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LANCASHIRE HISTORY MAGAZINE

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## ANSDELL

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Lancashire

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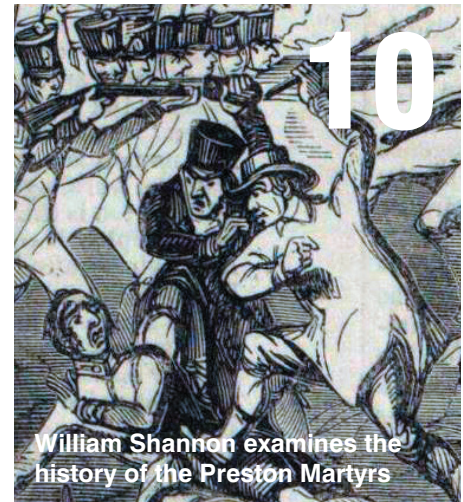
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# Welcome to the first edition of our new magazine, Archives.

This publication is a new venture for the team at Lancashire Archives and developed from a wish to share far and wide the amazing local history stories we hear about every day in the archives.

Researchers are always telling us fantastic tales of Lancashire's past and now we can say not just, 'Have you written this down?' but more excitingly, 'Can we put it in our magazine?'.

We would like to thank The Friends of Lancashire Archives, who generously supported design and printing costs for the magazine, Andrea Watson from Lancashire County Council who designed the look and style of the publication, and the team at the County Council's Document Handling Service who brought the final copy to print.

Most of all we want to thank the researchers, volunteers, local and family historians and authors who contributed their stories and research to our first edition.

We hope you enjoy reading the stories featured, that you might learn something new about Lancashire's history and that you too feel the urge to put pen to paper and share your local history stories with the people of Lancashire.

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**You can find out more about how to contribute to the next edition of Archives on page 51.**





# BROTHERS IN ARMS: John and Charles Cawson and the 'Lancashire Plot'

By Susan Stuart

Norbreck Farm as it appears today, © Susan Stuart

The subject of this article is the dramatic incident of 1689 that became a crucial part of a larger story, a story of alleged espionage relating to a planned Lancashire invasion aided by Lancashire Catholics to return the deposed King James II to the throne. The evidence was extracted from a contemporary document which recorded conspiracies from 1688-1697 against William and Mary.

This is the story of two Lancashire men, John Cawson and his son Charles of Norbreck, near Cockerham. They unwittingly became embroiled in one of the most dramatic events in British history. The late 1600s were a troubled time. King James II of England and Ireland and VII of Scotland, was the last Roman Catholic monarch to rule Britain. He was deposed in the glorious revolution of 1688. In December 1688, James attempted to flee the country but was intercepted; then on 12 February 1688-89 he was allowed to escape custody and he fled to France. The Convention of Parliament in England declared that James had abdicated and the following day, 13 February, William of Orange and James the II's daughter Mary, ascended the throne to reign jointly as William and Mary. In March 1689, James landed in Ireland in an attempt to regain his throne and the Irish Parliament acknowledged him as King.

Some important Catholic families in the north of England supported James and favoured both his return and the return of the Catholic religion. Lancashire was an important Catholic stronghold having the largest Catholic population of any English county. In 1689 the government suspected that there was a plot to raise a rebellion in Lancashire against William and Mary. It was believed that divers people in that county and adjoining counties had received commissions from the late King to raise two regiments of horse, two regiments of dragoons and three regiments of foot, and that great numbers of Irish soldiers and arms for them were privately kept across Lancashire. It is against this background that our story takes place.

John Cawson of Norbreck Farm near Cockerham, on the Lancashire coast about seven miles from Lancaster, was described in various legal documents as a 'yeoman,' or 'gentleman'. However, he was also a merchant and half owner of a vessel of 40 to 50 tons, called the Lion of Lancaster, or alternatively the Pink. His son-in-law, Robert Curwen, and his son Charles Cawson both owned a quarter share, and Charles was also the master of the Lion. The Cawsons were not known Catholics but as owners of a vessel which made regular trips to the Isle of Man and Ireland, they were vulnerable to being bribed by spies to take them abroad.





Plan (1791) showing Norbreck Farm (1) and (2) Cockerham Sands where the Lion anchored in June 1689, Lancashire Archives (DDGR/Box 79)

The Cawsons had for several years before 1689 been employed by the Earl of Derby (via his servant Mr Crockett) to carry his cattle from the Isle of Man to fatten them on the salt marshes of Cockerham (a practice which still took place in the time of the present owner of Norbreck's grandfather, when cattle were sent from Ireland). John Cawson arranged to bring cattle to Cockerham in the spring of 1689 as usual. However, John was approached twice by a Mr Edmund Thrillfall who tried to persuade him to take him as a passenger on the Lion, he said to the Isle of Man. John refused his request because there was an embargo on such an arrangement, but Thrillfall, unbeknown to John Cawson, approached his son Charles Cawson who foolishly agreed to take him to the Isle of Man.

The Lion left the Lune waters about 2am, one May morning in 1689 to avoid the Lancaster port commissioners. With Thrillfall on board he offered Charles Cawson a bribe of ten pounds to change his course and put him instead, 'ashore in any part of Ireland'. Charles agreed saying he had debts to settle in Ireland. Charles Cawson took him to Dublin, and after staying about three weeks he returned to England, bringing Thrillfall and another passenger, Mr Lunt, with him – plus a cargo of one and a half tons of iron pots, iron bars and nine barrels of beef. Charles intended to collect the Earl of Derby's cattle from the Isle of Man as his father arranged but after his return to Cockerham

he told his father that Thrillfall and Lunt '...were too strong for him, being armed with Pistols' and they refused to let him go to the Isle of Man, but instead promised him another ten pounds for their passage from Dublin to Cockerham. He complained that they never paid him.

What was the purpose of Thrillfall's visit to Dublin? It appears he had an audience in Dublin with James II. Thrillfall and Lunt, alias Jackson, were carrying incriminating secret papers and weapons from Ireland to be distributed amongst sympathetic Yorkshire and Lancashire Catholic gentry in preparation for an intended invasion led by the deposed James. When Thrillfall went on board the Pink in Dublin he was carrying a trunk, covered in hair, a sword and a pair of pistols. Lunt had a pair of leather bags, a sword and pistols. The Pink arrived in the Lune River near Cockerham about 6 June 1689. As soon as the vessel anchored at Cockerham, Lunt and Thrillfall agitated to be put ashore and Charles Cawson, master, was concerned to be rid of them, lest they be seized by the customs officers who came on board every vessel as soon as it anchored.

Lunt and Thrillfall were rowed ashore in a cock-boat, a small boat used to ferry supplies. According to evidence given by one of the ship's mariners, John Preston of Cockerham, they were put ashore at, 'Crook, being on the south side of the river', presumably the river Cocker.

They took with them two cases of pistols, a sword and a portmanteau. In his haste to leave the ship Lunt left two bags containing commissions, declarations, blanks and other written and printed papers behind.

He realised his error on landing and begged the boat's crew to fetch his bags and deliver them to him in Cockerham. Before the boat reached the ship the officers of customs boarded the Pink, seized the papers and pursued Thrillfall and Lunt. Failing to catch them, they handed the commissions, declarations, and other incriminating documents to the port authority. Charles Cawson fled, conscious of his own guilt, but his father and the Pink's five crewmen were called to explain their part in the affair. John Cawson and the crew's depositions or examinations, plus the incriminating papers, were the first crucial pieces of evidence for what became known as the 'Lancashire Plot'.

“  
...plus the incriminating papers, were the first crucial pieces of evidence for what became known as the 'Lancashire Plot'. ”

Meanwhile, Thrillfall and Lunt escaped the officers of customs and hastened to the Lodge, the home of a Mr Tildesly where they divided the incriminating papers. The commissions directed to the gentlemen of Yorkshire and the Bishopric of Durham were taken by Thrillfall, described as a young man with his own short hair (instead of a wig). Once he ate and rested, he was provided with a guide for his journey. The rest of the commissions, appointed for distribution in Lancashire, Cheshire and Staffordshire, were committed to the care of Lunt.

Thrillfall delivered his share of the commissions to the Catholic gentry, carried out other business concerning the more northern gentlemen and

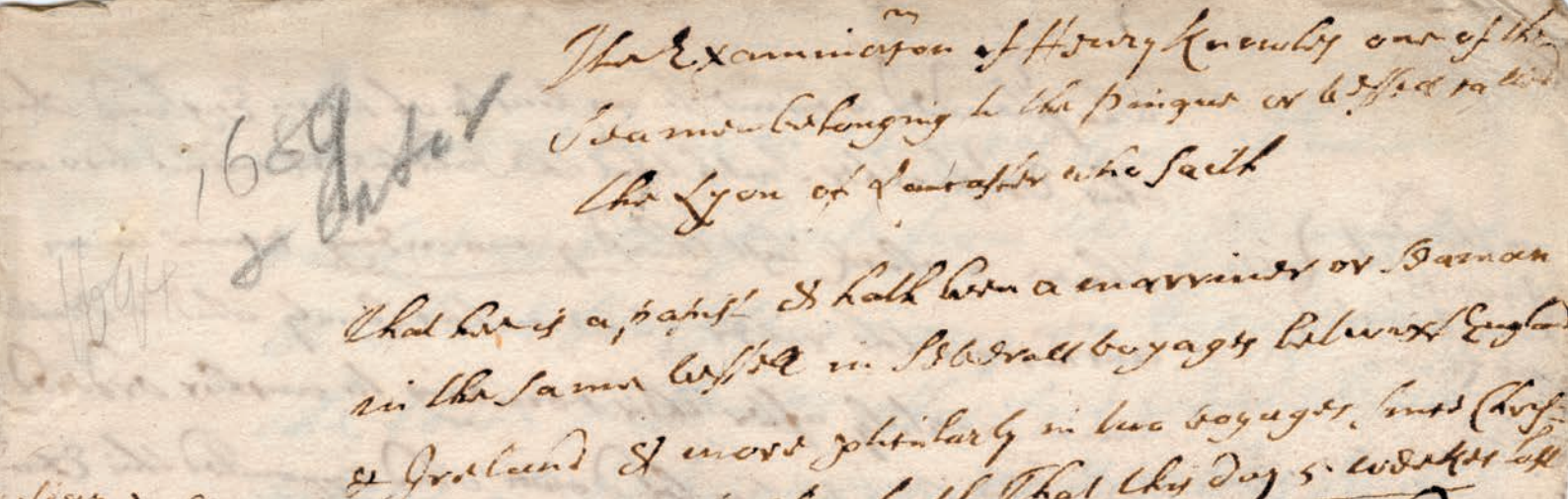
returned to his house in Goosnargh, Lancashire. He then discovered that his treasonable practices had been identified, so he hid until he could find an opportunity to return to Ireland. However, he was to receive a reward for his treachery. News of his return soon became known and a warrant for his arrest was made; a corporal in the militia found him hiding in a hollow space made for him in a stack of turf. The corporal attempted to seize him, but Thrillfall snatched his musket and knocked him down. The corporal quickly recovered and finding his own life in danger, drew his sword and ran it through Thrillfall's body; he died instantly.

“  
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Meanwhile, Lunt and George Wilson, his guide, delivered his share of the commissions and Lunt was sent by the conspirators to London to purchase arms, recruit volunteers and send them to sympathetic Lancashire Catholic families until they could employ them in the plot. In August 1689, Lunt, in company with Mr Abbot, steward to Lord Molyneux, was returning to Lancashire to give an account of his negotiations in London. On reaching Coventry they were seized and imprisoned as enemies to the government.

A while after Lunt and Abbots' confinement, providence so ordered that Charles Cawson (having been captured in Lancashire), master of the vessel which had brought Lunt and Thrillfall out of Ireland, was being escorted as a prisoner to London. Whilst lodging at Coventry he was told the news that two of his countrymen were committed to that gaol as enemies of the King and government. Cawson asked to see them.





Examination of Henry Knowles concerning the voyage of Threlfall and Lunt on the Lyon of Lancaster, circa 1694, Lancashire Archives (DDKE/8/18)

He immediately recognised Lunt as being one of the men he had brought out of Ireland in June. He confirmed that Lunt brought over the commissions, declarations and other papers which were left in his ship the Pink or Lion at Cockerham and for which he Charles, was now himself in trouble. Charles Cawson was examined in London by the Council, he told them the whole story. He was bound over to give evidence against Lunt and discharged from custody. Lunt and Abbot were taken to London, examined by the Privy Council and both committed to Newgate Gaol for Treasonable Practices in November 1689.

Lunt and Abbot remained in Newgate for 20 weeks and were bailed to appear at Lancaster Assizes. In August 1690 Lunt was committed to Lancaster Gaol for High Treason, where he continued he was held until about April 1691. Whilst in prison he lived a very comfortable life. He was not only maintained at the charge of the Lancashire gentlemen but was applauded as their favourite. Given the evidence against him he should have been given the death penalty for high treason; Lunt, however, was acquitted.

Why then was Lunt acquitted? When the officers of the customs in Lancaster seized the incriminating papers that Lunt left in the Lion, they made a cardinal error; they forgot to mark these crucial papers before delivering them out of their hands. These marks should have enabled them to be

recognised again when produced at a trial, but for want of such a mark they were unable to swear that they were the same papers, having been so long out of their custody. The Government expressed an unwillingness to prosecute for life where the proof was doubtful, so would not produce witnesses against the prisoner. Nor was this the only cause of Lunt's acquittal. Charles Cawson fell sick shortly before the Assizes and died. All the other witnesses, as mariners, were away at sea. There was only one witness against him which was insufficient in a case of high treason (a minimum of two were required) and thus Lunt had the extraordinarily good fortune to be discharged. On his release he was again employed by his Lancashire friends to recruit soldiers (particularly from Ireland), buy arms, and prepare for an invasion which never came... but that is another story.

Meanwhile, John Cawson of Norbreck, although in debt, continued to own land and property in Lancaster and its environs. He made his will on 20 December 1692 and was buried the same month at Cockerham Church. Charles Cawson, who died before Lunt's trial at Lancaster Assizes in April 1691, may have been the Charles Cawson of Greaves, Scotforth, Lancaster whose probate papers, dated 1693, are in Lancashire Archives. ■

Author's note: I am grateful to Richard and Philip Halhead of Norbreck Farm.

<sup>1</sup> Oxford Text Archive online, ota.bodleian.ox.ac.uk, Richard Kingston, b.1635 (?), 'A True History of the Several Designs and Conspiracies, against his majesties Sacred persons and Government. As they were continually carried on from 1688 till 1697, published 1698'.

<sup>2</sup> Will of John Cawson, dated 20 December 1692, late of Norbreck, see RCHY 2/2/71 and R22A/43, Lancashire Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Probate, Charles Cawson, Lancaster 1693, R21A/23; Charles Cawson of Greaves, Scotforth, Lancaster, A/wrapper (1) WRW/A, July 1693, Lancashire Archives.

# FORTY-TWO

By William D Shannon, PhD, FSA



The Corn Exchange, Preston, with the memorial to the dead in the right foreground, © Francis C Franklin (Wikipedia, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license)

**O**n the morning of Saturday 13 August 1842, the men working for the Ordnance Survey in Preston found themselves caught up in tragedy. As they worked in their office on the corner of Fishergate and Winckley Street, four people died when rioters were fired upon by a detachment of soldiers.

The troubles started back in May, when a Chartist petition to Parliament was thrown out. By July, there were strikes throughout Lancashire, aiming at disrupting production by forcibly entering the cotton mills, pulling the plugs on the steam engine boilers, and raking out the fires. On Friday 12 August, many mill-hands in and around Preston left their workplaces and in the evening a meeting was held in Chadwick's Orchard (where Preston's covered market is today), attended by several thousand people and addressed by a man called Aiken, and other Chartists. Meanwhile, the Mayor of Preston, Samuel Horrocks, prepared for the worst, meeting with magistrates and others at the Bull Inn (now the Bull and Royal) at the top of Fishergate. Planning for the following day, a small detachment of the 72nd Highland Regiment accompanied them. About thirty in all, the soldiers spent the night under arms in the Assembly Room at the Bull<sup>1</sup>.



At 6am on the Saturday, a party of strikers launched an attack on a factory in North Road. Windows were smashed and mill-hands there fought against the attackers. Nevertheless, as the strikers moved from mill to mill, their numbers swelled. Estimates vary, but there were probably many hundreds – possibly as many as 600 – by the time they reached Lune Street. Expecting and prepared for trouble, they were armed with stones, with women collecting stones in their aprons to replenish the ammunition for the men. Shortly before 8am, the Mayor, the magistrates, the Chief Constable of the County, the Superintendent of the Borough police, a number of police officers and the men of the 72nd Regiment set off from the Bull Inn down Fishergate heading towards Lune Street.

It may have been at this moment that the surveyors got involved. Notionally part of the army, dressed in army uniforms, and having army ranks, these men were not soldiers. The Corps of Royal Engineers dated its origins back to 1716 but was given its 'Royal' prefix in 1787. Prior to that date, all its members had been officers, employing civilian contractors to do the heavy lifting, but the Corps of Military Artificers was then formed to provide men. In 1812 the unit's name was changed to the Corps of Royal Sappers and Miners.

Once the Napoleonic wars were over, their main job was the Ordnance Survey – but in 1825 the decision was taken to halt the British part of the survey and focus all efforts onto mapping Ireland<sup>2</sup>. By 1841 that work was all-but complete and an office was set up in Preston, under a Captain Henry Tucker, to pick up where the English survey left off. And so it was on the morning of 13 August that, 'the captain of the Sappers and Miners rode down amongst the mob, got in advance of the other soldiers, with his sword drawn, and called upon the people to go away, telling them that the soldiers would fire on them if they did not, whereupon they stoned him until he had to go back'.<sup>3</sup> This was probably the only time in his

entire career that Captain Tucker ever drew his sword in anger.

Things rapidly got out of hand. The soldiers of the 72nd Regiment pushed into Lune Street – but part of the mob went down Lune Street into Fleet Street, then back up Fox Street and into the top of Lune Street, trapping the Mayor's party and the soldiers between two sets of stone-throwing rioters, with many of the soldiers being hurt. At some point, Captain Woodford, the Chief Constable, was knocked to the ground and kicked where he lay. The Mayor now formally read the Riot Act, but the paper was knocked out of his hand by a stone. When he tried to carry on with the reading, he was met with a barrage of stones. He decided to give the order to fire. It seems twenty of the soldiers did so, at close range, with devastating effect.



**The Mayor decided to give the order to fire. It seems twenty of the soldiers did so, at close range, with devastating effect.**



The shocked crowd dispersed immediately, perhaps twelve or fifteen men were hurt, with five of the wounded men taken to the House of Recovery. One of them, William Pilling, aged 21, had to have his leg amputated. Four of the wounded died and their inquests, held over the next two weeks, recorded the unusual verdict of 'justifiable homicide.'

The pages of the Preston Pilot and Preston Chronicle give us most of what we know about the events of that day, with the Pilot going to press with a second edition at 1pm on the very

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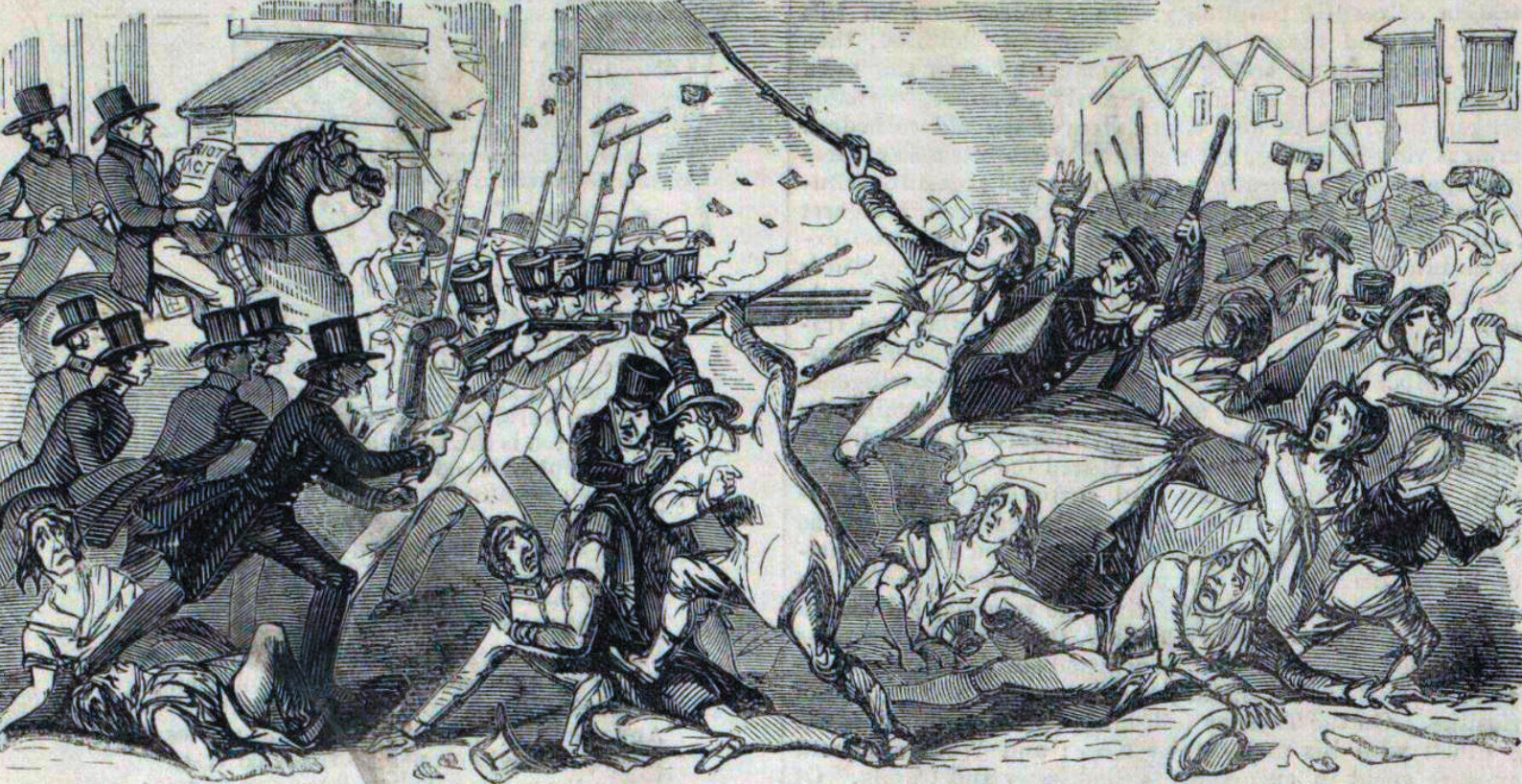
<sup>1</sup> Preston Chronicle, 11 March 1843.

<sup>2</sup> Tim Owen & Elaine Pilbeam, *Ordnance Survey: Map Makers to Britain since 1791*, Ordnance Survey, Southampton, HMSO (1992).

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Hewitson, *History of Preston* (Preston, 1883), p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> Preston Pilot: 13 August 1842. Preston Pilot: 20 & 27 August 1842, Preston Chronicle: 20 & 27 August 1842.





PRESTON—ATTACK ON THE MILITARY.—TWO RIOTERS SHOT.—See p. 233.

#### The events of 13 August 1842, as depicted in the Illustrated London News

day of the riot, with a detailed account under the headline, 'Dreadful Riot – Rioters Shot'.<sup>4</sup> Neither of the newspapers mentions Captain Tucker and his Sappers and Miners. The only source for that is Hewitson in his History of Preston, although he does not mention the name of the captain. While Hewitson in turn tells us that his source was a, 'Mr John (now Professor) Tyndall', whom he interviewed in February 1881, 'We reminded the Professor that he once resided at Preston, when on Ordnance Survey work and... he sententiously remarked "Forty-two" – meaning the year in which the riot above alluded to occurred'. This is interesting language for Hewitson to use, as it could be taken to mean Tyndall adopted a pompous, moralising or self-righteous tone – however it is more likely that Hewitson was trying to get across to us that Tyndall was being concise, but heavy with meaning, summing up the dreadful experience in just two words.

Tyndall was born in August 1820, so was just 22 when he found himself caught up in events. He was Irish-born and served as a civilian draftsman with the Irish Ordnance Survey before coming with them to Preston in August 1842. In 1843 he left the service, posting from Dublin five highly

critical letters to the Liverpool Mercury (calling himself 'Spectator'), in which he condemned almost everything about the service, but being particularly critical of the way the officers took all the credit.<sup>5</sup>

'Look at an engraved map, "drawn" forsooth "by Captain Tucker" who never placed a pen on it, engraved by someone else, while the name of him who first gave the thing an existence is consigned to utter oblivion.'

After a brief interlude in surveying for railway construction, Tyndall, whose interest in the sciences had been first sparked in Preston, where he went each week to lectures at the Mechanic's Institute, went on to have a remarkable career as a scientist and is now recognised as the man who, in 1859, first came up with the idea of the greenhouse effect.<sup>6</sup> He also made a considerable contribution to the science of glaciology, and to this day has several glaciers named after him, in Chile, Colorado and Alaska.

Meanwhile, the Ordnance Survey carried on their work without Tyndall, completing the survey of Lancashire at the Six-Inch to the Mile scale by 1848 and starting to publish these maps,



making Lancashire the first county in England to be published at this new scale. The map of the Preston area, for example (Lancashire Sheet 61), tells us it was surveyed by Capt Tucker and Lieutenants Stanley and Bayly, RE, between 1844 and 1847, and was engraved in 1848 and published on 21 February 1849.<sup>7</sup> However, in 1845, the Preston office had closed and the team had moved on to Yorkshire to begin surveying that county.<sup>8</sup> Tucker himself went on to have a successful career, narrowly missing being appointed to the top job of Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey in 1854.<sup>9</sup>

The events of 13 August 1842 have not been forgotten in Preston, where 'The Martyrs Memorial' was unveiled on the 150th anniversary, 13 August 1992, at the bottom of Lune Street, funded by Preston TUC, Preston Labour History Group, Preston Council and others. The stone sculpture, by Gordon Young, was consciously based upon Goya's painting *The Third of May* – despite the fact that that painting actually depicts an execution by firing squad. The 'Forty-two' is often seen as Preston's Peterloo, but again, that parallel is not exact. Peterloo was a peaceful event, a mass rally listening to speeches by Orator Hunt and others when the Yeomanry charged the crowd. The 'Forty-two' was very different. The participants had already caused considerable damage to property, and were behaving aggressively towards the authorities, throwing stones and physically assaulting them. Had the soldiers not been ordered to fire, there may well have been an equal number of casualties on the other side; however unpopular

it might be to say this, the verdicts of 'justifiable homicide' were, in retrospect, probably correct.

In positioning this event in terms of the 'class struggle', as it often is, we should not forget the likes of John Tyndall, the local police and the unnamed soldiers of the 72nd Regiment, who were all equally working class. Indeed Tyndall wrote to his father (who had been a shoemaker, and who had served as a police constable in Co Carlow), who was concerned about his safety in Preston, 'I could pass very quietly thro' ten thousand Chartists and be taken for a brother'.<sup>10</sup>

However, we should above all see the victims not as 'Martyrs', but as named individuals, each with their own story to tell, cut short on that day:

“  
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William Lancaster, from Blackburn, aged 23, shot in the act of throwing a stone and described as 'a ringleader': John Mercer, aged 27; George Sowerbutts, aged about 19; and Bernard Macnamara, aged only 17, all from Preston. ■

<sup>5</sup> Liverpool Mercury 16 Feb 1844: 'Spectator' is identified as Tyndall by Richard Oliver, *The Ordnance Survey in the Nineteenth Century*, Charles Close Society (2014), p. 161.

<sup>6</sup> Roland Jackson *The Ascent of John Tyndall: Victorian Scientist, Mountaineer and Public Intellectual*, OUP (2018).

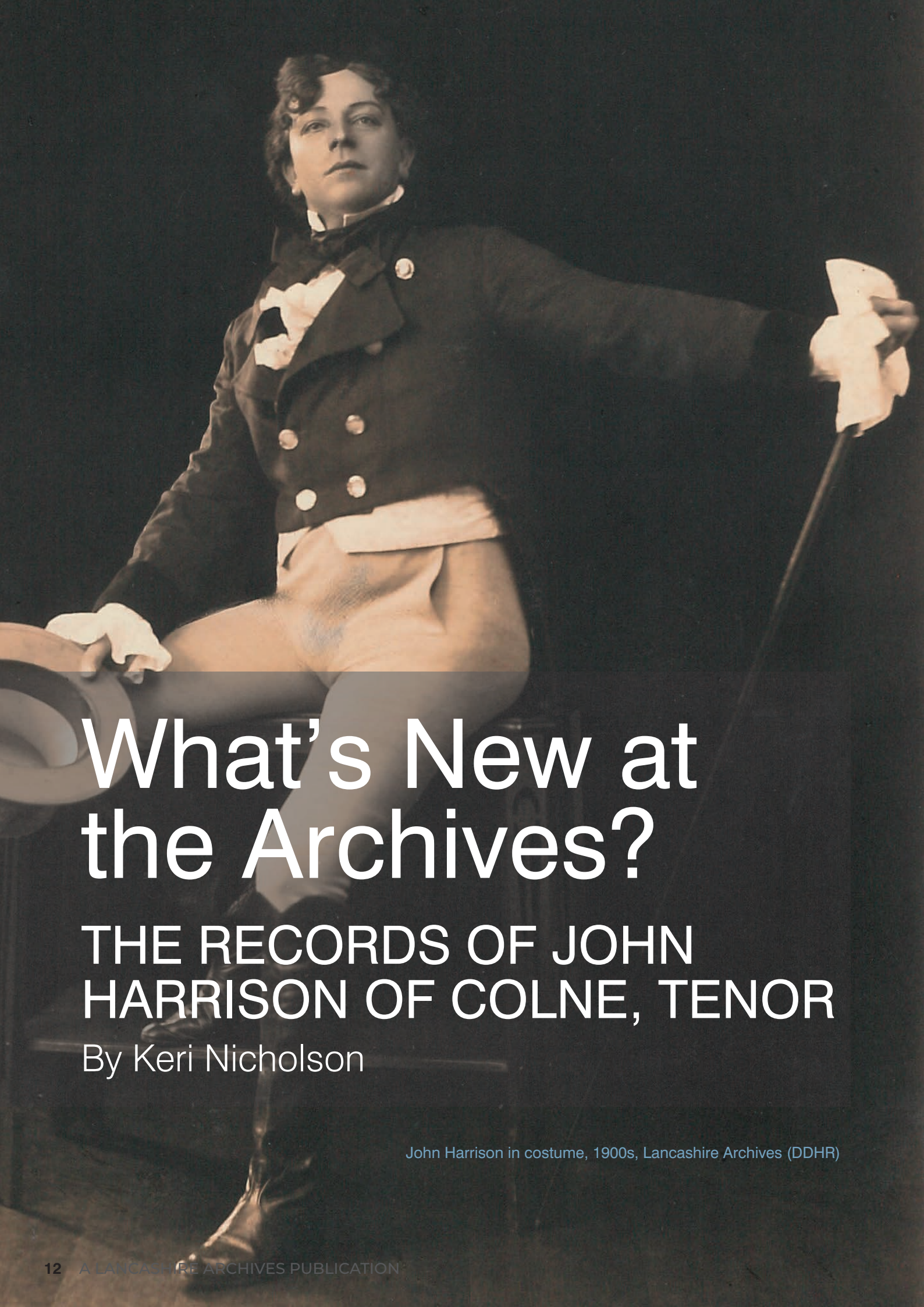
<sup>7</sup> Richard Oliver has pointed out, 'The survey dates given in the footnotes to the published maps are of practically nil value in establishing the exact dates when particular localities were surveyed. ... To judge by the footnotes, very little work was done on the Lancashire and Yorkshire surveys before 1844, yet survey parties were coming over from Ireland in the winter of 1841-2, and a substantial area had been surveyed at 6-inch by March 1842', Richard Oliver, 'The Ordnance Survey in Lancashire in the 1840s', *Sheetlines: The Newsletter of the Charles Close Society*, no 8, December 1983, pp. 2-8.

<sup>8</sup> Preston Chronicle, 20 Sept 1845.

<sup>9</sup> W A Seymour, *A History of the Ordnance Survey*, Dawson (1980), p. 127.

<sup>10</sup> Letter to John Tyndall Snr, 18 or 25 August 1842, Geoffrey Cantor & Gowan Dawson (eds), *The Correspondence of John Tyndall Volume 1*, University of Pittsburgh Press, (2016), p. 261. I am grateful to Roland Jackson for drawing this reference to my attention.





# What's New at the Archives?

## THE RECORDS OF JOHN HARRISON OF COLNE, TENOR

By Keri Nicholson

John Harrison in costume, 1900s, Lancashire Archives (DDHR)



At the height of his fame John Harrison was a familiar name for many in Britain. He was nicknamed 'the English Caruso' and performed at venues across the country including the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden and Kelvin Hall in Glasgow. He toured internationally, travelling across Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

John Harrison was born in Foulridge near Colne in 1868. His father worked as a warp dresser and John followed him into the cotton industry at a young age. At 13 years old he was a cotton twister, but by 1891 had the same occupation as his father. His professional career in music wouldn't start until his late 20s, but he played an active role in local entertainment. Harrison performed in the choir at Langroyd Road Methodist Church, with the Colne Glee Union and Colne Amateur Operatic Society.

Harrison originally sang as a baritone but was encouraged by his agent to switch to tenor in the hopes of greater professional success. He moved to London and spent two years working with singing tutors to help retrain his voice. His concert appearances were a great success and the Gramophone Company (later HMV) awarded him a recording contract.

It is the gramophone recordings starring John Harrison which formed the basis of the collections we hold at Lancashire Archives. In 1976 one of his daughters deposited a collection of nearly 300 records, believed to contain about 80% of his entire recorded output. The records were transferred to the North West Sound Archive (NWSA) in the mid-1990s, but found their way back to Preston after the closure of the NWSA in 2015.

Earlier this year we gratefully received a large additional deposit, this time from Harrison's granddaughter, containing a set of beautifully bound scrapbooks with letters, programmes and news cuttings which the family curated carefully to tell the story of Harrison's career in music. Also included are some wonderful photographs and cartoons, showing John Harrison in both his professional and personal lives.

The programmes offer a snapshot of the music industry in the early twentieth century, with Harrison appearing alongside performers such as Ada Crossley and Percy Grainger, and the conductor Hans Richter. However, they also offer some fantastic examples of early twentieth century design. While many of the programmes are relatively simple, there are some beautiful exceptions, including souvenirs of the Cape Town Music Festival in 1912 and a matinee in aid of the Belgian Refugees Fund, held at the mansion house of the Lord Mayor of London in 1915.

Despite finding international fame, Harrison remained close to his Colne roots, maintaining a house locally and returning regularly. He retired from singing at the age of 51 and died 10 years later. His daughters were eager to preserve his legacy, having the mementos of his performing and recording career bound into scrapbooks and an index to the contents published by Colne Library. The material has now been deposited at Lancashire Archives, as was the wish of his daughter, where it can give others the opportunity to learn about this early star of the British music industry.

Listings of the gramophone recordings and other papers relating to the career of John Harrison can be found in our catalogue under the reference **DDHR.** ■

If you would like to donate any records, maps, photographs or other historic material to the Archives, please get in touch with us at **[archives@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@lancashire.gov.uk)** Our collections cover the length and breadth of Lancashire and contain everything from medieval deeds to lockdown poetry; we'd be delighted to hear from you.

# A QUALITY OF RESOURCES

By Chantal Oakes



Seven years ago, I was full of anticipation as I walked into Lancashire Archives in Preston. I was in the process of searching for any bits of black history in Lancashire for a National Lottery Heritage Fund project, to celebrate and share Lancashire's past. The archivist there had already done some searching and found a photograph. It was, he thought, the earliest documented picture of a black woman in Preston, a wonderful glimpse of Britain's industrial past when migrants from near and far came to work and live in Lancashire. As authentic documentation, what the photograph represented was so tantalising. The photograph was of a woman called Mary Albert.

I suspect lots of people have experienced that strange feeling, when they see an old photograph and realise that although living in different circumstances and wearing different clothes, people living then look like people alive now. For me, having never seen ordinary British working women of colour in old archival photographs, it meant that suddenly the substance of researching social histories felt alive.

Cover art for the forthcoming publication showing Mary Albert, 'People Are Wonderful and They Adapt', by C R Oakes, © C R Oakes



That is the power of an old photograph. A moment where time was stopped by a camera and proof that a specific moment now has a presence outside personal memory. And adding to the drama, because this photograph was taken in Victorian times, accompanied by a cloud of smoke smelling vaguely of eggs.

Photographs are an important part of archives, social history collections, personal photo albums and now there are multitudes of images in the vast digital clouds. The photograph I saw was taken only 70-years after the end of British Caribbean enslavement. Yet here was a young black woman, who I discovered was born in England, wearing a pinafore with a heavy cotton dress beneath, looking as much a part of the industrialised north of Victorian Britain as any other hardworking woman of her day. I got in touch with the Archives and asked if it was possible to find more information for my own project work. We agreed to meet.

“

**It was... the earliest documented picture of a black woman in Preston”**

Lancashire Archives is not a fusty old place, made of dark wood and misogyny. It is clean, calm and carefully efficient. The document the archivist placed on the desk seemed almost artistic by comparison, with actual hand-writing, a heavy weight paper, adorning curlicues and rubber stamping and folds made permanent by 100 years of sitting in a strongroom out of the sun, file upon file, statement upon statement. The basic origami unfolded to reveal the background information to the photograph I had thought wonderful just a moment before. I was determined to discover everything I could about the young woman pictured.

Tracing someone, especially if they are not from your own family, is a long study in detection. Regular national censuses started in 1801 in Britain, but the first censuses (1801–1831) were

mainly headcounts, with virtually no personal information. The 1841 Census was the first to intentionally record names of all individuals in a household or institution, and this was done for several reasons. One reason Parliament decided to make financial provision for this huge task was the need to know how many seamen Britain had, for both defence and trade interests, as well as knowing how many men could be called upon for conscription in times of conflict and fighting. For example, in 1841, across the world the British were involved in conflicts over trade, territory and nation-forming, and, for instance, fighting against the Chinese, Afghans, Australian First Nations, those who sought to continue enslavement around the west coast of Africa and policing illegal slave trading around the Americas.

The Census was also to be used to plan for food growth and importation as, ‘an industrious population is the basic power and resource of any nation, and therefore its size needs to be known’ (Rev. Malthus, Thomas, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, 1798), and it would help services and industries understand and plan for their growing markets.

Through time it became apparent that there are a few ways to make sure you have discovered the records of the right person when exploring the census records online. For instance, if you were to type in ‘James B\_’ in any online census and just for the year 1840-41, within Lancashire alone there will be over 14,000 mentions. However, taking note of other people in the house on the day of census-taking, checking more years, and then checking through gravestone records, baptism and marriage records and plotting out the information in a family tree diagram, it does become possible to make good quality, educated guesses.

Of course, people of African and Asian descent became part of the British Empire as soon as it existed. One of my main research tasks became trying to understand how this affected life for a young black woman, because social reform was one of the defining elements of the Victorian era.

The young woman in the photograph lived a long time ago, I knew that much when I started the research. The 1901 census recorded her

presence in Preston but she was, it seemed, alone because there were no other people of the same name with her. The weight of imagining this young black woman by herself in a potentially hostile environment without the succour of cultural awareness or empathy was unsettling to me.

The chance to do something came. A research project, run by a woman called Jhilmil Breckenridge, a poet, writer and activist who speaks out about mental health, and her experience of incarceration and abuse. Surviving her situation, she was working on a doctorate at the University of Central Lancashire, in Preston, exploring mental health for women. I went to the workshops she was facilitating, to think about my response to the photograph and to find out anything else I could.

I had to do some sort of research to stop me imagining that Mary Albert had been bullied beyond endurance, cried tears alone and was emotionally and even physically tortured. The best she might have got – I thought then – was that no one had cared. I had fallen for the tangling of time inherent in the digital world. Events from the past and present can get scrambled, time flattened by the juxtaposition of information from 200 years ago and information from last week. A lone black Victorian woman – the stereotype is that black people, therefore this young woman, inherently lived in suffering. Blackness and abjection were/are one and the same. Yet, if I had just gone back ten years on the census before the workshops, I would have found that, in 1891, she was surrounded by family.

Seven years later, I think the story behind the picture is now about as complete as I can make it. Mary Albert's story, about a woman from a normal family of individuals who all have a life story, explains so much about Britain then and Britain now.

The Victorian era stretched from 1837 until 1901, and her family story starts just before those dates, when the world was a very different sort of a place. By the end of this story and in the years after the First World War, workers had begun to protest for suffrage all over the British Empire, working people rose up against all discriminatory

policies and African socialists and people from the African diaspora began to consider home rule, independence and Pan-Africanism because, and from a black perspective, notions of what is 'normal' had translated into classism, scientific racism and eugenics.

White genocide conspiracy theories were developing, the idea that natural resources were needed to conserve the 'Nordic' race ('Nordic' became 'Aryan' soon enough). There were men who advocated for the conscious selection of 'the fittest', to build a new and exclusive super-society. There was a Congolese man called Ota Benga, put into the Bronx Zoo in New York, and displayed beside species of captured apes.

“  
...the photograph was the seed that bloomed into the creation of a narrative real-life story of a Victorian family”

Yet, regardless of theory, now discredited or otherwise, multiculturalism was also born. All over the Empire, and people being people, Europeans married Asians, Africans, Slavs, Swedes, Jews, and so on. It is somewhat understandable then, that the life stories of this integrating black family, three generations of working men, women and children, would have remained as obscure as the histories of any working-class people living in industrialised Britain when changes in the working world were happening at such a pace. Except, there are artefacts in archives that can tell these family stories. The first was the 100-plus year old photograph that began the research; for me, it was the seed that bloomed into the creation of a narrative real-life story of a Victorian family, yet it ended up being just part of the story in the end. The final assemblage of historical information – the story – was made from published literature, a combination of archival and civic records, and of course information from the internet.



Then, there are the people of African descent, the families that live in Lancashire now and have lived here since the days of Windrush, who made contributions to how the story was told. A book about those times is now in the pipeline. Through this family story, called *People Are Wonderful and They Adapt*, it is possible to explore what it was like in Lancashire, in the British Empire, and how events affected ordinary men, women and children. Through this story we can now also explore something of what the world was like for some of those newly emancipated peoples, the obstacles and trials they had to endure, and something of what affected their existence as British citizens. It was a great thing to be able to put together the story of those times through the lives of a working-class family who jumped out of the frying pan and managed to avoid the fire. ■

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*People Are Wonderful and They Adapt* is due to be published in March 2023. If you would like more **information sent to you nearer the time, email [info@kitchensinkart.org](mailto:info@kitchensinkart.org)** and we'll let you know when it is available.



A strongroom at Lancashire Archives

# THE EDITOR, THE OFFICE BOY AND THE CAVALRY HERO

## POLITICS, PAY AND PROMOTION ON A LANCASHIRE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

By Stephen Tate

A small file of business letters from 1867 stored at Lancashire Archives provides a fascinating insight into the development of the British newspaper industry. The letters were written at a time of crisis on the Burnley Gazette weekly newspaper as the owners looked for ways to cut costs in the face of worrying losses. A solution was sought through job cuts and new working and production arrangements. The correspondence surrounding these initiatives opens a window on the nature of journalism and the careers of journalists in the second half of the nineteenth century. The material in the Archives tells stories of working-class white-collar career ambitions, political intrigue, the defamation of a Crimean War hero and the sacking of an editor.

The Gazette was launched in 1863 in the teeth of the Lancashire Cotton Famine (1861-65) when the region's staple industry lay traumatized, with general trade across the textile districts moribund. It appeared a bold, almost foolhardy move to start a new newspaper. But the paper survived – it would continue in circulation until 1914. That the penny publication, initially called the Burnley Free Press, was launched was primarily down to politics.

The paper was designed as a Liberal counterweight to its Conservative penny rival, the Burnley Advertiser. The Gazette changed hands in December 1866, with ten of the town's Liberal businessmen agreeing to form a company to run the paper with the printer-owner accepting £100 and securing the contract to carry on producing the paper. William Livesey was appointed manager on £2 a week and the company looked to hire a reporter. The services of incumbent manager Richard Welbourne were dispensed with.

Within weeks of the takeover the proprietors were holding crisis meetings to tackle losses, although they determined to keep the newspaper 'afloat at all costs'. They were keen to obtain cash support from the town's Liberal elite to prop up the paper.

Change was coming with the extension of voting rights to many male householders and the



Front page from the Burnley Gazette, 1864



Gazette's Liberal owners felt it essential to ensure the party message was proclaimed through the newspaper.

The opening file notes for 1867 set the scene for what follows: Livesey resigns just three months into his tenure, overwhelmed by his workload and his failing health. Livesey refers to himself as manager even though he is clearly also the newspaper editor. The proprietors suggested a plan to have one man assume the duties of manager, editor, sub-editor and reporter. Livesey was also expected to canvass the business community for advertisements, '...these are so difficult to get,' he wrote, 'and I am so sick of that part of what has fallen to my lot that I cannot bring myself to consent to continue that part of the work'.

Staffing levels on small-town newspapers were limited and the division between the editorial room, the print works and the counting house often blurred. Livesey had already dispensed with the services of a 'Mr Young', possibly the Gazette's only reporter recruited weeks earlier, to make a start on cutting costs.

At the heart of the crisis was a lack of revenue from advertisements with only half the anticipated level reached. Livesey suggested using a cheaper newsprint; he raised the idea of cutting composing room costs by using 'stereotype casts'. The process allowed pages or part-pages to be 'bought-in', having been written and set in type elsewhere.

## All Change at the Top

Preparing the ground for his own departure, Livesey took the decision himself to advertise a joint post of sub-editor and reporter, using the jobs column of the Manchester Examiner and Times. The Gazette was not mentioned, with applications to be posted care of a Manchester address. Oddly, the Gazette advertised the joint post of reporter and manager the following week, using the columns of the Leeds Mercury. Once again, the Gazette was not mentioned, the position identified as being on a 'weekly penny paper of Liberal politics'. Both ads sought experienced candidates with practical printing skills. There was an overt expectation of a shared political outlook,

with all that might entail in the reporting of news, plus a pragmatic approach to what tasks might befall the successful applicant.

There are seven surviving applications, all from men, due to the absence of women on the provincial press of the day. They feature candidates from Whitehaven, Salford, Manchester, Hull, Southport, Bishop Auckland and North Yorkshire; applicants' ages range from 28-32. Three state they are married, and three mention their Liberal credentials. 'I would like to have a place where I could feel settled,' wrote one. Pay expectations run from £1.15 shillings a week to £3. It is safe to assume they each earned considerably less than the sum asked for. It is reckoned a family of the day could just about get by on £1 a week.

Five mention their print backgrounds, with three stating they served print apprenticeships. Four note their skills at verbatim reporting and three highlight their experience of writing leaders – the long, detailed, politically-heavy editorial comment columns beloved of the press of the time. One correspondent feels it pertinent to suggest that 'in an educational point of view,' he is, 'fitted to associate with intellectual society'. Another states, 'I may add that not the slightest disagreement exists between me and my employer', and one boasts of being 'steady, and respectable'. One indefatigable job seeker was sub-editing two weekly papers and a morning title, with occasional reporting duties thrown in!

The efforts and hopes of the applicants came to nought. By the end of the month John Collier Farn had been appointed manager, editor and reporter on £2 a week. He is not featured in the job correspondence, but a later court dispute throws light on the matter. He had been employed on the Eccles Advertiser. He was prominent on the Temperance and Co-Operative lecture circuit and some years later he took on the editorship of the Co-Operative News. His was a political appointment, recommended by members of the National Reform Union, a primarily Liberal pressure group agitating for electoral change. One of the proprietors approached him at his home in Eccles and offered him the job. When told he would have to work under a committee of proprietors 'for instructions as emergencies

arose', Farn balked at the prospect, although at a later meeting he was seemingly assured he would have the final word on the content of the paper. On taking up the job he found the Gazette 'in very great difficulties', and that he was 'the financial manager' on top of his other duties.

It appears that gradually political comment pieces from the shareholders were being submitted and even sent to the printers to be set in type without first passing through Farn's hands. In late 1868 one of these leaders contained an alleged 'gross libel' on General Sir James Scarlett, the Tory candidate in the forthcoming General Election and the hero of the Charge of the Heavy Brigade at the 1854 Battle of Balaclava in the Crimea.

For Farn to have allowed an edition of the paper to go to press without fully checking its content was a serious error. For the author of the alleged libel, Henry Houlding – a man trusted by the Gazette proprietors to pen cutting political leader articles boosting their cause and attacking Tory opponents – to have submitted it without checking his facts, merely expecting Farn to save him should he overstep the mark, was at the very least naive. Houlding would go on to accuse Farn of 'monstrous' negligence in allowing his article to be printed! The proprietors' action in promptly dismissing Farn due to alleged incompetence appears heavy handed.

The finer details of the saga were soon aired in court when Farn successfully claimed three months' pay instead of the one offered in lieu of notice. His feelings after a very acrimonious split can only be guessed when he learned that his replacement as editor and manager was to be Houlding ...on improved terms to those he enjoyed.

<i>Week ending July 11th-1868</i>	
Cost of Paper £	4 5 9
Papers Printed	2200
Papers sent out	2130
Papers returned	<i>[scribbled out]</i>

Tally of accounts, Burnley Gazette, 1868,  
Lancashire Archives (DDX1101/27/6)

“

...we have done him an injustice. We never intended to cast any imputation upon General Scarlett's bravery”

Despite the engagement of solicitors and a company resolution, in private, to defend any action brought against Houlding by the cavalry hero, the libel appears to have been settled out of court. A statement in the paper appeared to calm matters, 'we have done General Scarlett an injustice. We never intended to cast any imputation upon General Scarlett's bravery'.

## The Curious Case of James McKay

It remains to examine material in the Gazette records relating to one more individual who, although junior to the chief actors, enjoyed a career that encapsulates much of what has gone before.

In September 1867, the Gazette shareholders resolved that James McKay, aged about 19, currently on the staff as a jack-of-all-trades, be offered a pay rise to 15s per week. McKay first comes to light in the Gazette records on his appointment as office boy in late 1866. He was clearly ambitious. When William Livesey quit as manager McKay wrote to the proprietors urging they, 'allow me in future to have some little share in the "getting up" of the paper. In the course of seven or eight weeks, and indeed earlier, I hope to be able to undertake the Reporting of Lectures, Meetings, and Police News. In the meanwhile, I would suggest that the collection and arrangement of the Local News, should be entrusted to my care'.

His suggestion was acted upon in part. A year later he is found responding to a request for greater clarity in the keeping of financial records.



He argues, 'The first two weeks of the present quarter I was kept so busy at work reporting, collecting the quarter's accounts, and preparing for the auditors that I could not attend to the books as I ought to have done'.

## “ McKay paints a remarkable picture of a man under suspicion of being a political subversive in the ranks of the Gazette ”

By December, McKay paints a remarkable picture of a man under suspicion of being a political subversive in the ranks of the Gazette. He penned a letter to his employers complaining, 'I have plainly been told, by different persons, that they were individually cautioned to be guarded in their conversations in my presence... I have also learned that Mr Farn even took upon himself to appraise you, that I was of a different shade of politics to that advocated by your paper, and therefore was not to be trusted'. He complained of working under a cloud of 'distrust and suspicion', all of which 'galled me to the heart'. He even questioned Farn's approach to political reporting.

The letter is a plea to the proprietors to clear the air, spell out his position and seek an increase to his wages – 'I do not hesitate to say that the great bulk of the work connected with the paper has been done by myself... the pay I now receive, which I think at once will be conceded is not in proportion to the duties of my position'. No reply is present, but five months later the proprietors were informing McKay he was to be sacked 'owing to the indifference you have shown to the interests of the Gazette'.

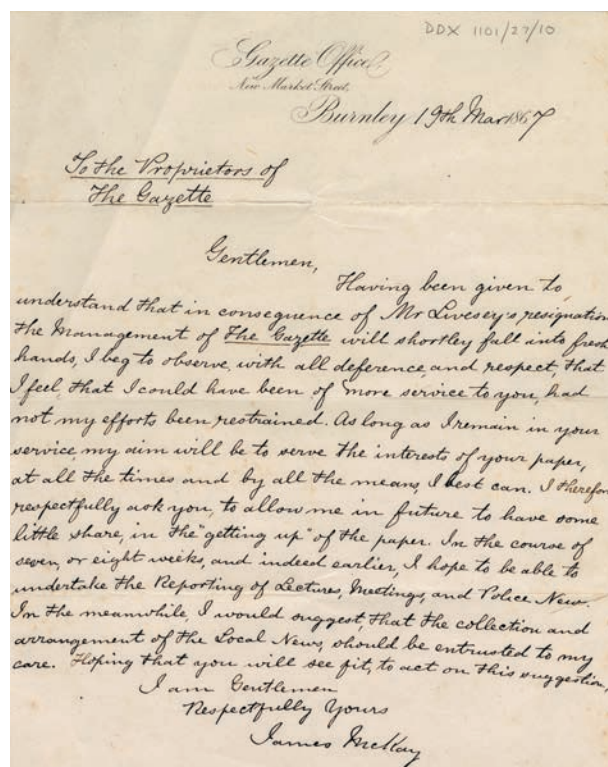
McKay entered journalism through the counting house. There followed a dizzying odyssey across the newspaper industry, working in Blackpool, Preston, Cockermouth, Cardiff, Glasgow, London and finally Aberdeen where he died in 1894. He

also worked as editor of the Gazette's bitter rival, the Conservative-supporting Burnley Advertiser, which adds a further dimension to his claim of being treated as untrustworthy and dismissal.

The newspaper industry underwent radical change from the mid-1800s onwards, with a phenomenal growth in the number of titles and an accompanying increase in the number of journalists employed. The finer details of this news explosion, the personnel involved, their careers and aspirations, are often lost to the record; that makes rare insights into this process of change such as that provided by the Gazette archive, however partial it may be, particularly valuable. ■

Author's note: Credit for the survival of the correspondence is due to M Grey of John Grey Ltd, cotton and rayon manufacturers, and descendant of one of the 1867 Gazette owners who, in 1962, deposited the material with Burnley Council's Libraries and Arts Committee, and to borough librarian R Caul who recognised its worth.

The Burnley Gazette material (DDX 1101/27/) has been used alongside information from the news pages of the Burnley press and other titles.



Letter from James McKay to the Proprietors of the Gazette, 1867, Lancashire Archives (DDX1101/27/10)

# A Pageant of the Martyrs

By Dave Gorman

**L**ancashire has a rich Catholic heritage and remained a stronghold of the faith through the turbulent times which followed the Reformation and the break with Rome initiated by Henry VIII. Persecution of Catholics was at its height during the reign of Elizabeth I, but Lancashire clung staunchly to the 'Old Faith'. Many Lancashire folk, men and women, clergy and laity, suffered the ultimate price and gave their lives. Some of these brave individuals were eventually recognised by the Catholic Church, with the most significant recognition the canonisation of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales on 25 October 1970.

The cause for the canonisation of the Forty Martyrs of England had roots in the mid-nineteenth century. Following the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in England and Wales in 1850, Cardinal Nicholas Wiseman and Cardinal Henry Manning, successive Archbishops of Westminster from 1850 until 1892, led a campaign for the recognition of those Martyred for their faith. By 1935 nearly 200 Reformation Martyrs had been beatified, earning the title 'Blessed', but only two, John Fisher and Thomas More, were canonised as Saints, both on 19 May 1935 by Pope Pius XI.

Following the end of the Second World War, the cause was gradually revived. In December 1960 the names of 34 English and six Welsh individuals, martyred between 1535 and 1679, were submitted to the Vatican. 33 were priests and seven were lay people. Around a quarter of these Martyrs came from within the historic boundaries of the County Palatine of Lancashire, a reminder that Lancashire remained a true stronghold of the faith.

The Lancashire Martyrs included Edmund Arrowsmith, John Southworth, John Rigby, Ambrose Barlow, and John Wall, although not all were martyred at Lancaster. 34 were hanged,

drawn and quartered – an execution reserved for traitors – three were hanged, one died under torture, and one died in prison awaiting execution. Amongst those martyred at Lancaster was Edmund Arrowsmith, a Jesuit Priest from Haydock who ministered in and around Brindle, Hoghton and Whittle-le-Woods and whose hand is preserved at the church of St Oswald and St Edmund Arrowsmith, Ashton-in-Makerfield, where an annual pilgrimage takes place in his honour every August. The skull of Ambrose Barlow, from Withington, is preserved at Wardley Hall, Salford, the official residence of the Bishop of Salford.

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Amongst those martyred at Lancaster was Edmund Arrowsmith... whose hand is preserved at the church of St Oswald and St Edmund Arrowsmith.”



A rally for the Diocese of Lancaster in support of the cause for canonisation took place on Sunday 2 July 1961 at the Deepdale stadium, home to Preston North End, and was attended by more than 20,000 people including over 200 clergy. Parishioners processed through the streets of Preston to the stadium whilst others, from parishes further afield, arrived by coach. The Lancashire Evening Post reported that, 'It started back in the parishes where three huge processions based on St Joseph's, St Ignatius' and St Gregory's formed and walked through the streets with banners and bands to converge at Deepdale'.

A 'Pageant of the Martyrs' took place with 40 individuals, each dressed as a Martyr in the colourful costumes associated with the Tudor and Stuart periods. Narrators announced details of each Martyr's life and death and once all were assembled, 'they presented a huge tableau, strangely set in a modern football stand, of figures who suffered the strife and religious persecution in England and Wales 400 years ago'.

“

...they presented a huge tableau, strangely set in a modern football stand.”

The pageant was followed by Pontifical High Mass, celebrated by Monsignor Thomas Eaton, the Vicar General of the diocese, in the presence of Bishop Thomas Flynn of Lancaster. The chalice used was from St Thomas the Apostle Church, Claughton on Brock, near Garstang, which was described as 'of English workmanship of the latter half of the fifteenth century, and was probably used by Bl. Edmund Campion, one of the Forty Martyrs, when he visited William (later Cardinal) Allen at Maynes Hall, near Rossall'.

The sermon was preached by Fr James Walsh SJ, the Vice-Postulator of the Cause of the Forty Martyrs. Following Mass there was a blessing of the sick with relics of Blesseds John Southworth, John Almond, Cuthbert Mayne, and Margaret

Clitherow. The Lancashire Evening Post published a special commemorative edition on Tuesday 4 July.

In 1970 Pope Paul VI declared that the canonisation would take place on 25 October. Some 10,000 English and Welsh pilgrims, together with the Bishops of England and Wales and Bishops from Scotland and Ireland, were amongst the congregation at the canonisation Mass in St Peter's Basilica. In recognition of the unique significance of the event for English and Welsh Catholics, the Maestro Perpetuo (Master) of the Sistine Chapel Choir, agreed that the Westminster Cathedral Choir could sing in its place. Amongst the pieces performed, the choir sang the Kyrie, the Gloria and the Agnus Dei from the Mass of Five Voices by William Byrd (1543-1623). Perhaps the greatest Tudor composer, Byrd was a contemporary of several Martyrs and despite being a lifelong Catholic and recusant himself, is believed to have escaped harsh penalty due to his musical genius.

Today, many of the Martyrs are depicted in Lancashire's churches. Many depictions pre-date the canonisation; hence the inscriptions of those now canonised still refer to them as 'Blessed'.



Mass celebrated by Fr John Gorman at Arrowsmith House, 2022. The room is said to be where Edmund Arrowsmith celebrated his last Mass before his capture nearby on Brindle Moss, courtesy of Maria Hall, owner of Arrowsmith House.



The rally for the Diocese of Lancaster in support of the cause for canonisation at the Deepdale stadium, Preston, 2 July 1961, image supplied by Dave Gorman

Examples of beautiful stained glass depicting Lancashire's Martyrs can be found in St Mary's Church, Chorley; St Robert of Newminster Church, Catforth; and St Mary's, Bamber Bridge. The Martyrs are particularly commemorated at St Thomas of Canterbury and the English Martyrs in Preston, which has been a focal point for an English Martyrs Pilgrimage. There is a Martyrs Altar, a set of stained glass windows depicting Martyrs and the church possesses a fabulous gold chasuble which depicts St Thomas of Canterbury together with St Thomas More and St John Fisher.

Relics of the Martyrs can be found at the Ladyewell Shrine at Fernyhalgh, near Preston where the Burgess Altar is preserved. This wooden altar, from 1560, is designed to fold away like a sideboard and is said to have been used by St Edmund Campion, St Edmund Arrowsmith and Blessed John Woodcock for the celebration of mass. Arrowsmith House, Hoghton is where St Edmund Arrowsmith celebrated his final mass

before being captured nearby on Brindle Moss when his horse faltered as he attempted to flee.

Many other churches in Lancashire, often hidden away in remote and beautiful locations, can claim a link to a Martyr including, St Mary's, Hornby; St Francis Hill Chapel, Goosnargh; St Joseph's, Brindle; and St Mary and St John Southworth, Samlesbury. Many of these churches have relics of local Martyrs in their possession or items such as chalices, which belonged to them. Stonyhurst College in the Ribble Valley, founded by the Jesuits, has an extensive collection of relics and other items relating to the English and Welsh Martyrs. One particularly interesting item is a large pony skin trunk which was used in the early seventeenth century by a succession of priests based at Samlesbury Hall. The trunk, which contained everything the priest needed to minister to the faithful, would be strapped to the back of a pony and the priest, disguised as a travelling salesman, would use the packhorse routes across the fells to reduce the risk of detection.



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**Walking the quiet country lanes in these localities it is not too difficult to transport oneself back to the time of these brave men and women.**”

Some historic Lancashire houses, home to recusant families who sheltered priests at great risk to themselves, have priest holes, where priests could quickly hide from the authorities. Such hiding places can be found at Hoghton Tower, Samlesbury Hall, Chingle Hall, Rufford Old Hall and Astley Hall. Even today, walking the quiet country lanes in these localities, it is not too difficult to transport oneself back to the time of these brave men and women.

The veneration of the Martyrs had fallen out of fashion but once more interest in and devotion to these great men and women, and an appreciation of the immensely rich Catholic heritage of Lancashire, is being revived. Of particular interest is the blessing of a new Martyrs icon at St Joseph's Church, Skerton, Lancaster. This stunning piece of art by Shropshire craftsman, Martin Earle, was blessed by Bishop Paul Swarbrick of Lancaster on 2 November 2019 and depicts the fourteen men who were Martyred at Lancaster. These include St Edmund Arrowsmith and St Ambrose Barlow, together with Blessed Roger Wrenno, a weaver from Chorley; Blessed John Woodcock, from Leyland; Blessed Edward Bamber, from the Fylde; Blessed Robert Nutter, from Pendle; and Blessed Thomas Whittaker, from Burnley (who were all beatified in 1987). Each of the two groups of seven Martyrs flank an image of the Holy Family and the icon is rich in symbolism. The pattern beneath the feet of the Holy Family depicts Lancashire roses and the pattern at the feet of the Martyrs is inspired by a wallpaper design in the home of

the celebrated Gothic Revival architect, Augustus Welby Pugin, whose younger son, Peter Paul Pugin, was the architect of St Joseph's.

A Martyrs Walk is described in a booklet written by Fr Philip Conner in 2019 and takes in St Joseph's and the icon, St Peter's Cathedral, Lancaster Castle where the fourteen Martyrs were imprisoned, and the site of the martyrdoms on Lancaster Moors near Williamson Park. Today, this is marked by a simple plaque with the poignant words, 'Can you drink the chalice that I am about to drink? They said to him, We can.' ■



Our Lady's Shrine, Fernyhalgh, Preston, Red Rose Collections (ENE20151120015)



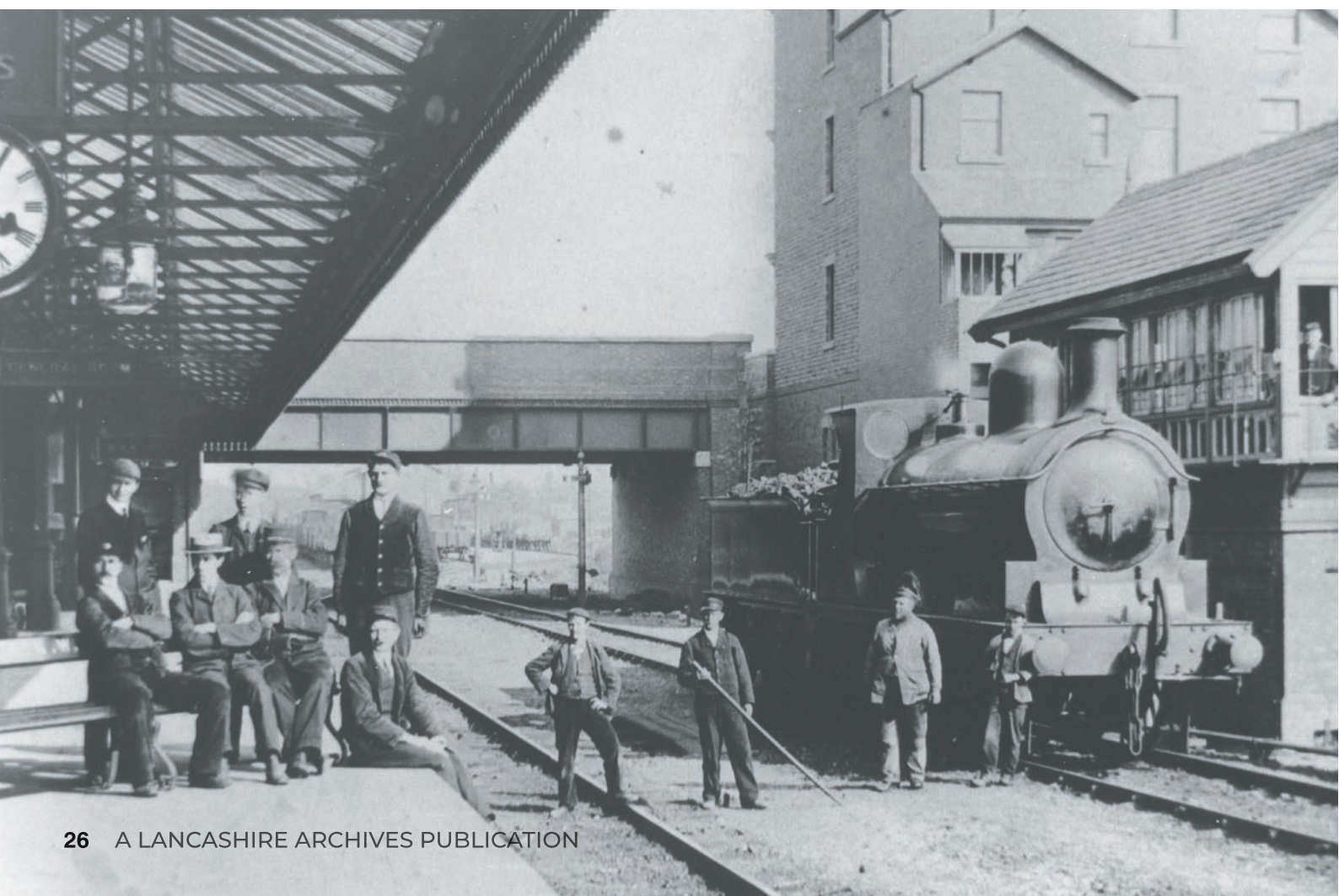
# ANSDELL

## **‘The only place in the country to be named after an artist!’** By Beth Wilson

Situated between the Georgian ‘watering place’ of Lytham and the mid-Victorian planned seaside resort of St Annes-on-the-sea, Ansdell is in the main an Edwardian ‘urban village’. Mentioned in the Domesday Survey as Lindun, the land and town of Lytham was owned by the Clifton family and the manor was purchased by Sir Cuthbert in 1606. The family’s control and influence in the area diminished towards the end of the nineteenth century with the rise of local urban district councils. The Borough of Lytham St Annes was formed in 1922. The house and demesne were in the hands of the family until it was liquidated in the 1960s, due to the profligate spending of the last two squires, John Talbot and his son Henry De Vere Talbot Clifton.

Prior to the 1850s the area was sparsely populated with a small hamlet of Heyhouses, and the old track of Commonside running through it, with farms dotted through the area. Most of the farms disappeared by the late 1960s, although a few buildings remain today.

New Railway Station, Ansdell, c.1903, Red Rose Collections (232107)





## The beginnings of Ansdell

Between 1840 and 1860 the Clifton's and their agents set about improving the Lytham estate, town and farms. They flattened the sandhills, extended the beach and promenade, along with an area round St Cuthbert's Church. The promenade became a, 'very eligible and desirable sites for marine villas'. One of the first to be built in 1847, 'Fairlawn', was for a partner in a Bolton brewery, James Eden. Eden went on to build two other properties with the eight other marine villas all built from the 1860s. Other villas included Pembroke Villa (now a Convent Care Home), Newsham House, Edenfield/Fairfield and West Bank.

James Eden, who became wealthy in later life, was a lover of art and appreciated artists such as Edwin Burne Jones, Thomas Webster and Richard Ansdell. He became instrumental in bringing the likes of Webster and Ansdell to the area. Richard Ansdell became friendly with Eden and often stayed with him at Fairlawn.

After the foundation of St Annes in 1875, the first properties were built under the auspices of the Lytham Land and Building Company. They developed residences in what today is Cambridge Road/Stanley Road. Built in 1878, 1 Stanley Road was internally built as one property with 5 Cambridge Road. The story goes that it was built as a weekend retreat for a businessman who wanted somewhere discreet for his mistress; it looked on the outside like two houses but was in fact one.

## Richard Ansdell and Starr Hills

Born in Liverpool, Richard Ansdell started painting professionally at the age of 21 and became a prolific painter, accumulating several wealthy patrons. He eventually moved to London where he became a member of the Royal Academy.

During the summer exhibitions, James Eden visited London and became a sponsor and friend of Ansdell. Over the years Ansdell stayed with Eden, becoming familiar with the area, appreciating the local sand dunes as a backdrop to his paintings. In the late 1850s he purchased a plot of land close to the sand dunes of Lytham, but on the opposite side of the road from the marine villas. In 1861

he built a summer residence and studio which he called 'Starr Hills', Starr being the local name for the marine grass found on the sand dunes.

Seeking solitude and quiet, he and his family occupied the house for several summers until the construction of the Blackpool and Lytham Railway in 1870, which passed within yards of his house. By 1873, Starr Hills had been sold. Ansdell moved to Farnborough where he died in 1885. In the First World War, Starr Hills became a VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) hospital, but since the 1950s it has been a Methodist Care Home.

## The Railway at Ansdell

The railway had a stop on the line called Ansdell's Halt/Gate, because it was close to one of the few properties in the area – that of Mr Ansdell. The actual station at Ansdell was founded around 1878 with a gothic booking office. The name 'Ansdell' eventually became attached to the area – it is the only place in the country to be named after an artist. The area became popular with industrialists, especially cotton mill owners, most of whom either lived in Ansdell and took the train into the mill towns of East Lancashire, or retired to the area and built homes here. Woodlands Road railway bridge and the accompanying buildings date from 1903-1905, when expansion of the area took place.

Ansdell in fact had three railways stations:

- Ansdell's Halt/Gate stop – 1878-1903, located close to Ansdell's 'Starr Hills' property – due to the rapid expansion of the area it was moved a few hundred yards up from its original site in 1903.
- Ansdell Railway Station – 1903-1906, located where it is today. Double tracked with a long platform and brick booking office. In 1906 it was eventually renamed Ansdell and Fairhaven Station (due to the residential area of Fairhaven).
- Ansdell and Fairhaven Station 1906-present, used today as part of the South Fylde Line to Colne, but the double track platform and booking office were demolished in the 1970s/1980s. Today the station comprises a single line track and a shelter-type waiting area.



The opening of Ansdell Institute, 1909, Red Rose Collections (231309)

## Buildings

Most of the public buildings within the very centre of the village date from 1900 onwards and include the Ansdell Institute, The Post Office and Kingsway Garage. There were five banks in the village in the early 1900s and included the District Bank, Martins Bank, Union of Manchester and the County Bank.

Today, Ansdell Post office is a much loved facility at the heart of the community. The Post Office opened in 1898 and the original Postmaster was George Trickett who was paid the princely annual sum of £6. This branch is the longest serving Post Office still in its original building in the area. As a rule, Sub-Postmasters (which George Trickett was one) were not generally employed by the Post Office but had a business alongside the Post Office. In this case, George Trickett was a grocer. After the Tricketts, the Shuttleworths ran the Post Office and grocery store from 1929. The Knowles family ran it in the 1970s.

## Ansdell Institute

Situated on Woodlands Road, the building was designed by G H Willoughby of Manchester and built by Messrs Dryland and Preston of Blackpool. The foundation stone was laid by Mrs Talbot Clifton in January 1909 with an official opening in October that year. It was a gift from the

Clifton's and was built, for 'the educational and cultural development' of the growing residential population of Ansdell. The institute and public hall were intended to be used as a village hall for residents and it cost £4,500 to build. The building was entered on Woodlands Road, with the main lecture hall originally seating 400 people. In 2012, it was used for corporate hospitality when the British Golf Open was at Royal Lytham as it overlooks the 9th tee of the famous golf course.. Today the 'Stute' is a community hub, has a lovely café, and is used by a variety of local businesses.

## The Kingsway Garage, Kings Road

The building dates from 1912 and is an early example of a motor repair garage and showroom. It was owned by the Williams Brothers, Walter and Henry. Initially Walter Williams was appointed by the local landowner, John Talbot Clifton to maintain the Clifton Estate vehicles. In the 1920s they had a garage in Henry Street, Lytham, along with showrooms in Kings Road (now Kingsway) and Blackpool. In the 1980s the garage was part of a Nissan dealership, but local residents in recent years will remember the building as Lot 3 Auction House, prior to it becoming a second-hand car dealership.



## Entwistle Auctioneers, Kings Road (Now Kingsway)

The property was built as a purpose-built auction house in 1924 and owned by Major Joseph Entwistle, who also had the Kings Road Garage built. On its opening, the Lytham St Annes Express ran an article stating that, 'Messrs J Entwistle & Co of St Annes and Ansdell, the well-known auctioneers and estate agents have opened a new and more extensive premises at Ansdell an extension made necessary by the growth of the district and the large volume of business transacted by the firm'. It continued to be used as a general auction house until 2021.

## The growth of Ansdell

From the 1880s to the 1920s, the opening of shops along Woodlands Road, alongside the prevalence of banks, showed a rise in the middle-class population. There were a variety of shops including confectioners, drapers and chemists. Ansdell expanded with residential areas built just before and after the Great War, but it was after 1945 that Ansdell rapidly grew with new housing springing up on former farmland.

We shall be looking at Arundel Road as an example. Situated opposite the Royal Lytham Golf Course, Arundel Road today was built on land originally owned by the Cliftons and in the main is large, terraced housing, built from 1905 with the middle section dated around 1913. Originally called Alexandria Road, it was developed again in the 1960s with bungalows at the far end. It was renamed in 1930 as Arundel Road, after the West Sussex town famous for its castle and home to the Dukes of Norfolk. It was here at the Poor Clare

Convent, part of the Duke of Norfolk's estate, that the Lady of the Manor, Violet Clifton lived as a novice nun in the 1950s.

It was after the Second World War, especially in the 1960s-1970s, that Ansdell developed rapidly. Major employers such as Guardian Royal Exchange, British Aerospace (now BAE systems), BNFL (now Westinghouse) and civil service departments, all opened premises in the area. It became a dormitory for those working in Preston and Manchester, which takes us full circle. Estates such as West Park, and South Park (built on Clifton land by developers after the liquidation of the Estate) were built in the late 1960s. Even today there is expansion in the area with new housing developments being built in the outer Ansdell area, but most of the historic part of Ansdell, apart from one or two older farm houses, date from the 1880-1920 period.

Today Ansdell is a thriving urban village, Edwardian in character but with modern twenty-first century amenities, blended into the landscape. ■



Tricketts Post Office, Lytham Heritage Group Archives

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Editor's note: We are grateful for Beth Wilson's digested history of Ansdell, taken from a forthcoming publication, The History of Ansdell.



Society volunteers with County Councillor Peter Buckley and the Lancashire Archives team being presented with the Archives and Records Association Volunteering Award for the Crew Lists Project, August 2018

# Fifty Years of Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society



By Stephen Benson

We are looking forward to celebrating our 50th Anniversary next year. Celebrations will include our annual Conference and a Family and Local History Fair.

We will be relaunching our website and making much more data available online. We are now providing in-person and online access to a series of three Family History Training Courses, the first of which started on Thursday 29 September 2022. Other developments are planned.



Throughout the last fifty years the one constant has been change. The early years of family history research involved visits to Somerset House, then later St Catherine's House or the Family Records Centre in Islington to search for birth, marriage and death certificates. Enthusiasts travelled to distant archives and churches to view and search through parish records and graveyards and made trips to The Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, London before it became The National Archives at Kew in 2003.

Now many of those records, including birth, marriage and death certificates, census records and burial and monumental inscription records are available online, either from paid subscription websites or the sites run by volunteer transcribers which make no charge but ask for optional donations from their many users. One of these is the Lancashire BMD, with which the Society has played an important part by contributing to it for over twenty years. In that time its members have added over 20 million transcriptions of birth, marriage and death certificates.

Our members also worked with many other family history societies coordinated by The Federation of Family History Societies. Alongside members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, they transcribed the 1881 census and made it available on CD. This successfully paved the way for the much wider availability of census records including the recent release of the 1921 Census and the 1939 Register.

More recently in 2017-2018, the Society worked with Lancashire Archives and The Federation of Family History Societies to transcribe over 70,000 names on members on ships' Crew Lists from the ports of Fleetwood, Lancaster and Preston – a project which won the prestigious Archives and Records Association, 'Archive Volunteering Award', in August 2018.

The television programme 'Who Do You Think You Are?', which today still provides a celebrity's family tree explored through a one-hour weekly session, gained widespread popularity and stimulated membership in many family history societies. LFHHS was no exception reaching a peak of over 3,500 members in the early years of the twenty-first century.

Today we have instant access to millions of worldwide historic records from a computer terminal in our own home without needing to visit distant archives and libraries or wait for an exchange of letters, which could take weeks if overseas correspondence was involved.

Nevertheless it is still difficult to rival the heady excitement of finding a lost ancestor you have possibly been searching for over the last twenty years and finding them in an archive you least expected.

Reading ancient documents in an archive is a fascinating experience, realising that this text was originally written perhaps two or three hundred years ago.

“  
So much has changed in the last fifty years since we started. What will the next fifty years bring I wonder?  
”

The Society and its members continue to work closely with our friends at Lancashire Archives, transcribing records and many other tasks.

We have Branches throughout Lancashire so do come along to one of our meetings. To find out more about what we do and if you need help with your research, take a look at our website

**[www.lfhhs.org.uk](http://www.lfhhs.org.uk)** ■



Society members and volunteers at work on the Crew Lists project at Lancashire Archives

# GEORGE LYON

## UPHOLLAND HIGHWAYMAN?

By Marianne Howell



Westwood House, the home of Charles Walmesley, and the object of the burglary, Archives: Wigan & Leigh (MMP/21/26)

Although highwaymen were often ruthless criminals, romance and legend has gathered around them - perhaps because of the passage of time, or their portrayal as unlikely heroes in films. One such person, whose dubious fame has lasted for over two centuries, is George Lyon, 'the Upholland highwayman'.

He was hanged at Lancaster Castle on 22 April 1815, together with David Bennett and William Houghton, for a burglary at Westwood House, the home of Charles Walmesley, lord of the manor of Ince, Wigan.

We can prove few facts about Lyon's early life, except that he was born in 1760 (probably not in Upholland). He had at least one legitimate child, but his wife's name is unknown. Numerous tales were told about George, embellished over time. He was seen as either a generous Robin Hood character, or a cold-hearted thief. Audrey Coney, writing about abusive behaviour in Upholland in the early seventeenth century,<sup>1</sup> found that drink was a factor in many court cases. She estimated that there was one alehouse for every five or six homesteads. Lyon would have been familiar with at least six of them within a very small area.<sup>2</sup>

Lyon's legitimate trade was handloom weaving. During his lifetime, the industrial revolution gradually mechanised production, employing an increasing number of people. Geoff Timmins concluded that handloom weaving continued in Lancashire into the mid-nineteenth century, alongside the cottage industry.<sup>3</sup> If Lyon was not producing fancy cloth, he would have been competing with cheaper, mass-produced fabric. In 1808 the mayor of Wigan wrote to the Home Secretary that 'the present distresses of the weavers and their families are such as were never before experienced'. This period saw exceptionally severe weather, poor harvests and deprivation.

Lyon was so notorious that Wigan magistrates established a subscription fund for his capture. He claimed he had been 'lugged' (transported)



- some said to Africa - or that he spent time on a prison hulk – but there is no evidence for these events. He boasted that he was called ‘King of the Thieves’.

His reputation as a highwayman grew. He supposedly held-up a mail coach, racing from the Bull’s Head to Tawd Bridge, he stole from the passengers and was back in the pub before news of the crime reached the village. Again there is no evidence for this event, but it adds to the legend.

The first of his documented crimes was in 1801.<sup>4</sup> He was charged with stealing ten pieces of calico. A later document states he swore an affidavit that there were no witnesses, so it seems the case was dropped.

Ellen Weeton was a schoolteacher who lived in Upholland and in a later letter dated 23 May 1809, wrote: ‘Upholland is, if possible, more licentious and more scandalous than when I lived in it. Such numbers of unmarried women have children... In two houses near together, there have been in each, a mother and daughter lying-in, nearly at the same time; and one man (the notorious George Lyon) reputed to be the father of all four!’.

“

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near together, there have been in each, a mother and daughter lying-in, nearly at the same time; and one man (the notorious George Lyon) reputed to be the father of all four! ”



Courtroom at Lancaster Castle, where the men were tried, early twentieth century, Lancashire Archives

<sup>1</sup> Audrey Coney 'Abusive behaviour in Upholland, Lancashire: the evidence of the Halmot records, 1599-1633' in *Aspects of Lancashire history: essays in memory of Mary Higham*. The Lancashire Local Historian, ed. Zoë Lawson, 20 (2007-8), pp. 55-66.

<sup>2</sup>The Owl, the Bull's Head, the Legs of Man, the Eagle and Child, the White Lion, and the Old Dog.

<sup>3</sup> Geoffrey Timmins, 'The decline of hand weaving in nineteenth-century Lancashire', *Regional Bulletin*, Lancaster University Centre for North-West Regional Studies, New Series no. 8 (Summer 1994), pp. 32-37.

<sup>4</sup> Lancashire Record Office (LRO) QJC/1a, Lancashire Courts of Quarter Sessions 1583-1999, Calendar of Crown Prisoners Mar 1801-Mar 1822.

<sup>5</sup> Miss Weeton: journal of a governess 1807-1811, ed. Edward Hall (OUP, 1936), p. 167. A recent biography of Ellen Weeton incorporates extracts from her letters and diaries, and contains previously unknown details of her life: Alan Roby, *Miss Weeton: governess and traveller*. (Wigan: Wigan Archives, 2016).



There are numerous official records of Lyon fathering illegitimate children.<sup>6</sup>

The crime that saw him hanged was a well-planned burglary. On 13 August 1814 Bennett, Houghton, Lyon and Edward Ford met in the Bull's Head to plan to 'break' Westwood House in Ince in Wigan. All had known each other for several years – except for Ford. He had been employed to decorate the house, so he knew the layout. Ford and Houghton made their way via The Hare & Hounds public house in Pemberton where they drank beer and Houghton stole a pair of quarter boots. They met up again with Lyon and Bennett and went on to Westwood House.

Charles Walmesley and his family were away, leaving four servants at the house. (An account of the burglary follows later.)

Suspicion soon fell upon Lyon. To entrap him, John Cooper, constable of Wigan, employed a thief taker, John Macdonald. He was kitted out as a hawker, and gradually gained Lyon's confidence.

After some time, Macdonald arranged to meet Lyon to buy the stolen goods, paying with £10 from marked bank notes given to him by Cooper. Lyon and the other men were arrested and taken to Lancaster Castle, where they were tried on 3 April.

An entry from the Calendar of Crown Prisoners for 25 March 1815 shows that Lyon was charged with four burglaries, in addition to the one at Westwood House. In each one he stole silver items.<sup>7</sup>

An account of the trial was published in Wigan giving vivid details of the proceedings.<sup>8</sup>

Amongst those giving evidence were two of Charles Walmesley's servants, Betty Aspinall and William Johnson, who had discovered the burglary. Many silver items were stolen (and later recovered) which Walmesley identified as his property.

There was also the testimony of Macdonald, the thief taker, and Lyon's own hand-loom apprentice, Luke Bradshaw, who had known the three accused for several years.

Ford had turned King's evidence and clearly intended to lay the principal blame on Lyon. George, heavily armed, had kept watch while the three others entered the house. After they burgled two rooms, Lyon demanded that Ford go in again; he refused because the servants knew him. George cursed him as a coward and asked him to black his face as a disguise: 'Lyon generally carried soot in his pocket'!

The evidence put the men's guilt beyond doubt. At the end of the trial:

'The Lord Chief Baron then summed up the evidence, in an able, perspicuous, and very impressive manner, and the Jury without hesitation, brought in a verdict of guilty against all the prisoners; to the satisfaction of a very crowded court.'

From his cell, George sent a heartfelt letter to his wife (thought to have been dictated to a clergyman):

'I am first going to state my unfortunate state to you, that is, I now lay under the awful sentence of Death... My distressed soul is almost rent in pieces, but I trust in my Heavenly Father to pardon my sins for the sake of his son our Saviour Jesus Christ, who died to save sinners.

“

This is my last and farewell letter from so unfortunate a criminal and now locked in a dark and gloomy cell where I am daily acknowledging my sins and faults which I have been guilty of.”

This is my last and farewell letter from so unfortunate a criminal and now locked in a dark and gloomy cell where I am daily acknowledging my sins and faults which I have been guilty of.

Postcard showing Lancaster Castle, Lancashire Archives



I hope it will be in my power with the assistance of my heavenly father to clear a path for my poor soul's flight to have a resting place among his heavenly angels. Dear wife I beg you will pray fervently for my sins to be forgiven. I beg you will send my black clothes to die in. I hope that you are preparing for my body to be buried with...dear Nanny. I could not wish my body to be entered here on account of the surgeons taking it for dissection. So God Almighty bless you forever and may we meet in my Father's kingdom never to be separated more. I end in tears, your ever affectionate and loving husband, this is my last and farewell letter'.

John Higgins, the chief gaoler, allowed Lyon to wear his best black suit and 'topped' jockey boots: it was considered important to make a 'good death'. The condemned men marched from their cells to the Drop Room, and then out to the scaffold, surrounded by the usual huge hanging-day crowd.

'On Saturday last, about noon, George Lyon, David Bennett and William Houghton...underwent the awful sentence of the law, on the Drop, behind our Castle. [They all] seemed to pray most fervently...especially Lyon, who was the last tied up... After hanging the usual time, the bodies were taken down and those of the three burglars were given to their friends for interment.

May the fate of these unfortunate fellow-creatures have its due weight upon their unhappy partners in iniquity, teaching them and all others to refrain from the works of darkness and evil-doing, to flee from the wrath to come, and to prepare for that awful day, when they are to appear before the

Great Judge, the searcher of hearts, and against whose sentence there can be no appeal.<sup>10</sup>

The landlord of the Old Dog inn, Simon Washington, and a companion collected the bodies. They returned to Upholland in a thunderstorm so fierce they took shelter under the cart and Washington swore that the devil himself had followed them.

The following day, Sunday 23 April, a huge crowd gathered to witness the burial of the three men.

“  
They returned [the  
bodies] to Upholland in  
a thunderstorm so fierce  
they took shelter under the  
cart and Washington swore  
that the devil himself had  
followed them.”

Rev Frederick George Willis, Vicar of Upholland (1888-1927), said:

'No shrine of saint or martyr could be more eagerly sought than the plain flat stone which does not even bear the name of the man whose fame seems so altogether out of proportion to his deserts, or even to his eminence as a criminal.' ■

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<sup>6</sup> LRO: QSB/1/1782/Oct/Pt2/17 Lancashire Courts of Quarter Sessions 1583-1999, Recognizance Rolls 1605-1835: Recognizance for George Lyon of Ashton within Mackerfield, to obey court orders relating to a child likely to be born a bastard to Rebecca Fradsham of Winstanley; QSP/2385/8 Lancashire Courts of Quarter Sessions 1583-1999; Ormskirk Easter 1797: Lowton. Order of filiation and maintenance of Alice, bastard child of George Lyon of Ashton, weaver, and Ann Twiss, singlewoman; QSP/2610/155 Lancashire Courts of Quarter Sessions, Petitions, Ormskirk: Easter 1811: Lathom. Order of filiation and maintenance of bastard son of George Lyon of Upholland, Weaver, and Jane Rotherham, singlewoman.

<sup>7</sup> LRO QJC/1a Lancashire Courts of Quarter Sessions, Calendar of Crown Prisoners Mar 1801-Mar1822. Lyon stole from the homes of Peter Robinson, John Fogg, Henry Gaskell and Robert Yates.

<sup>8</sup> The trial at large, of George Lyon...on an indictment for a burglary, committed at Westwood-House, the residence of Charles Walmesley, Esq.... (Wigan: J. Brown, [1815?]).

<sup>9</sup> George Lyon's daughter Nanny died in 1804 and is buried in the graveyard of St Thomas the Martyr church; some accounts incorrectly name her as Lyon's mother. Lyon's wish was fulfilled.

<sup>10</sup> Lancaster Gazette Sat 29 April 1815, vol. 14, issue 724.

# BEHIND THE SCENES IN CONSERVATION

By Mark O'Neill, Archive Conservator

Hello, and welcome to the Conservation Team at Lancashire Archives. We hope to be able to share the occasional article with you in future, but it would be remiss of me not to introduce ourselves first.

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As the Conservation Team we are responsible for the preservation and repair of the physical documents within the care of the Archives, and we've had a busy year.

I joined the Archive in September 2019 as a Preventive Archive Conservator, and now manage the Conservation Team. I originally started at the Archive in 2014 on a two-month Workstart placement, which is where I fell in love with conservation.

Leanne is an Audio & Preservation Technician, who started in June 2021. Leanne has very quickly and adeptly found her feet, not least bringing her creativity, eye-for-detail and ability in planning and delivering exhibitions and displays, which we hope to be able to share with you in the near future.

Liam began as a Searchroom Assistant at the Archive, before joining Conservation as a Preservation Technician in September 2019. He quickly proved himself integral to the team in being primarily responsible for the Deepstore move mentioned below.

Kezi is our newest member and joined us September 2022 as our Digitisation Preservation Technician but it feels like she's always been here! Covid showed us how important it was to still be able to provide the public access to the

information held at the Archive, so her role is of growing importance to deliver for customers and widen collections access.

Kai joined the Archive as a Kickstart in December 2021 and although that position ended after six months, we didn't want to let her go! She currently uses her photography skills to digitise awkward documents and provide images for our exhibitions and events.

And here is just some of the work we've been involved with recently:

## Covid-19 Rescue Fund (The National Archives)

We applied to this Fund to help preserve a collection of architectural plans from a family business in Lancaster. We collected, transported, repaired and packaged the collection, and installed some bespoke shelving in our strongrooms to better preserve them for the future (and make it easier for our staff to handle them).



## Deep Store Storage

We are always receiving new items at the archive, so space is something we would like more of. The Conservation profession in the UK began in part with the storage of important objects, paintings and documents underground in mines for their protection during the First and Second World Wars. We decided to follow suit and have an agreement with DeepStore (a heritage storage company located in an active salt mine in Cheshire) to store some collections for us.

## National Manuscript Conservation Trust Bid

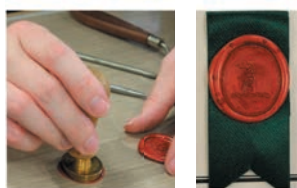
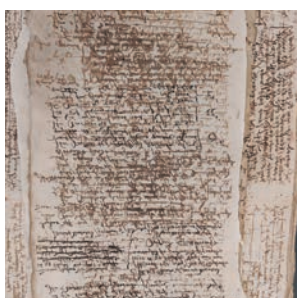
The Archive applied to the National Manuscript Conservation Trust for funding to allow conservation treatment to be carried out on a series of account books (1582-1621) from Gawthorpe Hall. This involved stabilisation

treatment to prevent ink deterioration of the iron gall inks the volumes were written in, as well as treatment to support and repair fragile and damaged areas of the volumes, and a missing cover to be made for one of the volumes. A conservator experienced in book repair, Sharon Oldale, agreed to undertake the work and provide training for conservation staff as part of the project, which began in February 2022 and will be completed within the next couple of months.

## Lord Lieutenant Seals

The Conservation team is tasked with providing the wax seals to affix to the Deputy Lieutenant's certificates, granted by the Lord Lieutenant every year to certify the position. We are happy to report we were able to provide the next batch of certificates to confirm the positions for the coming year.

We hope this has given a brief insight into the role and work of Conservation at the Archives. ■



Images showing conservation treatments on the Gawthorpe Hall account books and fabrication of wax seals, Lancashire Archives

# The Friends of Lancashire Archives



Everybody needs friends – to back them up, offer moral support and share great experiences. And maybe even to slip them a tenner now and then!

That's pretty much what the Friends of Lancashire Archives does. We're a charitable organisation set up nearly 30 years ago to support the work of the archives service in whatever way is needed. We're here to help the Archives flourish and reach as many people as possible with the wonderful historic resources in their collections.

## Past endeavours

So, in the past, we've contributed funds to major projects such as the Whittingham Lives exploration of the heritage, culture and legacy of that asylum, as well as smaller ones such as Time and Tide, a creative writing project inspired by First World War coroners' records from Morecambe. Even a small amount from the Friends can demonstrate local support and lever significant funding for projects and acquisitions.



The mandate of John Till, Prior Provincial of the Order of Dominicans in England, in favour of William, Prior of Cartmel, 1418, Lancashire Archives (DDHU)



## And talking of acquisitions, over the years the Friends have helped to buy:

- The oldest document in the Archives – a 900-year-old manuscript owned by the Towneley family
- The papers of Hylda Baker, renowned Lancastrian comedian and actor of the 1960s and 1970s
- The diaries of Anthony Hewitson, a newspaper editor in Preston and Lancaster, the first of which have just been published
- ...and a fridge for the Archive users' tea room!

More recently our ability to support the Archives was given a major boost by several generous legacies. This has put us in the happy position of providing significant funding for three major projects that are getting underway right now.

## Breaking out of the Box

Last year, the Friends funded the Inside the Box project to help tackle the cataloguing backlog at the Archives. In just 10 months, the project archivist, Roz Williamson, created catalogue records for 2,857 boxes. Roz proved – literally – irreplaceable when she moved on to a permanent role elsewhere, so the Friends have now agreed to fund the temporary appointment of a Collections Assistant. For just a little extra funding, we are able to extend the length of the project, which will target another 3,000 boxes. In addition, this role will develop opportunities for volunteers to assist with this and other tasks. And as an extra bonus, this is an entry-level role providing essential paid experience for an aspiring archival professional.

## Digital heaven

The pandemic revealed the importance of digital access to archives – and the limitations of Lancashire Archives' existing equipment. So the Friends are very pleased to invest in all-singing, all-dancing – possibly not literally – digitisation equipment. This will enable the Archives to digitise items as large as A0 – that's over a metre long – using a far better camera. Exciting tech, but what really persuaded the Friends to invest are the possibilities to share more of the collection'

collection online, as well as provide a better service for researchers.

## Read all about it!

And the third project? You're reading the fruits of it right now! The Friends have provided seed funding to get this excellent publication off the ground, paying for the first issues and their promotional material.

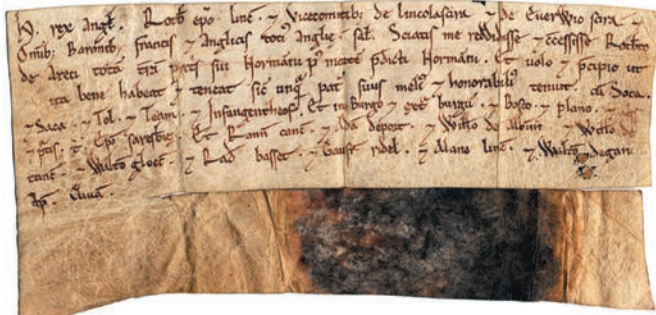
## Into the future

Like many organisations we're adjusting to a new world after the pandemic and are looking again at our activities – both those that support the Archives and others specially for our members. We're in the process of developing a new website, which will provide online access to our newsletters, news of our activities, and a space for members to share their discoveries in the Archives' collections.

One of the great things we were able to fund over the past couple of years is a Zoom subscription. It meant we could still hold meetings and talks during the pandemic, and it also allowed Archives staff to 'visit' schools and share documents with pupils. It now means that some of our events and meetings can be accessed from all over the county, country and even the globe.

Whether you're a regular user of the Archives or simply interested in local history, we hope you'll benefit from the Friends' funding and activities. If you're interested, you'll find us on Twitter [@flarchives](#), and on our current temporary website, [flarchives.weebly.com](#) ■

**You might even want to slip us a tenner some time and join the fun...!**



The oldest document in the Archives – a 900-year-old manuscript owned by the Towneley family, Lancashire Archives (DDTO/K/1/5)

# PAINTING WIGAN RED: WOMEN AND WIGAN'S LABOUR MOVEMENT, 1914-1918

By Yvonne Eckersley

Wigan Mill Girls, Weaving Room, No 1



Workers at Rylands Mill, Wigan, © Archives: Wigan & Leigh (PC2017.0734B)



**In 1914 Wigan's labour movement was a loose conglomerate of trade unions, political parties including the Wigan Labour Party, and ordinary people. Whilst Wigan's labour movement was dominated by men, the work of women was essential in the evolution of labour politics in Wigan, particularly from members of the Wigan and District Weavers, Winders, Reelers and Beamers' Association (referred to as the Weavers).**

Wigan's textile workers, the majority of whom were female, formed the second largest occupational group after the miners. Like the miners they had a distinct identity, forged by shared experiences. Mill workers were highly visible. Thousands of women tramped in a constant stream through Wigan's narrow streets to and from a workplace offering long hours in poor conditions with low wages. They lived and worked in closely knit, mutually supportive communities, where women turned to other women for help. They carried this camaraderie into their union.

## The Weavers' political activism

From 1893 the Weavers were active members of Wigan's Trade Council, with their President, Helen Silcock, on the executive. At the 1902 Trade Union Congress, Helen, on the union's direction, introduced the motion that Congress vote to support women's suffrage.

After its rejection she was appointed to their Parliamentary Committee. In 1906, the Weavers, with Helen (now Fairhurst) still the association's President, and the Lancashire and Cheshire Women's Textile and Other Workers Representation Committee of which Helen was an active member, came together to run Britain's first Women's Suffrage Parliamentary candidate in Wigan.

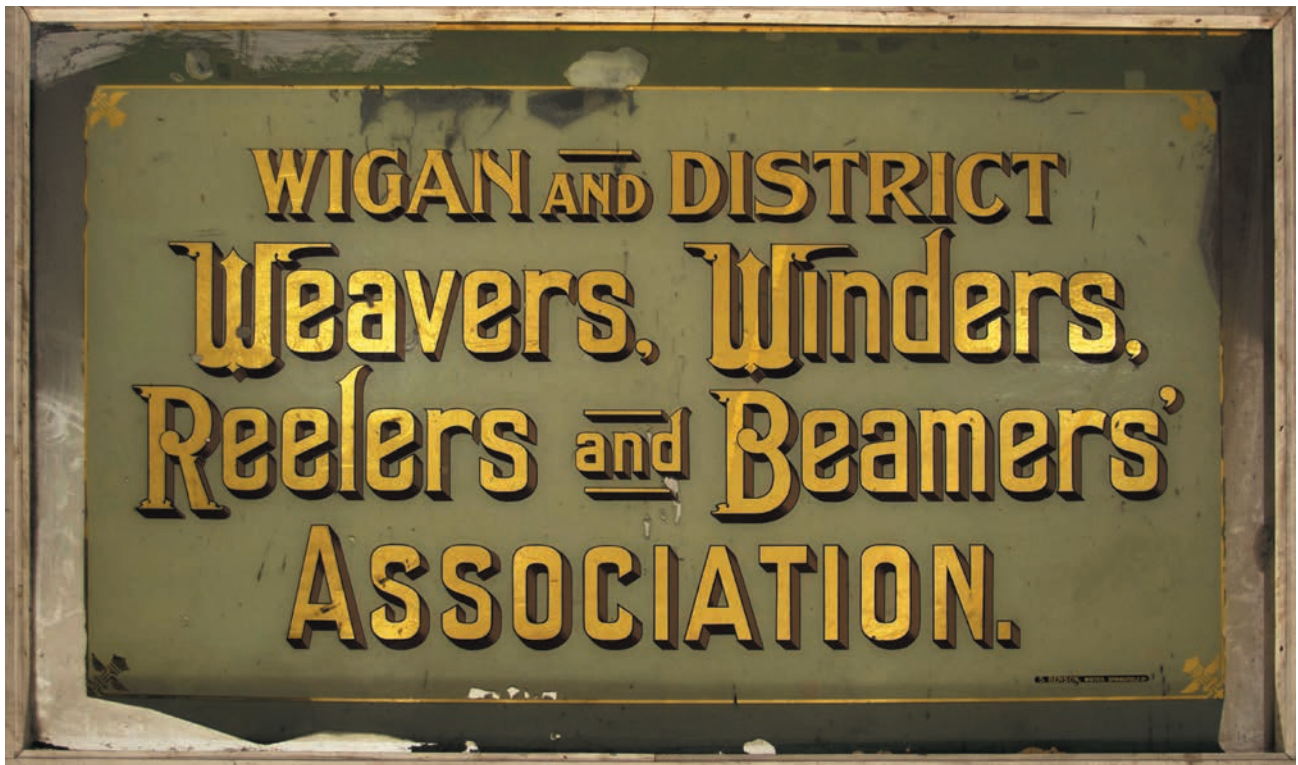
In the General Election of January 1910 the union supported Harry Twist as he became Wigan's first Labour MP. After his defeat in December 1910 they continually voted for his reselection until he retired in 1918, thereafter supporting John Allen Parkinson (Wigan Labour MP, 1918-1941). From 1913 as a member union of Wigan's Trade Council, they played an active part in the unification of local labour organisations. In 1913 following a motion by Elizabeth Hart they became affiliated to the Wigan Labour Representation Committee (LRC). As Wigan's Independent Labour Party (ILP) was a constituent member of Wigan's LRC this affiliation facilitated a close working relationship between the ILP and the Wigan Weavers.

This was helped as Helen Fairhurst was the ILP's vice president throughout the years of the First World War. In September 1914 the Weavers voted for the merging of Wigan's LRC and its Trades Council. Then in 1915 they voted for the Wigan LRC to be included in the Lancashire and Cheshire Federation of Labour Parties. In this way they helped meld the Wigan-centric labour movement with regional politics. Throughout the war years they sent delegates representing the Weavers to the joint political meetings of Wigan's LRC and Trades Council.

## Gathering knowledge and making their voice heard

The Weavers spent a considerable amount of time and money sending delegates on fact finding exercises or to vote for specific courses of action. Each delegate was required to report back to the Committee, who then discussed the reports before disseminating information to their members, taking a poll if necessary before deciding on a course of action.

Delegates were sent to most local, regional and national Labour Party Conferences, Trades Union Congress', LRC Conferences and the United Textile Factory Workers Association Conferences. The Textile Association's role was to represent and advise textile workers on political matters. As an indication of their status within the Textile



Workers at Rylands Mill, Wigan, © Archives: Wigan & Leigh (PC2017.0734B)

Association, the Weavers' secretary was elected to its legislative council. In 1918 the union sent delegates to Ruskin College, the United Textile Factory Workers Association, and the National Labour Party Conferences to discuss the Labour Party's proposed new constitution. And there were many more.

This required a substantial number of women willing and able to be delegates. The Weavers' 1917 rota of delegates listed sixteen women. Of these, fourteen went to TUC conferences and fourteen to LRC and Trades Council meetings. Interestingly thirteen of the sixteen went to all three. The union paid rail and tram fares, the cost of an overnight stay where relevant and an allowance.

## Connectivity and networks

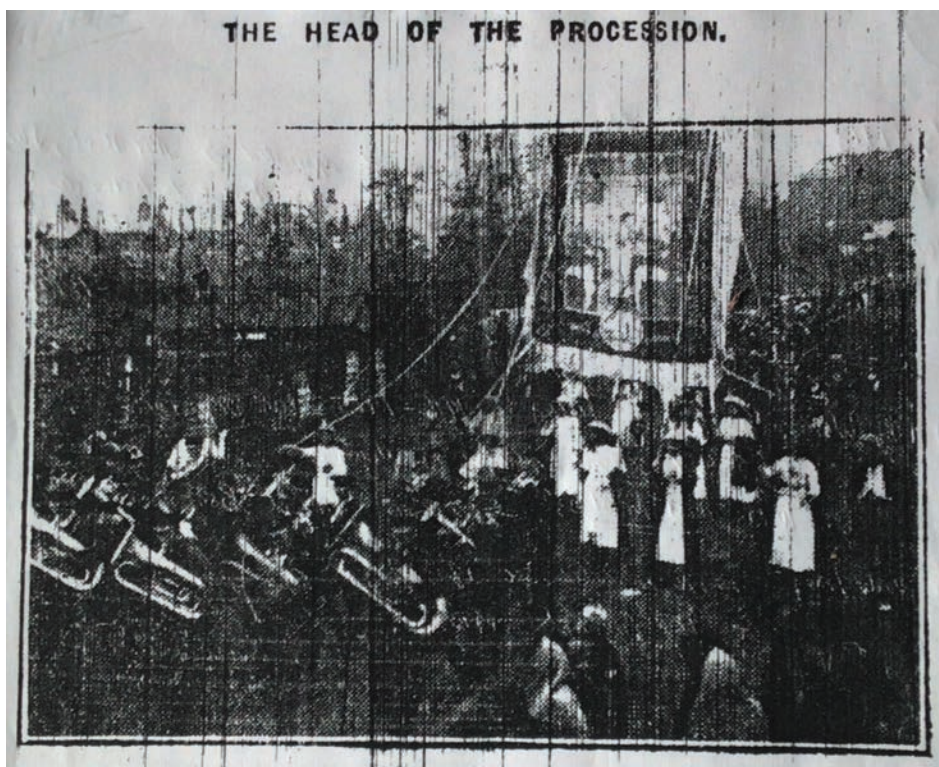
Wigan women who wanted to be involved in labour politics and could not be members of a trade union had an alternative. The Women's Labour League (WLL) was formed to work for the ILP in connection with the Labour party and had several branches in the Wigan district. Although not trade union based one of their aims was to

encourage and support local women as they formed trade unions. In the Wigan district, League members worked alongside Mary MacArthur's National Federation of Women Workers organisers Helen Fairhurst and Ada Newton as they helped Wigan's Pit Brow Women start their own union.

In 1910, WLL members Elizabeth Hart, Julia Walkden and Julia Smith met the Weavers' Committee to ask for their support. The Weavers promised to promote the League among their members and gave them practical and financial help. Members of the League used the Weavers' Darlington Street office as their base as they organised their political activism and ran educational programmes. They continued to do this after 1918 when the WLL morphed into the Labour Party's Women's Section. From there they helped run the election campaign of WLL member and weaver Julia Walkden as she stood as the first working women candidate for Wigan council in 1919. The Weavers Union also paid her expenses.

Though Julia was unsuccessful, fellow League member Martha Hogg was elected as Wigan's





Wigan's women weavers leading the 1914 Wigan and District Trade and Labour Demonstration Procession, © Archives: Wigan & Leigh

first working woman councillor the following year. With Wigan's ILP they had worked for Helen Fairhurst's election onto Wigan's Board of Guardians. In 1915, Helen, as WLL member and ILP President, was Wigan's first female labour Guardian.

An important element in developing a strong labour community was reaching out to working people. Many identified with organised labour's efforts to work for political legislation to protect and improve employment and economic conditions but could not take on a direct role in the struggle. To cater for these individuals a programme of construction of Labour Clubs was devised.

Labour clubs provided venues where working people could be part of and support the labour movement. The clubs were funded in part by loans from trade unions. Weaver's committee member Elizabeth Hart, a member of the Directorate of Wigan's Labour Clubs Building Company, arranged a loan from the Weavers to help finance the scheme. This had positive results. At the 1914 Labour Demonstration in Ashton in Makerfield, Newton Labour Club, Earlestown's Grant Street and Earlestown Number 2 Labour Clubs, joined the procession.

## Labour women's increasing status

In 1911 the WLL was the only, and barely visible, representative of a women's organisation at the Annual Labour Demonstration of 10,000 male trade unionists in Ashton-in-Makerfield. At this and contemporary Labour Demonstrations, the issues discussed by the speakers were male-focused. By 1914 women's issues, particularly women's suffrage and women's trade unionism had a higher profile, no doubt helped by women's increased involvement in suffrage and labour politics.

There was a rapid increase in the status and number of women's organisations taking part. As an indicator of change, Wigan's women weavers headed the 1914 Wigan and District Trade and Labour Demonstration Procession. The procession walked through Wigan's streets from the Market Square to congregate at Westwood Grounds in Ince to hear leaders of the labour movement speak. In prime position, walking with their huge banner, preceded by a brass band and wearing white dresses, the Weavers recreated an almost mirror image of the mass Women's Suffrage marches in London, made familiar in the



Helen Silcock,  
President of the  
Wigan and District  
Weavers, Winders,  
Reelers and Beam-  
ers' Association, ©  
Archives: Wigan &  
Leigh

press and newsreels. By linking their membership of the trade union movement, and by extension the labour movement, with the fight for women's suffrage they suggested to Wigan's women a possible route to their enfranchisement.

## Anti-Conscription

Men like Harry Twist and Stephen Walsh, Ince MP, some members of Wigan Trade Council and Ince Labour Party agreed with the National Labour Party's resolution to support the Government's conscription policy from September 1914.

Members of the Wigan Weavers, following the WLL and the ILP's pacifist stance, opposed it.

In 1915 the National Registration Act was passed, designed to quantify possible military recruits and people who could be drafted into war-work. The Act required everyone between 15 and 65 to register at Labour Exchanges. The WLL declared that 'under no circumstances had the state the right to demand compulsory service from its male citizens'.

During the anti-conscription campaign that followed the introduction of the Compulsory Military Service Bill in January 1916, Wigan Weavers sent their secretary to a National Conference called to discuss it. Upon his return they drafted a protest and sent it to the Prime

Minister, Wigan's MP and the press. Much of the wording of this letter of protest echoed the ILP leaflet, but going further it expressed the fears of many in the trade union movement, namely that the Bill 'is only the thin end of the wedge towards not only military but industrial conscription'.

The government, forced to take this into account, inserted a clause in the Act that prevented industrial conscription.

## Wigan Weavers and The Peace Campaign

On 3 March 1917 Russia signed a Peace Treaty with Germany and withdrew from the war just before their Revolution of 8-12 March. The ILP, the British Socialist Party and the Fabian Society planned to establish Russian-style democratic Councils of Workers and Soldiers in Britain. One of their aims was the promotion of world peace. In July 1917 the Weavers Committee voted to send supportive delegates to the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils' Manchester Branch conference on 11 August.

The Weavers resolved to send their secretary to the Special Labour Conferences planned for 10 and 21 August in London. These conferences were called to consider the possibility of the Labour Party accepting Russia's invitation to send delegates to the International Peace Conference in Stockholm. At the Conference of 21 August, a ballot was taken of delegates representing 2.5 million labour members. They voted by a majority of three in favour of Labour's Arthur Henderson going to Stockholm. The Government, press and military establishment considered the pursuit of a negotiated peace as defeatist and Henderson was denied a passport.

It is impossible to know for certain how the Weavers' secretary voted but given they supported many of the Independent Labour Party's anti-war policies it would seem reasonable to assume they voted in favour. ■

Primary sources consulted:

Wigan Weavers, Minute Book, 1908-1924 (Archives: Wigan & Leigh)

Wigan Observer, 1911-1920 (Archives: Wigan & Leigh)

The Labour Leader (The Labour Party History Archive, Manchester)



# Can you help keep Lancashire in the picture?

Lancashire County Council's archives, museums and libraries take care of hundreds of thousands of historic photographs of our county, and you can look at many of them online at <https://redrosecollections.lancashire.gov.uk/>



The kitchen of a new house in the Skelmersdale New Town development, Lancashire Archives (NTSK/27/1/43)

However, many more are not available online and the collections need to be brought up to date. Gone are the days when some people printed their photographs and handed a copy in at their local library. Digital cameras and smart phones are capturing images of Lancashire every minute of the day, but very few are being added to the council's collections.

Next year a project is planned to get more photographs in the existing collections digitised and catalogued so everyone can enjoy them. People will also be asked to donate more recent images and help further by taking photographs that show what Lancashire is like now. It will be important to ensure that the images in the collections reflect the diversity of Lancashire's communities.

If you are interested in lending a hand - by helping with digitisation, donating images or taking photographs – just drop a line to **archives@lancashire.gov.uk** and we will keep you updated as the project takes shape. ■



Performers at the Nelson Mela, 2011, Lancashire Archives



The Sepulchre, the Quaker burial ground, near Twiston, circa 1900, Red Rose Collections (ECL20140408022)

# MY ANCESTORS' HIDDEN HISTORIES: WITCHES, QUAKERS AND NONCONFORMISTS

By Jenny Palmer

I was born and brought up on a small hill farm in the hamlet of Twiston, two and a half miles from the village of Downham in Lancashire. As a child, my siblings and I roamed freely in the fields and meadows around our home. Sometimes, accompanied by my favourite aunt, Auntie Don, we'd walk to the hill known locally as Sepulchre. Climbing onto the milk stand we'd peer over the wall. There wasn't much to see, just a square patch of land, surrounded by stone walls and ash trees on all sides, with an opening where the sheep had been allowed to graze. Our aunt told us that this was a Quaker cemetery, connected to our family, the Whipps, Watsons and Bulcocks, who had lived at Hill Foot Farm for hundreds of years.



After university, I lived and worked in London for 40 years. When I started thinking about returning to Lancashire, I got interested in family history and became a frequent visitor of Friends Meeting House Library in London, of the Lancashire Archives and of the local reference library in Clitheroe. I enrolled on a three-year, online course in local history at Lancaster University and around this time inherited a set of family documents, which had been lying in a wooden box in my parents' bedroom. The box contained wills, inventories, indentures and miscellaneous papers going back hundreds of years. My mother once loaned the documents to the ex-Bishop of Chester, who happened to be living nearby, and he deciphered them and detailed the contents. I used this research to flesh out the bones of ten generations of our family who had lived in continuous succession at Hill Foot Farm to the present. The result 'Whipps, Watsons and Bulcocks: a Pendle family history, 1560-1960' was published in 2014.

In my second family history book 'Witches, Quakers and Nonconformists,' I have focused on three groups: the Pendle witches, the Twiston Quakers and the Nonconformists. I discovered a probable link between our Bulcock ancestors and Jane and John Bulcock from Moss End, Newchurch, who were hanged as witches in Lancaster in 1612. Jane and her son John were shadowy figures. They appeared in the testimony of James Device at the 1612 trial, accused of having used 'Witchcrafts, Inchantments, Charmes and Sorceries' causing Jennet Deane to 'waste and be consumed,' after which she 'became madde.' Jane and John were identified by the nine-year old Jennet Device, as having attended the infamous Good Friday meeting and John as having turned the spit there, on which a stolen sheep was roasted. They were also accused of shapeshifting by James, who said they 'went out of the house in their own shapes, got on horseback and presently disappeared out of sight.'

As they were led away, Thomas Potts, the clerk of the court, tells us in his 1612 report that they, 'cried out in a very violent and outrageous manner', protesting their innocence. For this, Potts called

them 'the most desperate wretches, void of all feare or grace in all this pack.' I thought it was an unusual conclusion to come to. During the writing of this book, I learned that the Salem witches of Massachusetts had been pardoned and this year Nicola Sturgeon issued an apology to the Scottish witches. The petition to pardon the Lancashire Witches presented to Jack Straw when he was Home Secretary was refused but a new one has recently been started and I support this.

“

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The link between our Whipp/Bulcock ancestors and the Quaker Burial ground at Twiston is well-documented. In 1669, Mary Bulcock, my great grandmother ten times removed, was buried alongside her infant son in a field near her house, by her husband James Whipp. The burial took place in non-consecrated ground for which James had to pay a penalty, but he gave the field to the Quakers as a burial ground and was himself buried there in 1675. The field served as the Quaker burial ground for the whole of the

“

**George Fox believed in the spiritual equality of women and encouraged them to participate in the movement. Women travelled as preachers and prophetesses and suffered the same punishments as the men.**

”

Ribble Valley until 1883. I found the names of the people in the Sawley Quaker records. So far, I have counted 83. They came from right across the Ribble Valley, the only two other Quaker burial grounds in the vicinity being at Newton and Marsden. The last burial was that of 'Old Billy Bulcock.' It was remembered by my grandfather Robert Whipp Watson, who was only three at the time, as being 'a very dark day.'

In 'Witches, Quakers and Nonconformists,' I looked in depth into the historical background (Brigg, 1961 and 1989) and local conditions which led to the trial of the Pendle Witches and to the fervour of the group of early Twiston Quakers, just one generation later. Mary Bulcock's father was Jenkin Bulcock from Foot House Gate, near Black Moss, where some of the Pendle witches are supposed to have dwelt. In his will of 1664, he leaves the sum of £30 to his daughter Mary, who had married the Quaker James Whipp from Padiham in 1657 and moved with him to live as a Quaker in Twiston. Jenkin left £6 13s 4d to his son William, also a Quaker, who moved to Twiston and was married to Elizabeth Hargreaves from Middop. My mother Marjorie Watson was descended via her mother Sara Bulcock and via her father Robert Whipp Watson to both these Quaker couples.

While researching the Quakers, I came across interesting facts, such as George Fox's belief

in witchcraft. Fox had founded Quakerism after a walk to the top of Pendle Hill in 1652. In his journal he wrote, 'as I was going to a meeting, I saw some women in a field, and I discerned them to be witches.' (Trevett, 1995) I wondered what had led him to such a conclusion. I uncovered the life of a prominent local Quaker ancestor, Elizabeth Bulcock (1635 -1701). After James Whipp died in 1675, Elizabeth took over the running of the Twiston Women's meeting. I found her tithe testimony, written in 1678, in the Sawley women's minutes:

'Friends I pay no tithe, nor nothing of ye nature, but they come and take ye corne off ye fields, without any consent of mine. And here I give Testimony yt I am clear concerning those things. And I hope I shall stand a living witness for the Lord whilst I have a day to live.'

In 1682, Elizabeth was arrested for holding a conventicle in her house, along with thirteen others from the region. She was fined £20 for this and had goods taken from her. This did not deter her and next day she went to a meeting in Clitheroe, five miles away. She lived beyond the Act of Toleration in 1689, when statues against the holding of meetings were repealed and died at the age of 66 in 1701. George Fox believed in the spiritual equality of women and encouraged them to participate in the movement. Women travelled as preachers and prophetesses and suffered the same punishments as the men, sometimes ending up in Lancaster gaol, just like the so-called witches had done.

The nineteenth century religious revival brought different nonconformist churches and chapels to the area, to serve the burgeoning population resulting from the industrial revolution. There were Methodist, Primitive Methodist and Congregationalist chapels. My great-grandfather Robert Watson and his sister Ann Maria Dugdale were staunch members of the Congregational chapel at Martin Top, where he served as the deacon and she as the treasurer. The tradition continued with my grandfather, Robert Whipp Watson who was the organist, and his wife Sara who was the Sunday school superintendent. My mother and her four sisters





The Bulcock Memorial, Clough Head, c. 1900,  
Red Rose Collections (ECL20140513006)

walked the one-and-three quarter miles and back to chapel on a Sunday, sometimes twice in one day.

After my first book was published, I was contacted by a woman from Utah about her Mormon ancestor, Margaret Yates, whose mother Margaret Whipp had been born at Hill Foot. As a teenager, Margaret Yates was baptised into the Mormon church by Heber Kimball on his visit to Downham and Chatburn in 1837. She went to live in Salt Lake City, Utah and, at the age of 24, became the first wife of a prominent Mormon, Philo Tayle

r Farmsworth. He was a farmer and stock raiser in charge of a team, which had crossed the Great Plains. Mormons still have a strong connection to Downham and often visit.

There was one mystery I had always wanted to solve. It concerned the isolated Bulcock memorial at Clough Head. This was a local landmark, often visited by Ramblers and the like, which had been written about in the local paper. Thomas Bulcock erected the monument in memory of his son

Thomas Peel Bulcock. Legend had it that Thomas wasn't allowed to bury his son in the graveyard at Downham Church, because he didn't reside in the parish. I discovered that Thomas was a prominent man, a millowner and one-time mayor of Clitheroe, who lived in Pendleton. Disgruntled about not being able to bury his son Thomas Peel Bulcock alongside his wife Ann Peel Bulcock in Downham, he buried him in Whalley Churchyard and erected this monument on the other side of the clough, just outside the parish of Downham. The inscriptions on the monument were quotations from the Bible, referring to people looking for places to bury their dead. Thomas had put a plaque on a wall enclosure in a field at Pendleton. Via an online contact, I discovered that he too was descended from the early Twiston Quakers.

Quakerism only lasted one generation in our family, but for hundreds of years, descendants of those early Whipp/ Bulcock Quaker families continued to live in Twiston. Some reverted to the Anglican faith, as testified by the hundreds of names on the parish registers. Others turned to the nonconformist chapels. By the time my generation reached school age, there were local buses in operation, so it was convenient to take the school bus to St Leonards Primary School in Downham and to secondary schools in Clitheroe. My sisters and I joined the church choir in our teens and cycled to church and back every Sunday.

These days I walk to the spots I knew as a child. My walks often take me to the graves of my ancestors, in the Quaker cemetery at Twiston, in St Leonard's Churchyard in Downham and in the Congregational chapel at Martin Top. Although I don't share their faith, I have gained a new admiration and respect for the struggles they went through and understand more about where my own ideas and beliefs have come from. ■

Author's Note: I'd like to mention these secondary sources that I found useful:

The Forest of Pendle in the 17th Century, Brigg M, 1961, Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire

The Early History of the Forest of Pendle, Brigg M, 1989, Pendle Heritage Centre

The Lancashire Witch-craze, Lumby J, 1995, Carnegie Publishing

Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment, Morgan N, 1993, Ryburn Publishers

The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches, from a photocopy of the original in 1612, Potts T (2003), Carnegie Press

Women and Quakerism in the 17th Century, Trevett C, 1995, The Ebor Press

My books, 'Whipps, Watsons and Bulcocks: a Pendle family history, 1560-1960' and 'Witches, Quakers and Nonconformists' are available from No 10 Literature and Lifestyle, Castle Gate, Clitheroe, from the Pendle Heritage Centre at Barrowford, and from the Ice Cream shop in Downham or direct from me + package and postage at [jenniferpalmer7@btinternet.com](mailto:jenniferpalmer7@btinternet.com)

# BOOK REVIEW

**'LOVE, HATE, and the LAW in TUDOR ENGLAND, The Three Wives of Ralph Rishton', by Professor L R Poos (Oxford University Press, ISBN 978-0-19-286511-3)**

Last September, Professor Larry Poos, of the Catholic University of America, talked to The Friends of Lancashire Archives about the events surrounding the lives of Roger Rishton, his son, Ralph, Ralph's three purported wives and their connections. His book develops, and details, what he told us.

The 'goings-on' of the Tudor Rishtons, of Powthalghe and Dunkinhalgh, have been known to antiquarians, local historians and, latterly, to journalists, since the seventeenth century but never researched in the detail now evidenced.

By investigating the substantial verbal witness evidence, amounting to some 150,000 words, and other court documents, Professor Poos has been able to develop both the social and legal history of Ralph Rishton (circa 1522-1573), his father and his successors, while explaining the complexity of the various, and numerous, civil, criminal and especially ecclesiastical legal jurisdictions available to a Lancashire litigant in the 1500s.

There was a plentiful supply of causes to generate legal actions. Roger's quarrels included desecration of Church Kirk, shooting of Nicholas Richton with an arrow, an alleged near fatal assault on his person by Thomas Talbot's servants and a 'stand up, drag out' row in 1555, with Isabel Holden, a daughter of Sir Richard Hoghton, over removal of turf from Duckworth Moor and public statements of the sexual turpitude of both Isabel and Roger's wife, Ellen.

In 1531, Roger had Ralph, aged about 9, contracted in marriage to Ellen Towneley, aged

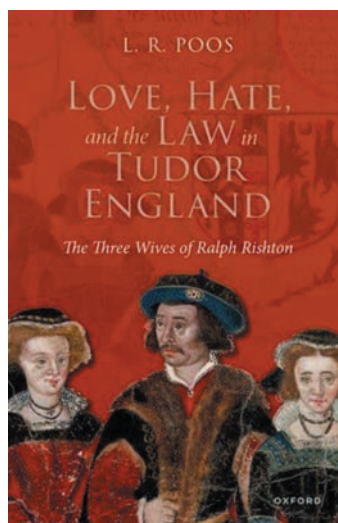
about 10. This betrothal, and the trusts created at the time, resulted in much subsequent litigation. Child marriage, its nature and consequences are considered in detail; Lancashire and Cheshire having a much higher incidence than southern jurisdictions.

In 1546, Elizabeth Parker was pregnant with Ralph Rishton's child and a wedding would put things right but what about that child marriage? Litigation regarding the validity and/or the annulment of the child marriage and the subsequent insanity of the bride, opens the door to the ecclesiastical judicial system - where a sum of money and a greyhound is alleged to have been enough to get the order!

Elizabeth and Ralph were married but later Ralph fell for Ann Stanley, Sir Thomas Townley's half-sister, and she became pregnant to Ralph. She was taken, before dawn, and married to John Rishton of Dunkinhalgh, a Ward in the care of Ralph! Thomas, Ann and Ralph then set about successfully separating young John from his inheritance. The deaths of Ellen and Elizabeth removed Ralph's first two wives and, once the marriage between Ann and John has been annulled, Ann and Ralph married.

All this muddle of relationships and motives, and the question of the legitimacy of Ralph's children ensured that the courts were busy for years after Ralph's death. In summary, the deep academic research revealed in this book is exemplary and most valuable to students of social and legal history, while the underlying story could merit a television series.

**Reviewed by Nigel Barker**





# NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Have you got a story to tell or some research to share? Would you like to see your local history story in print?

We are looking for submissions that relate to the history of Lancashire, its people, or places – from ancient history to the present day.

The publication will be sold widely throughout Lancashire and at library, museum and archive venues operated by Lancashire County Council, and published twice per year.

If you have an idea you'd like to discuss, please contact us at [archives@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@lancashire.gov.uk) and we'd be pleased to discuss your suggestion.

Contributions can be anything relating to the history of Lancashire.

Subjects could include:

- The history of your town or village, your home or street
- The story of a famous or notable person from Lancashire
- Stories of individuals or communities marginalised from previous documented history
- Histories of important events or occurrences in the County
- Reminiscence and personal stories about childhood, working lives or individual experiences
- Family history research
- The history of local businesses, clubs, societies or public organisations

## General Contributor Information

- Lancashire Archives will acknowledge all contributions received by authors.
- Articles must be submitted prior to the advertised copy deadline to be considered for publication.
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- Lancashire Archives may edit your submission or include additional images or information.
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- Articles should be between 500 and 1500 words, but longer articles can be submitted for consideration by prior agreement.
- Please include suitable images, if possible scanned at 300dpi as TIF files – please let us know if this is not possible so alternative images can be identified. Copyright and usage permissions should be provided for all images submitted.
- Please include your name and contact details with your submission. Contact information will be held in compliance with Lancashire County Council's Privacy Notice available at [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)

**The copy deadline for submissions for the next edition is FRIDAY 17 MARCH 2023**



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