – [www.mrias.co.uk](http://www.mrias.co.uk)
- Oldham Historical Research Group – [www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg](http://www.pixnet.co.uk/Oldham-hrg)
- Peterloo - [Peterloo-Manchester](http://Peterloo-Manchester)
- Ranulf Higden Society (Latin transcription) - [Ranulf Higden Soc.](http://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](http://Manchester Regional Website)

### Some Useful Sites

- GENUKI - [Lancashire](http://Lancashire)
- Free BMD - [Search](http://Search)
- [National Library of Scotland](http://National Library of Scotland) - Free to view, historic, zoomable maps of UK : 1891 - Oldham and locality [Here](http://Here)
- Online Parish Clerk Project - [Lancashire](http://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)

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## For the Gallery

### Manchester, August 2019



Photo courtesy Joan Secker-Wlodarczyk

**Peterloo Memorial**  
artist Jeremy Deller





Photo courtesy Joan Secker-Wlodarczyk

### **Peterloo Memorial ...**

the top ring is replicated on the ground, alongside.  
artist Jeremy Deller



Editor's photo

The Peterloo Tapestry, created for the Anniversary in 2016, was on display inside Manchester Cathedral in August 2019. Stitched onto it are the artefacts representing what Peterloo means to each individual contributor. My own contribution was a laminated photograph of the account in Rowbottom's Diary. (seen about the middle, along the top of the tapestry)