

LANCASHIRE

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Charles Thornton and Grace Thornton his cousin c1905/6

THE LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY & HERALDRY SOCIETY

Formerly Rossendale Society for Genealogy & Heraldry
(Lancashire)

Inaugurated 1973. Registered Charity Number 513437

President: John Dalton

Vice-Presidents: Rodney Hampson, Terry Walsh, Tony Foster,
Margaret Purcell

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**Renewals are due on the 1st January. Cheques should be
crossed and made payable to Lancashire Family History &
Heraldry Society and sent to the Membership Secretary.**

MEETING VENUES

**BLACKBURN &
DARWEN**

**Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom
Possibly First Thursday of the month**

BURY

**Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom
Second Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm**

CHORLEY

**Primrose Gardens, Fleet St., Chorley PR7 2EE
Second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm**

FYLDE

**St. Martin's Church, Fleetwood Road South,
Carleton, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 7NL
First Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.**

HERALDRY GROUP Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom

HYNDBURN Accrington Sea Cadets, Harvey Street,
Oswaldtwistle, Accrington BB5 3LT
First Wednesday of the month.
Doors open 6.45pm ready for 7pm start.

IRISH ANCESTRY GROUP

2 Straits, Oswaldtwistle BB5 3LU
Saturday Workshops 1 pm – 4.30 pm
Every 2 months as per Branch Programme,
Website and Members Forum
(or Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom as advised)

LANCASTER & MORECAMBE Morecambe Heritage, Unit 29 Arndale Centre,
Morecambe LA4 5DH
First and third Friday 11 am–1 pm and
Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom
Third Thursday of the month at 6.45pm for
7pm start.

LONDON & SOUTH Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom
Five meetings a year on Saturdays at 2.00pm as
advised.

PENDLE & BURNLEY Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom
First Thursday of the month at 7pm

PRESTON Kingsfold Methodist Church, Padway,
Penwortham, Preston PR1 9EJ
Last Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm.

RIBBLE VALLEY Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom
4th Thursday of the month at 6.45pm for
7.00pm start as advised.

ROCHDALE St. Andrew's U.R. Church, Entwisle Road,
Rochdale OL16 2HZ
Last Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm.

ROSSENDALE Longholme Methodist Church (opp.Bus Station)
Bacup Road, Rawtenstall BB4 7NU
First Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm.

SOCIETY VIRTUAL GROUP MEETINGS by Zoom
Second Tuesday of the month 6.30pm for 7pm start
as advised.

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Front Cover Picture Cousins Charles and Grace Thornton

Rear Cover Picture The Historic County of Lancashire Map

Centre Page Pull Out For Membership Renewal

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BRANCH AND VIRTUAL MEETING PROGRAMMES

2025

- 5 Nov – Fylde – Cancelled – no meeting
- 5 Nov – Hyndburn – A tale of two Christmases – Sonia Marshall
- 5 Nov – Rossendale – 1860 Helmshore rail crash – Leo Turner
- 6 Nov – Pendle & Burnley Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom 7pm
- 7 Nov – Lancaster & Morecambe help at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4 5DH

- 11 Nov – Society Virtual Zoom 6.30 for 7pm – Impact of the American Civil War on Lancashire – Stephen Irwin
- 13 Nov – Chorley – Chorley Co-op – John Harrison
- 20 Nov – Lancaster & Morecambe Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom 6.45 for 7pm start
- 21 Nov – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am -1pm At Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29, Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4 5DH
- 21 Nov – Family History Friday Help Desk from 9.30am – 12 noon at Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane, Preston PR1 2RE
- 22 Nov – London & South Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom 2pm
- 26 Nov – Preston Jacobs Join and Quiz
- 26 Nov – Rochdale – Christmas Party
- 27 Nov – Ribble Valley Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom 7pm
- 3 Dec – Fylde – Jacobs Join and Quiz
- 3 Dec – Hyndburn –
- 3 Dec – Rossendale – Xmas Party with Potato Pie Supper
- 4 Dec – Chorley – Quiz & Nibbles – Quiz Master Bernard Cliffe

- 4 Dec – Pendle & Burnley Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom
7pm
- 5 Dec – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm
at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29
Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4
5DH
- 9 Dec – Society Virtual Zoom 6.30 for 7pm – To Be Advised
- 13 Dec – Irish Ancestry Group – No Meeting
- 18 Dec – Lancaster & Morecambe Virtual Branch – No meeting
- 19 Dec – Family History Friday Help Desk from 9.30 – 12
noon at Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane,
Preston PR1 2RE
- 24 Dec – Preston - No Meeting
- 31 Dec – Rochdale – No Meeting

2026

- 2 Jan – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm
at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29,
Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4
5DH
- 8 Jan – Chorley – Lancashire Lasses – Steve Williams
- 13 Jan – Society Virtual Meeting by Zoom 6.30 for 7pm – To
Be Advised
- 15 Jan – Lancaster & Morecambe Virtual Branch meeting by
zoom, 6.45pm for 7pm start
- 16 Jan – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am –
1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit
29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe
LA4 5DH
- 28 Jan – Preston A short AGM followed by a talk
- 28 Jan – Rochdale – AI (Artificial Intelligence) and Genealogy
– Rodney Brackstone
- 31 Jan – London & South Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom
2pm
- 6 Feb – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm
at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29
Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4
5DH

- 10 Feb – Society Virtual Meeting by Zoom 6.30 for 7pm – To Be Advised
- 12 Feb – Chorley – Sir Edward Watkins, Victoria’s Railway King & Manchester Benefactor – Geoff Scargill
- 14 Feb – Irish Ancestry Group – zoom by Carol Lee 1pm
- 19 Feb – Lancaster & Morecambe Virtual Branch meeting by zoom, 6.45pm for 7pm start
- 20 Feb – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4 5DH
- 25 Feb – Rochdale – Research Evening
- 4 Mar – Fylde – AGM (first meeting of 2026)
- 6 Mar – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Morecambe LA4 5DH
- 10 Mar – Society Virtual Meeting by Zoom 6.30 for 7pm – To Be Advised
- 12 Mar – Chorley – AGM and talk by member Anne Lowe
- 20 Mar – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4 5DH
- 25 Mar – Rochdale – AGM
- 10 Apr – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4 5DH
- 11 Apr – Irish Ancestry Group – 1pm at Oswaldtwistle for Advice and Research
- 14 Apr – Society Virtual Meeting by Zoom 6.30 for 7pm – The 1826 Lancashire Weavers Uprising – David Scott
- 24 Apr – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4 5DH

- 8 May – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am – 1pm
At Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29,
Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe LA4
5DH
- 22 May – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am –
1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit
29, Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe
LA4 5DH
- 30 May – London & South Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom
2pm
- 12 June – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am –
1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit
29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe
LA4 5DH
- 13 June – – Irish Ancestry Group – 1pm at Oswaldtwistle for
Advice and Research
- 26 June – Lancaster & Morecambe Help Desk from 11am –
1pm at Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit
29 Arndale Shopping Centre, Morecambe
LA4 5DH
- 8 Aug - – Irish Ancestry Group – 1pm at Oswaldtwistle for
Advice and Research
- 5 Sept - London & South Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom
2pm
- 10 Oct - – Irish Ancestry Group – Zoom at 1pm speaker to be
advised.
- 5 Nov - London & South Virtual Branch Meeting by Zoom 2pm
- 12 Dec - – Irish Ancestry Group – No meeting.

SOCIETY VIRTUAL BRANCH TALKS BY ZOOM

Contact: Marian Crossley

e-mail: mariancrossley74@gmail.com

**or societytalks@lfhhs.org for more information or check
our website.**

**Hopefully you will be able to join us on the 2nd Tuesday
of each month at 6.30pm for 7pm start sometime.**

MEMBERS' ARTICLES

TRACING ILLEGITIMATE ANCESTORS

by Anna Watson

Following an extremely interesting and informative talk by Anna to the Preston branch, she was happy for her handouts to be printed in our journal.

ILLEGITIMACY

RELEVANT STATUTES

8 Elizabeth Ch 3 1576

Justices of the Peace shall order the punishment of the Mother and reputed Father of a bastard

This is the Act of Parliament that starts it all off. The concern was that mothers with illegitimate children became a burden on the parish the child was born in. It was seen as an attempt by the child's parents to defraud the existing poor and indigent of the parish and was also immoral.

The law took this very seriously: both parents should be punished and if they refused to comply with the law, the mother could be sent to the poor house and the father to jail - so penalties were severe.

7 Jas 1 Ch 4 1609

'Lewd' women who had illegitimate children were to be committed to the House of Correction for a year and if they got pregnant again while unmarried were to be re-committed and not released until they had obtained sureties that they wouldn't re-offend.

Act of Settlement 1662 (Poor Relief Act)

This dealt with putative fathers and 'lewd' mothers who ran away and left their illegitimate children as a burden on the parish. If the parents left property behind them, it was to be sold to pay for the child's support. The 1662 Act did not define settlement – the basic principles were already established and illegitimate children were granted settlement in the parish they were born.

6 Geo 2 Ch 31 1733

From 1733 pregnant women were to identify the father under oath. Failure to identify the father could lead to imprisonment and midwives could put pressure on the woman to identify the father during childbirth. The reputed father would also be imprisoned unless he could provide sureties. Many clergy would not baptise a child unless the father was identified.

33 Geo III Ch 54 1793

This is the Friendly Society Act under which illegitimate children no longer took their place of birth as their settlement but were to take their mother's place of settlement

33 Geo III Ch 101 1795

This Act was to prevent the removal of poor persons unless they actually became chargeable on the parish. However it excluded unmarried mothers and repeated that the child was to take the mother's settlement

49 Geo 3 Ch 68 1809

This Act was concerned with the inadequacies of the 1576 Act, not surprising perhaps after 230 years! This new Act made the reputed father responsible for the expenses incurred at the birth of the child, payment of costs involved if the parish has to look for the reputed father and also the cost of the filiation order. Also when the woman indicated who the father was, a warrant was to be issued for his immediate apprehension and he was to be brought before the Justices. He could then be committed to jail unless he provided security to indemnify the parish against the costs of maintaining the child or enter in to

a Recognizance with sureties to appear at the next Sessions. If the mother and father subsequently refused to pay having been ordered to do so, then they went to jail for 3 months hard labour.

Bastardy was more than just frowned upon – it was a civil and moral offence and could be punished in the church and civil courts. The mother and reputed father could find themselves, imprisoned, whipped, fined, and excommunicated.

It was a very serious issue causing overseers of the poor, constables and churchwardens a considerable headache.

Single women, once they realised they were pregnant, often absconded to a parish where they weren't known. Once discovered churchwardens of the parish would try to have the mother returned to the parish she had come from but that parish would not necessarily have her back.

Fathers could abscond and if the constable was unable to locate them, the constable could be fined to help pay for the baby's upkeep. Mothers might also go secretly to a friend's house to give birth and try to keep the baby hidden. Mothers who gave birth to a still-born child might also try to hide the baby.

The parents would be encouraged to marry.

In October 1833, Nicholas Green of Preston was summoned as the reputed father of the illegitimate child of Martha Ross of Preston.

A search of Preston St John's marriages for the period found that Nicholas and Martha were married on 29 Mar 1834. However I can't find a baptism for their child. One thing that becomes abundantly clear is that a great deal of time and money was spent pursuing the 'guilty' parties and punishing them. Bringing a child into the world without adequate provision for its care was an anti-social act in a parochial society with very limited resources upon which to call. It would have

made more sense to just maintain the child as it would have been a cheaper option!.

Documents

Recognizance for reputed father to appear

LANCASHIRE? } **We it remembered,** That on the fourth Day of
to wit. September in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and
thirty three Richard James of Lancaster in the County of Lancaster
James and Eliza James in the said County
James personally came before me Edward James Esquire one of his Majesty's Justices of the peace for the said County and acknow-
ledged themselves to owe to our Sovereign Lord the King the sum of Twenty Pounds
each of good and lawful Money of Great Britain, to be made and levied of their
Goods and Chattels Lands and Tenements respectively to the use of our said Lord
the King his Heirs and Successors if the said Richard James
shall make default in the Condition hereunder written.

Whereas Eliza James of Lancaster
in the County of Lancaster aforesaid Single Woman
hath in and by her voluntary examination taken in writing and upon Oath before me
Edward James Esquire one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said County of Lan-
caster declareth that she is with Child and that the said Child is likely to be Born a
Bastard and to be chargeable to the said Richard James and that the above
bounden Richard James is the Father of the said Child. **Now the con-**
dition of this Recognizance is such, that if the above bounden Richard James
do and shall appear at the next General Quarter Sessions of the peace to be holden for
the said County and shall abide and perform such Order or Orders as shall be made
in pursuance of an Act passed in the eighteenth Year of the Reign of her late Majesty
Queen Elizabeth concerning Bastards begotten and born out of lawful Matrimony
unless one of the Justices of our said Lord the King assigned to keep the peace within
the said County of Lancaster shall have certified in writing under his hand to such
General Quarter Sessions of the Peace that it had been proved before him upon the oath
of one credible Witness that such Single Woman had not been then delivered or had
been delivered within one month only previous to the day on which such General Quar-
ter Sessions of the Peace shall be holden or unless two Justices of the Peace of the
said County shall have certified in writing under their hands to the next or where such
Woman shall not have been delivered as aforesaid then to the immediate subsequent
General Quarter Sessions of the Peace that an Order of Filiation had been already made
on the said Richard James or that such Order was not requisite
to be made on account of the death of the Child born a Bastard or for other like suffi-
cient reason. **Then** this Recognizance to be void, otherwise to remain in full force.

Acknowledged before me,

Edward James

This 1833 recognizance is for the reputed father Richard Smeddles of Ulverston, labourer, to appear at the next Sessions unless Bella Brockbank of Subberthwaite, singlewoman has not been delivered or is within a month of having delivered; in which case he is to appear at the subsequent sessions.

It also says that Bella has been examined under oath and she says Richard is the father.

The purpose of this document is to secure Richard's appearance in court as the reputed father.

There are conditions as to when that will be :
if Bella hasn't given birth, there's no point in him coming back to court and if it's within a month of the delivery then Bella or her baby might not be well enough to come to court.

Infant mortality rates were high so the baby could die and then there would be no reason for Thomas to come back to court.

All being well Richard would be expected at the first available Sessions when the child was one month old.

Deposition

Here Isaac Wiseman deposes that he knows Mary Riley and that he believes Thomas Sharp to be the father. He also states that Mary has not yet given birth.

LANCASHIRE }
to wit.

the County of Lancaster to wit
Isaac Wooman of *Ulverston* makes oath that he
acquainted with *Mary Riley of Ulverston* *aforsaid*

in the said County Single woman
who he this Deponent is given to understand has lately sworn before one of his
Majesty's Justices of the Peace in the County of Lancaster that she is with Child
and that the said Child is likely to be born a Bastard and to be chargeable to the
parish of Ulverston *aforsaid* in the said County of Lancaster
and that *the Thomas Sharp of Ulverston* in the
said County of Lancaster did get her with
Child of the said Bastard Child; that (as this Deponent verily believes) the *aforsaid*
Mary Riley has not yet been delivered of the said Child.

SWORN before me one of his Majesty's
Justices of the Peace in and for the said
County of Lancaster this *fifth*
Day of *January* 182 *6*

Isaac Wooman

R. B. Radcliffe

TO HIS MAJESTY'S JUSTICES of the Peace for the County
of Lancaster in Quarter Sessions assembled.

PURSUANT to the act in that Case made and provided and in Consequence of the
above Information made on oath before me the undersigned one of his Majesty's
Justices of the Peace in and for the said County of Lancaster this Day.— I do hereby
unto you certify the same to the end that the Recognizance entered into with Sureties
by the above mentioned Putative Father may be respited to the next general Quarter
Sessions.

GIVEN under my Hand at *Ulverston* in the County of Lancaster the
fifth Day of *January* in the Year of our Lord one
Thousand eight Hundred and twenty *six*.

R. B. Radcliffe

Recognizance for the reputed father to abide

St. Wm.
Lancashire, } **BE** it remembered, That on the *Twenty first* Day of *January* in the *Ninth.*
 to wit. } Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Fourth, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, King,
 Defender of the Faith, &c. *James Meadowcroft of Dawes Street, in Great Bolton in the*
said County Cotton Spinner, Thomas Pennington of Deansgate in Great Bolton
aforsaid Cotton Spinner and Benjamin Rigby of Great Moor Street in Great
Bolton aforsaid Weaver

severally personally came before me one of the Justices of the said Lord the King, assigned to keep the
 Peace within the said County, and acknowledged severally to owe to our said Lord the King, *the said James*
Meadowcroft the sum of Forty pounds and the said Thomas Pennington
and Benjamin Rigby the sum of Twenty pounds a piece

of good and lawful Money of Great Britain, to be made and levied of *their* Goods and Chattels, Lands
 and Tenements, respectively for the use of our said Lord the King, his Heirs and Successors, if *the said*
James Meadowcroft shall make default in the Condition hereunder-written

THE Condition of this Recognizance is such, that if the above *saide James Meadowcroft*
 personally appear at the next General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, *to be*
 holden by adjournment at *the Parish of Manchester*, in and for the said County of Lancaster, and then and there *to answer such*
~~Bill or Bills of Indictment as shall be preferred against him~~ *him* *aliter and perform such order or orders*
~~for an Assault upon~~ *that shall be made touching his having begotten Betty Watson of*
the parish of Halton in the said County Singlewoman of a Child or Children
likely to be born a Bastard or Bastards and to become chargeable to the
said Parish of Halton and in the mean Time
 do keep the peace and be of good Behaviour to our said Lord the King, and all his liege Subjects, especially towards the said
Betty Watson and not to depart the Court without leave,
 then the Recognizance to be void, or else remain in full force.

Acknowledged before me

Wm. C. B. Esq.

1828

To answer for an Assault, &c.

W. C. B. Esq.

3

This recognizance is for James Meadowcroft of Dawes Street, Great Bolton, reputed father of the bastard child of Betty Watson of Halton, to abide any orders issued in the court

Certificate

County of Lancaster,
20 W12.

To the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, to be
holden at Lancaster, in and for the said County.

WE *Richard Atkinson and John Dodson*
Esquires

two of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in and for the said
County, do hereby certify, that an Order of Filiation has this
Day been made on *Henry Godber of Walton in le Dale*

in the said County *Salter Green* for the
Maintenance and Support of a *male* Bastard Child
born upon the Body of *Barbara Whithams*
of *Carnforth*

Barbara Smith in the said County, Singlewoman, on the
Day of *January* of which Child
we have adjudged him the said *Henry Godber*
to be the putative Father.

Given under our Hands, this *twenty eighth* Day of
March in the Year of our Lord 18*29*.

Rich^d Atkinson
John Dodson

This is a certificate that a Filiation and Maintenance Order has been issued to Henry Godber[?h] of Walton in le Dale, calico printer for the child of Barbara Whithams of Carnforth, singlewoman.

The order was issued by the two local Justices, Richard Atkinson and John Dodson and they inform the Quarter Sessions Court that they have done this. There isn't a copy of the order in the Petitions series and it may be that it would be given to the Overseers of the Poor/Churchwardens and has not survived.

Order

19
 Lancashire to wit.
 Whereas it appears unto us Richard Clayton
 and Robert Green Esquires two of his Majestys Justices of
 the peace in and for the said County that Ann Fishwick of
 Billinge in the said County widow is a Lewd woman
 and hath been Deliver'd of a Bastard Child in Billinge
 aforesaid which is now living and chargeable to Billinge
 aforesaid. These are therefore in his Majestys Name so
 require and command you the Constables of Billinge
 aforesaid to convey the said Ann Fishwick to the House of
 Correction at Preston in and for the said County and
 the said Keeper of the said House of Correction as he
 required and commanded to receive the said Ann Fishwick
 into your Custody in the said House of Correction
 to punish and set her on work during the Term of
 one whole year (if necessary) our Hundreded Shaler
 this done under the day of January in the year of our
 Lord 1774 -

To the Constable of Billinge
 aforesaid and also to the
 Keeper of the said House of
 Correction and each and every
 of them -

R. Clayton

Robert Green

COUNTY OF LANCASTER
 PR
 27487

Order in 1774 for Billinge Constables to take Ann Fishwick of Billinge widow to the House of Correction at Preston as she is a lewd woman and has had a bastard child: Ann to serve a year. I looked at the Calendars of Prisoners for 1774 but could not find Ann in them. I did discover the burial of an Ann Fishwick (*sic*), a widow, at Upholland St Thomas on 24 Dec 1775 and wondered if she'd been ill and so avoided prison.

Illegitimacy Booklist

Martin Ingram Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640 (Cambridge University Press, 1994)

Eve McLaughlin Illegitimacy (Federation of Family History Socs, 1989)

Ruth Paley My Ancestor was a Bastard (Society of Genealogists, 2004)

Lawrence Stone The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800 (Penguin, various editions)

James Tait "Lancashire Quarter Sessions Records" in Chetham Society, 1917, volume 77 (see page 95 under Dorothy Sympson and page 102-103 under Agnes Deny and other entries indexed under Bastardy)

Poor Laws or The Laws and Statutes relating to the Settling, Maintenance and Employment of the Poor 1724

Samantha Williams, Thomas Nutt and Alys Levene eds.

Illegitimacy in Britain, 1700-1920 (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

Helen Matthews The Legitimacy of Bastards: The Place of Illegitimate Children in Later Medieval England (Pen and Sword History, 2019)

Legitimacy and Illegitimacy in Nineteenth-Century Law, Literature and History Editors: Finn, M., Lobban, M., Taylor, J.B., Bourne Taylor, J. (Eds.) (Palgrave Macmillan 2010)

Ginger S Frost Illegitimacy in English law and society, 1860-1930 (Manchester University Press, 2016)

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/poverty-poor-laws/#5-poor-law-union-correspondence>

HENRY WATSON AND ANN THORNTON

By Rex Watson

e-mail: rexwatson@ntlworld.com

(Your view wanted!)

It is quite common in genealogy to have a situation where, after seemingly exhausting the sources, the 'jury is still out'. In other words, the outcome of a problem remains unresolved, though one may well consider a particular outcome best fits the data available.

Well, hopefully, ten heads say are better than one! In this spirit, I invite readers to consider the following. I know some of the characters quite well, but I will keep these to myself, and try to be objective in my presentation of evidence. At the end then, I invite you to give your view, by e-mail. If the response is reasonably substantial, I would hope to summarise these in a future issue of the journal. I should say that I am fairly experienced in family history, and not prone I hope to making rash assertions!

Henry Watson : still a favourite ancestor

In 1989 I published in this very journal an article on my 3 x gt grandfather in the male line, Henry WATSON. I had been able to amass quite a lot of detail, for a working man of modest means, and have discovered a few further pieces of information since.

Born in 1796 in Reedley near Burnley, Henry lived to the very good age of 81, dying in Burnley in 1877, and was buried at

Haggate Baptist. I will not of course repeat here the detailed account in my 1989 piece. Suffice to say that he married three times, with five children from the first marriage, and moved in turn to the area in and near Briercliffe, then to Burnley town. He was initially a hand loom weaver, but on moving to the town he worked as a beamer and twister.

The first marriage, to Betty CROSSLEY, was at Burnley in 1817. However in 1813 he fathered a child James, recorded at Haggate, with Betty CROASDALE. The two Bettys here may be one and the same, with one error in the surname. In any case, wife Betty died in 1846.

The second marriage was in 1849 at Holy Trinity in Burnley, or, rather at this time, Habergham Eaves, to Susey CATLOW, spinster. Susey died just two years later. The third marriage was in 1853 to Ann THORNTON, spinster, at Burnley Register Office. Ann died in 1865, making Henry a widower for the third time. There were no children from either of these two marriages.

The story gets more interesting when we look at Ann (with variations such as Nanny, Nancy) more closely.

First though a note about baptism registers, or birth ones for a Baptist church. These of course proceed chronologically generally, but now and then we will find two or more children in a family (quite apart from twins etc) recorded together. This might simply be because the family had just 'joined' the church, or at least were 'catching up'. This aspect will only be seen easily in the original register or a full direct transcript, not via indexing such as on Ancestry, etc.

Now in our case, the Haggate birth register during (generally) late 1834, contains four of the children of Henry and Betty WATSON, born, consecutively, from 1817 to 1826, and then, after two entries for another family, the birth of their fifth child John (1834); the place of residence, for the latest four of these five, is Lassey Cail, which is part of or close to Cop Row above

Lane Head. Also, and this is key, the two entries before the WATSON block of four are for Thomas (1833) and Nanney (1835) THORNTON, mother Nanney of Lane Head, but no father noted.

Various census and registration details make it clear that the mother Nanney is Ann who was Henry WATSON's third wife. The suspicion then is that the father of the two THORNTON children was Henry, even though his son John by his wife Betty was born around the same time as these two. Of course we have to accept that Nanney/Ann may not have known who the father of her two children was : indeed there could have been two different fathers.

In situations where a father is not recorded, there are generally two or three possible ways of finding out. One is to seek any bastardy order in the Quarter Sessions records : this produced nothing in this case.

A second way is to seek any marriage (from 1837) of the illegitimate child, say fifteen to forty years after the birth, in the hope that on the certificate the father's name will be given; also witnesses' names might help. This is explored below for our case.

Thirdly, the informant's name on the eventual death certificate (from 1837 again) might help. Again this is explored below.

[Incidentally, Scottish death certificates do give parents' names, but no such luck south of the border.]

Miscellaneous local newspaper information might also possibly help; nothing found in this case.

A number of marriage and death certificates have been looked at. The death ones, or at least partial scans, can nowadays be obtained from the General Register Office for a much smaller fee than that for a full certificate. And I only needed one new marriage certificate.

Nancy THORNTON and her children Thomas and Nancy are found in the 1841 and 1851 Censuses, neither child married in 1851. By 1851 they had moved into Burnley.

Thomas died in 1856, apparently unmarried, and the informant was either his mother or sister.

In 1857 his sister married Hartley WALTON, but infuriatingly no father's name is given for her! However, the witnesses' names are of considerable interest : they were Henry and Margaret WATSON. These almost certainly would be a married couple, Henry being the son of our original Henry. And looking back to the marriage of Henry and Margaret (BEANLAND), a witness was Thomas THORNTON.

If the hypothesis that the older Henry was the father of Nancy is correct, Nancy and the younger Henry would be half-siblings.

[Incidentally, Nancy WALTON lived to 1919, and is buried with her husband Hartley in Burnley Cemetery.]

One further source of help might be DNA matching. However exploration of my Ancestry matches has not led anywhere.

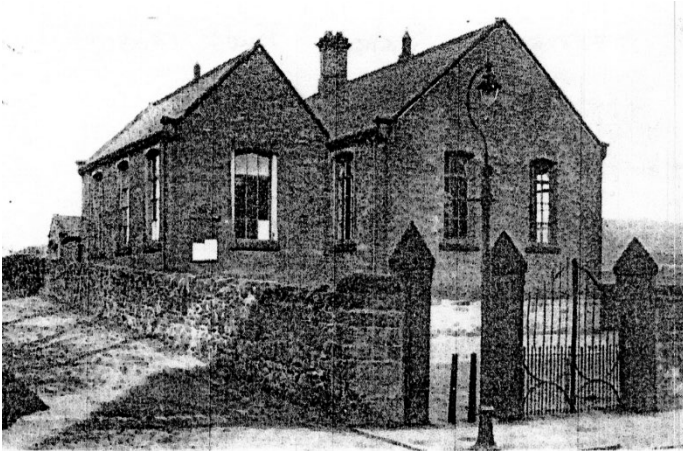
So there we have it. Do you think it plausible (likely ?) that Henry (born 1796) was father to the two THORNTON children born to Nanney in the 1830s?

e-mail: rexwatson@ntlworld.com

A CHERRY TREE MYSTERY SOLVED

By David Burgess

This started out as a simple family history mystery going back 75 years, but it grew into research into the place. I happened on this picture on my computer recently when searching for something else. It is an early picture of the school.



Cherry Tree National School

www.cottontown.org

It is Cherry Tree National School, which I attended from the age of 3 to 8. It reminded me when I was about 6 or 7 that the lady who lived at the adjacent house, 2 Feilden Terrace, used to remonstrate over the wall with children in the playground. I can't recall why: maybe the ball was kicked into her back garden too many times. The children usually responded with jeers. At the time I was told by my grandmother that we were related, although I didn't know how.

I grew up in Cherry Tree, a village some two miles west from the centre of Blackburn, in the parish of Livesey.

In the early 19th century, the parish of Livesey consisted of isolated farms and small hamlets. There was no village called Livesey. Cherry Tree was named after Cherry Tree House, originally a farm two miles from Blackburn on the old road to

Preston, built at the turn of the 19th century. It was close to the Leeds Liverpool Canal, and the railway from Blackburn to Preston which arrived in 1847. Two cotton mills used the canal in preference to the railway. Cherry Tree Mill started as a cotton weaving shed in 1845 and a spinning block was added in 1850. Bank Mill was built in 1865 for cotton spinning and a weaving shed was added in the early 1900s. Housing was provided for the workers and management in the village. Both mills were bought by John Dugdale in 1877 and he built the terraced houses in Feilden Terrace.

The Cherry Tree Machine Company was founded in 1882 adjacent to the canal and was one of the largest established engineering companies in the north of England. The company specialised in the manufacture of industrial laundry machines for countries around the world. They were a principal manufacturer of laundry mangles.

On rediscovering the picture, I decided to see if I could find the relationship with its next-door neighbour of 2 Feilden Terrace.

I was at the school up to 1950, so not that long after the 1939 Register. I searched the 1939 register using address, no name and tried several locations, e.g. Livesey, Cherry Tree, until I found this:

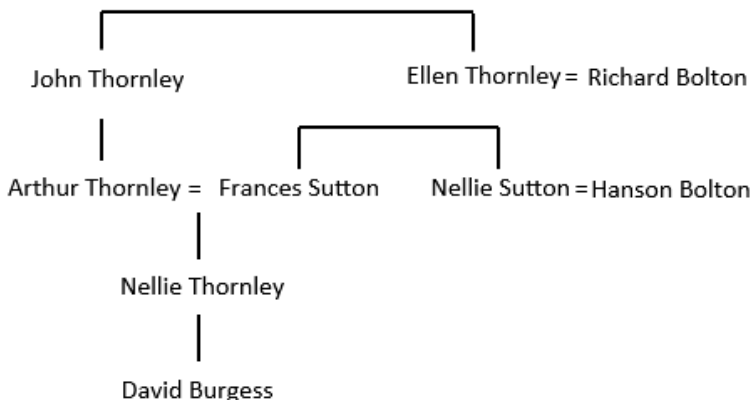
2 Feilden Terrace, Cherry Tree	1	Bolton	Harry	M	29 Nov	1881	M	Secretary for a Firm of Road Transport
	2	Bolton	Mary Ellen	F	26 Dec	1886	M	Unpaid Domestic Duties
This record is officially closed.								
This record is officially closed.								

It didn't help that the name of the Terrace was spelt incorrectly on the return. The correct spelling of Feilden has "e" before "i".

Feilden Terrace appears in my family; my grandmother Frances Sutton was born at 38 Feilden Terrace in 1888.

The surname Bolton rang a bell. I have Boltons in my extended family tree in this area.

Richard Bolton was the husband of my great grandfather's sister; and Hanson Bolton was the husband of my grandmother's sister. The two Boltons were not related.



Census England 1901

Address: 20 Feilden Terrace

Place: Cherry Tree

Name	Relation	Cond'	Sex	Age	Occupation	Employ Status	Where Born
Thomas Bolton	Head	M	M	42	Farmer	Own a/c	Livesey
Jane Ann <i>do</i>	Wife	M	F	45			Blackburn
William Henry <i>do</i>	son	S	M	21	Farmer's son	worker	Livesey
Harry Bolton	son	S	M	19	Cotton Clothlooker	worker	Livesey
Hanson H <i>do</i>	son		M	13			Livesey
Olga <i>do</i>	dau.		F	11			Livesey
James <i>do</i>	son		M	4			Livesey

In the 1901 census Harry Bolton is at 20 Feilden Terrace, Cherry Tree, along with his brother, Hanson H Bolton. My grandmother's sister's husband was called Hanson Haythornthaite Bolton. Haythornthwaite is an unusual surname, concentrated in Lancashire, and Yorkshire west of the Pennines, Skipton and Settle.

What struck me was the name of his sister, Olga. My grandmother's sister had named their daughter, Olga.

So, mystery solved. The lady who lived next to the school was Mary Ellen Bolton, the wife of the brother of my grandmother's sister's husband.

Having done the family history bit, it left me wondering, why the Feilden in Feilden Terrace had the "e" before "i". And where did the name come from? That was the next mystery.

There is a Feilden's Arms in the next village of Feniscowles, which my great grandfather, John Thornley, frequented when he was the village blacksmith.

Henry and William Feilden, two brothers, held the manor of Livesey from 1806, when they bought the Livesey Old Hall from descendants of the Livesey family. It has been demolished and is now part of a housing estate. But when I was a boy, it was a short distance from where we lived and was then a farm from where we bought our milk.

The hall was split into two with the two brothers holding a half each. The left half was inhabited and the right half abandoned. William Feilden of Feniscowles was created a baronet in 1846; he occupied the left-hand side. He was one of two first MPs for Blackburn, an industrialist, a cotton manufacturer and a friend of Richard Arkwright, as well as a local philanthropist.

So, some local history discovered.

LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY & HERALDRY SOCIETY

www.lfhhs.org.uk

(Registered Charity number 513437)

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If you have any queries about your membership, or about Gift Aid, please contact: -

**Sue Foster, Membership Secretary, 18 Glencross Place,
Blackpool, FY4 5AD**

email: membership@lfhhs.org.uk Tel: 01253 694783

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LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY & HERALDRY SOCIETY

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Forename(s)

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We mention this in order to defray increasing bank charges and this enables us to have maintained subscriptions at these reasonable levels since 2015. Your continued support and donation are very important to the Society. *THANK YOU*

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Owing to new banking security regulations we regret that we cannot now accept direct credit card details for membership subscription payments.

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Registered Charity No. 513437

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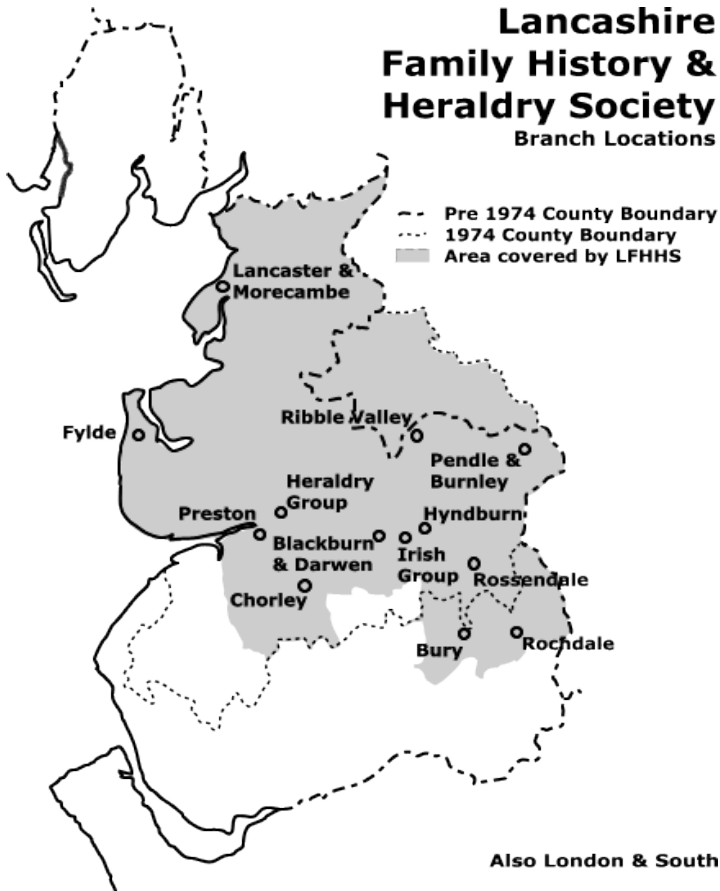
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Please Note: The membership data are held on computer. The data will only be used for the circulation of Society literature and for membership checking purposes. No data from the computerised records will be disclosed to any other parties by the Society unless required to do so by law.

Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society

Branch Locations



An appeal to members

Please consider helping the society by completing the Gift Aid section if you are a current UK taxpayer – (See Page 3 of this insert). Your donation is very important to the Society and enables us to maintain our subscription rates at these reasonable levels at a time of increasing costs.

The Society are looking for volunteers to help with transcribing data for future publication. If you would be interested in helping, please contact the webmaster - webmaster@lfhhs.org.uk

Thank you,

The Management and Executive committees

As for Cherry Tree School, there was an earlier connection. My grandfather, Arthur Thornley, and my grandmother Frances Sutton, were both baptised there in 1888. Why at a school? The records show they were baptised at St Francis Church, Feniscliffe, the local Anglican church for Cherry Tree. In 1888 St Francis church was operating from Cherry Tree School prior to the completion of the church in 1892. A copy of the baptism records also appears in the Register of Immanuel Church, Feniscowles.

The National Archives has the following record:

"A cottage in Granville Street, Cherry Tree, was used from 1863 as a Sunday School, and later as a day school. In 1865, part of the farmland belonging to Livesey Hall was acquired to build a permanent school, and this school opened later that year. Originally it was in the parish of Immanuel, Feniscowles, but when the conventional district of St Francis was formed in 1887, Cherry Tree School became St Francis' Church until the church itself was opened in 1892. The school was later associated with that church. The building was condemned as unsafe in 1964, and a new school, in Cherry Tree Lane, opened in 1966."

So, what is a Conventional District? It is a defined area placed under the care of a curate in charge (called the Minister of the Conventional District) with a district church council, by agreement between the incumbent(s) and bishop. They are not parishes but can have all the apparatus of a parish. They are often thought of as an experimental parish pending their creation as a proper parish in their own right.

I don't know why I remembered my grandmother's comment. But it has added to my understanding of a little bit of my family and local history. That one picture started all that research.

You will not find 2 Feilden Terrace now. Same building: it is now 436 Preston Old Road subsumed into Blackburn and has lost its Feilden connection.

References:

"History of The Cherry Tree and Feniscliffe Areas" by Mike Sumner – Cotton Town website.

The National Archives.

COUSINS CHARLES AND GRACE THORNTON

By Ron Chapman

I have a family history tale for you!

It concerns Grace Thornton (see front cover picture taken about 1905/6)

My granddad was Charles Thornton, and Grace was one of his cousins.

Grace was one of the main links that linked them both to their grandparents. I know of the tales concerning granddad (a story for another day) but all I was told about Grace was that she turned out to be a 'Camp Follower'! I needed to know more!

I previously had searched for her and only found her up to 1911. Her grandparents were John Thornton and Elizabeth Beatty. They had 10 children and the 8th one was Richard. He like all the rest (bar one) was born in Dublin. John the father was a career soldier and has risen to the rank of Quarter Master Sergeant Major but at the time of this tale had retired to Liverpool.

Richard eventually married a Hannah Grace Waters at St. Luke's Southport. They had two children, Marjory and Grace. Unfortunately, just one month after Grace's birth her mother died. This left Richard in a pickle. At the age of 27 Richard had two young children to look after. Marjory's mother's parents looked after Marjorie and Grace was to be looked after by Richard's parents, John and Elizabeth.

In 1906 Grace starts school at Granby Street Council School, Toxteth. The same school as my granddad Charles. In 1909 she moves on to St. Paul's Girls School, Toxteth. In 1911 when she is 8 years old she is living alone with her Grandmother at 33 Foxhill Street, Toxteth. (Her grandfather John had died in 1905) On 30 April 1921 grandma dies aged 81. She is still living with Grace but this time it is at 128 Briardale Road, Wavertree. This is just quarter of a mile from where my granddad Charles (in the photo) was living at the time. The 1921 census took place on 19 June and Grace is found living on her own at the same address, 18 years and 7 months old. She has never worked because she had been looking after grandma. Stuck at home with no job and no bills to pay. It was get a job or get a husband. Grace chose the second.

In autumn 1922 she marries Guy V. Hurrell, except that is not his real name. He is really Horace Winston Guy Hurrell. Also known as Winston Guy Hurrell or Vernon Hurrell or George Ellis. Grace has made a bad choice for a husband. Horace was born in Wimbledon and had only just been released from prison. He specialised in stealing cycles, motorcycles and cars, but with a little bit of house robbery and armed robbery as well.

Grace was soon pregnant but before the child could be born he was back in prison and indeed the child had died before he could be released. He must have cared for Grace to a degree because he had Grace's name tattooed on his right arm. When he came out she was soon pregnant again and again the next child was born and died in 1928 whilst he was in prison for an offence he committed in Middlesex.

Horace's criminal activities took place all over the country and he does not appear to have returned to Liverpool where Grace was living.

Understandably in 1929 after her second child died she went into lodgings with an Elizabeth Mackintosh at 26 Firbank Street, Liverpool but she did not stay.

For in 1930 in the Electoral Registers we find six couples living at one address. She, Grace Hurrell, and her partner Edward Hurrell were living at 133 Botanic Road, Liverpool. This Edward Hurrell in fact was Edward Riley. Edward adopted the name Hurrell for purely probity reasons. They were still at 133 Botanic Road in 1931 but in 1932 they were at 28 Dodge Street. Grace remained as Grace Hurrell but Edward had returned to his real name Riley. In the 1939 Registration both Edward and Grace are now both Riley's. The evidence that this Grace is the same as our Grace Thornton is that her date of birth is exactly the same, 10 November 1902.

I can find no marriage for Grace and Edward Riley (1928-1997) and I don't think that there ever was one.

In 1939 Edward was employed as a Furniture Packer and Grace as a Clothing Canvasser.

Edward died in 1964 in South Liverpool and Grace died in 1969 also in South Liverpool. They have no children.

So what of Horace Winston Guy Hurrell? After the mid 1930's he does not appear in court again. Either he has stopped his criminal activities or he has learnt not to be caught. I can find no evidence of a divorce but in 1948 Horace marries a Mabel F Parke in Willesden. They too have no children. Horace dies in 1987 in Brent.

Horace dies intestate but his estate is valued in 1991 at £70,000.

Articles required for the journal. Do you have an interesting tale to tell? Have you managed to break through your brick wall and are willing to share your experience? Your Editor will be pleased to accept articles no matter how large or small. Many thanks.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Abbreviations:

c.Bury = Bury area

e.20C = early 20th century

m.18C = mid 18th century

c.1650 = about 1650

e.1763 = earliest ancestral link

l.19C = late 19th century

N.B. The 19th Century ran from 1801 to 1900. Unless otherwise specified, all locality names are in the pre- 1974 County of Lancashire. All other references are to pre- 1974 Counties.

Ms. P. Archer (11555)

ARCHER	IRL	Antrim	1900-1940
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Mr. D. Yates (11545)

TOWNS	Great Britain
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Mr. H. Russell (11573)

9 Craven Mews, Skipton BD23 2AQ

Tel: 01756 228345

e-mail: russelltourguiding1122@yahoo.co.uk

BRITTON	LAN	Blackburn	1814+
HOWARD	CHS	Mottram-in-Longendale	1719+
HOWARD	CHS	Stalybridge, (Butcher)	1719+
HOWARD	YKS	Saddleworth	1719+
HOWARD	DBY	Glossop	1719+
MORRIS	CHS	Stalybridge	1850+
RUSSELL	LAN	Mottram-in-Longendale, Bolton (Calico printer)	1775+
RUSSELL	LAN	Blackburn	1775+
RUSSELL	LAN	Ashton-under-Lyne (Block printer)	1775+

RUSSELL	LAN	Rochdale (Stone Mason)	1775+
RUSSELL	CHS	Stalybridge	1775+
SCHOLES	LAN	Crumpsall, Prestwich	1732+

Mr. R. Turner (11576)

TURNER	LAN	Rawtenstall	1700-1970
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NOTES AND NEWS AND BOOK REVIEWS

Steve and Jennifer Benson run regular help sessions at **Tarleton Library**. Everyone welcome.

FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH, 10.00 am to 12.00

PRESTON BRANCH HELP DESK AT LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES

Jennifer Benson, Joan Clayton, Peter Bamford and Stewart McLaughlin run regular help sessions at Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane, Preston. Everyone welcome.

THIRD FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH,
09.30 am to 12.00pm

HYNDBURN BRANCH HELP DESK AT OSWALDTWISTLE LIBRARY

Muriel Smith and sometimes Eileen Bullock run regular help sessions at Oswaldtwistle Library. Everyone welcome.

FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH,
10.00 am TO 12.00 pm

Barry Dickinson holds regular bookable Family History one to one surgery sessions at Barrowford Library.

MOST MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS from 2pm

Please book on the LCC website or phone/call in to see the local librarian.

HELPING HANDS

E-mail: help@lfhhs.org.uk

Do you have a family history question or need a library/archive lookup then Helping Hands might be able to help.

**OUT OF COUNTY STRAYS
AND NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS**

Did you know that the Society still collect any Out of County Strays or Newspaper Cuttings or Stories?

If you have or find any, please forward to

LFHHS, 2 Straits, Oswaldtwistle BB5 3LU

Many members have ancestors who have strayed away from Lancashire and been lost to their families forever.

**SCANNED PDF COPIES OF ALL OUR OLD FICHE
NOW AVAILABLE ON WEBSITE BY EMAIL**

Our microfiche have now been scanned and are available through our website shop.

Orders are currently being sent out as an attachment to one or more emails, depending on the size of the order.

The prices are the same as the original microfiche, but obviously excluding postal charges.

In the near future it will also be available to purchase as an immediate download.

Look on the website for the shop section showing "Scanned images of microfiche" – this leads to 5 sections divided by alphabetic first letter of location - A-D, E-H, I-L, M-Q, R-Z. Click on <https://www.lfhhs.org/index.php?cPath=63>

EXHIBITIONS AND FAIRS

Society Coordinators – Steve and Jennifer Benson

If you would like to help and take part in any of the fairs please contact **Stephen Benson** (telephone 01772-422808 or e-mail Stephen.t.benson@btinternet.com)

BOB DOBSON, SECOND-HAND BOOK DEALER

Society member Bob Dobson has been dealing in second-hand Lancashire-interest books since 1968.

Due to his health Bob wants to 'sell up' the whole of his stock, which is mostly local history. He publishes a catalogue, but, due to a glitch on his computer, has been unable to delete some books which have been sold, making it not as up-to-date as he would wish.

His walking and mobility have also affected his strength and as a result, he is no longer attending fairs and conferences.

Another aspect to Bob's business is that he has had to vacate his warehouse and keep his stock at home. He wants to sell as much of his Lancashire stock as he can so that, in December, he will have room for his Cheshire-interest stock which is now kept in a neighbour's garage.

To aid matters, Bob is offering his stock at half the catalogue price and offers a further discount to those who will travel to see his stock. Not only that, he invites offers from buyers. He can be contacted by e-mail on landypublishing@yahoo.co.uk and by phone at his home near Blackpool on 01253 886103 or mobile on 07749838444. Please mention the society if you do contact him.

To 'keep his hand in' and if and when he has sold his stock, he intends to keep a lookout for any particular Lancashire titles that members want to acquire.

CHANGES TO LANCASHIRE LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

Lancashire County Council have advised that from 3 November 2025, there will be a slight adjustment to opening hours at some Lancashire libraries.

What's changing?

In some libraries, the late-night closing time will move from 7pm to 6pm.

The extra hour will be added to the weekday half-day closure, which will now mean that those libraries will remain open until 2pm.

These changes are being made to better align with customer usage patterns and staff availability.

Will my library be affected?

To check if your local library is included in these changes, please visit:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library/>

You can also follow us on social media:

Twitter@LancsLibraries or Facebook@lancslibraries

Thank you for your continued support of Lancashire Libraries.

MEMBER PAUL SUTCLIFFE, BOCHUM, GERMANY

e-mail: paulsutc1@aol.com

For members who have followed Paul's many articles in the journal regarding his research originally titled 'The Fall of the House of Chew : the Decline and Disappearance of a Medical Dynasty'.

Paul's unfinished paper is now called "Dr Chew's House for the Reception of Lunatics 1713 – 1801" has now been donated to the Lancashire Archives, for the information of those with an interest.

At 35 pages with footnotes it was probably too voluminous to publish in the society journal, and gaining the impression that most readers are more interested in more personal and current histories.

This document is relatively detailed for the above period, and now housed in Lancashire Archives.

NEW MAP OF THE HISTORIC COUNTY OF LANCASHIRE

By Friends of Real Lancashire

(see outer rear cover)

In April, Friends of Real Lancashire launched a new Ordnance Survey map of the Historic County of Lancashire. This is the first OS map of the County since the Friends produced its millennium map 25 years ago.

The maps are selling extremely well and we thought LFHHS members would be interested.

The County Palatine of Lancashire, also known as the Historical, Traditional, Ancient and Geographical County of Lancashire is distinct from the administrative county, created as recently as 1888 and which bears the same name.

At first, the administrative county area closely matched that of the traditional county, but it was drastically reduced in size in 1974 and again in 1998, whilst the Historic County and County Palatine remain unaltered.

The map has been produced by Weekend 365 who are licensed by Ordnance Survey. The map is A1 in size (594mm x 841mm) and the scale is 1:160,000.

The price is £8 plus postage (currently £3.99 UK only).

The map will be posted in a cardboard tube to prevent creasing.

Please visit our online shop **www.forl.co.uk**

We also sell flags, bunting, badges, tea towels, postcards, Lancashire Day greeting cards etc.

Order now for Lancashire Day – 27 November.

BRANCH NEWS

BLACKBURN & DARWEN Virtual Branch Meetings by ZOOM

All members are welcome.

Check the Members Forum and Website for further information

BURY
Virtual Branch Meetings by ZOOM

Usually Second Tuesday of the month at 7pm

Check Members Forum and Website for more information.

All members are welcome.

CHORLEY

Secretary: Jayne Dixon
Branch e-mail: chorley@lfhhs.org.uk

We have continued to have very good attendances at our branch meetings, with the talks being well received, and we are looking forward to maintaining the same in the coming months. We are on track to return a surplus for the current year.

We are beginning work on the programme for next year, and welcome any suggestions from members regarding the talks or the speakers they would like. We have been encouraging members to give talks, which of course is financially beneficial for the branch. We would warmly welcome members from other branches who would like to give us talks; just let me know!

There will not be a talk at our December meeting, as traditionally we have a quiz night with snacks to celebrate Christmas, led by our redoubtable quiz master, Bernard Cliffe.

We have recently introduced our volunteers to a new rewards programme being offered by Chorley Council, which will give volunteers discounts at things like the cinema, Chorley Theatre and Chorley Council events. We shall be monitoring progress to see how this is received.

We continue to open our meetings to non-members, and we

have been told that a number are considering joining the Society at the beginning of next year.

Megan Roberts,
Chorley Branch Chair

FYLDE

Secretary: Mrs. Olive Thexton, 7 Bispham Lodge, 251
Norbreck Road, Thornton Cleveleys FY5 1PE
Branch e-mail: fylde@lfhhs.org.uk

Each month we continue to meet. We discuss all aspects of our family history and our finds etc and the fact that we can ask questions and exchange information proves very useful.

Unfortunately the November meeting was cancelled at short notice.

Our next meeting is on 3 December when we will have our Quiz and Jacobs Join.

No more meetings then until the branch AGM in March 2026. If you have any queries in respect of the Fylde area please just email the address as given above.

HERALDRY GROUP

Contact Stephen Benson or Chris Ward

We are looking into the possibility of conducting our meetings by Zoom for the benefit of interested members who live too far away to be able to travel for face-to-face meetings. No programme has been arranged, but notices will appear on the Members Forum and the Society website.

If you are interested in joining us, please let us know

HYNDBURN

(covering Accrington, Altham, Church, Clayton le Moors, Gt Harwood, Oswaldtwistle & Rishton)

Secretary: Eileen Bullock, 51 Hawthorn Avenue,
Oswaldtwistle,

Accrington. Lancs BB5 3AE

Branch e-mail: Hyndburn@lfhhs.org.uk

**New Venue : Accrington Sea Cadets, Harvey Street,
Oswaldtwistle, Accrington BB5 3LT**

Now first Wednesday of each month.

Doors open 6.45pm for a 7.00 start.

IRISH ANCESTRY GROUP

Branch e-mail: irish@lfhhs.org.uk

The group continues to meet most of the year face to face at Oswaldtwistle. We have access to Find My Past and Ancestry and other less well-known websites that hopefully are helpful to our membership, in addition to the collection of Irish related books.

In order to plan the meetings and for the branch to be useful to those who are at a distance – if you want to send your queries to us we will 'try' to prepare answers for the meeting.

Our meeting on 11 October was by Zoom at 1pm when Carol Lee gave a fascinating talk about 'An Irishman Missing in Manchester'. We were introduced to excellent reference material not only in Ireland but Lancashire as well, followed by a Questions and Answers session. Thank you Carol for allowing us to record your talk.

On Saturday 14 February 2026 at **1pm Carol Lee** will give us another **Zoom talk Finding Irish Ancestors – the difficulty of researching.**

An explosion and fire in the Public Record Office in Dublin in 1922 destroyed many records and left an ever-present gaping hole for Irish Researchers.

Join me to explore what records are available and how to access them.

LANCASTER & MORECAMBE

Morecambe Heritage Centre, Unit 29 Arndale Centre,
Morecambe LA4 5DH

First and third Friday 11 am–1 pm

and

Virtual Branch Meetings by ZOOM

Third Thursday of the month at 6.45 for 7pm start

For those with an interest in that area. Members worldwide can ask questions and share knowledge and information about Lancaster and Morecambe families.

E-mail: maryjanebevins@yahoo.com for joining instructions.

LONDON & SOUTH

Virtual Branch Meeting by ZOOM

Five Saturdays in the year at 2pm

Joint Cumbria/Lancashire/Cheshire/London & South

These talks are open to **all members of the society**. They will continue Saturday afternoons on Zoom at 2pm, with the room opening at 1.30pm. If there is a topic or speaker which you think would be of interest to the group, please email me at the address below.

We have not had a meeting since the last talk, but I have been busy arranging talks for 2026. I have confirmed two talks for 2026, and am in the process of arranging two more talks for the 30 May and November. They will continue to be on Zoom

at 2pm on Saturday afternoons. Thank you for your support this year. We have had some interesting talks, looking at maps, visiting Victorian Hiring Fairs and researching our WW2 Air Force Ancestors.

The final talk of 2025 is on 22 November when Richard Holt will give a talk about **Freedom of Information for Genealogy**.

Have you ever wondered if there might be more information out there about some of your ancestors? Have you ever considered what information might be held by public authorities? Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities. Some public bodies hold information that can be vital to family historians. This talk will look at how you go about requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act, along with case studies looking at the type of information that can be helpful to family historians. It will also address what you can do when things go wrong, such as when you believe a public body hasn't handled your request correctly.

Richard Holt is a professional genealogist and runs his own research business, Holt's Family History Research. Prior to becoming a professional researcher, Richard worked in a number of schools as an Early Years teacher and senior leader. He has a deep-rooted belief that learning is a life-long endeavour. Richard also tutors for Pharos Tutors, teaching their Apprenticeship Records and Victorian Crime and Punishment courses. Richard is a Member of AGRA (the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives) and is on AGRA's Council.

Saturday 31 January 2026 Sarah Pettyfer **Using Manorial court records to trace family connections.**

Tracing family histories in small communities often presents the challenge of distinguishing between individuals with the same name, particularly in closely-knit or intermarried families. This

talk delves into the rich but underutilized resource of manorial court records and will demonstrate how these records can clarify familial connections, resolve ambiguities, and provide deeper insights into the social and economic lives of ancestors. Attendees will gain practical strategies for using manorial records to reconstruct family trees, unravel complex relationships, and appreciate the broader historical context in which these families lived.

Sahar Pettyfer is a professional family, house, and local historian based in Surrey. She holds both the Higher Certificate and Diploma in Genealogy from the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies (IHGS) and now serves as a tutor for the Higher Certificate course. She is a Member of the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (AGRA), the Register of Qualified Genealogists (RQG) and Association of Professional Genealogists (APG). With a background as a family law solicitor, Sarah has a particular expertise in legal records, including deeds, Manorial Court records, and Chancery court proceedings. Though no longer in practice, she remains a member of the Law Society. Sarah is also the author of *Tracing Your Surrey Ancestors : A Guide for Family Historians* published by Pen & Sword.

Saturday 5 September 2026 Phil Isherwood – **Using A Research Methodology For Family History.**

The sources we rely on for our family histories provide information, but the analysis of that information and formulation into proof requires a structured method. Currently there is little guidance on this for beginning and intermediate family historians, especially in the UK.

This talk will discuss methodologies, what they are and why they are useful. It will introduce an effective, easy-to-follow research methodology and show how it can be used to successfully solve complex cases.

You will learn what a research methodology is, why it's important, Six Steps to solving difficult genealogy problems and how to use the Six Steps to be more successful in your research.

Phil Isherwood is a family history speaker and writer alongside his full-time career in the software industry. He brings a passion for best-practice methods and innovative technology to his genealogical research.

Phil is a contributor to Family Tree magazine, a Family History Advisor for Oxfordshire Family History Society and co-founder of Pro-Am Genies, a networking group for professional and aspiring pro genealogists.

Submitted by Helen Conchar – Member 7279

E-mail: london2@lfhhs.org.uk or helsbels1997@gmail.com

PENDLE & BURNLEY

Virtual Branch Meetings by ZOOM

First Thursday of the month at 06:45 PM
E-mail garryjwalton@gmail.com for joining instructions

It is encouraging that although no face-to-face meetings are presently being held, there has been so much interest from members to request zoom meetings/chats. The advantage of this is that members far and wide can now join in.

Check the Members Forum and Website for further information

PRESTON

Secretary: Stephen Benson, 32 Slater Lane, Leyland. Lancs
PR25 1TN Tel: 01772 422808
Branch e-mail: preston@lfhhs.org.uk

Our branch members continue to run the monthly Family History Help Desk mornings at Lancashire Archives from 9.30am to 12 noon each 3rd Friday of the month.

Thank you to Peter Bamford, Jennifer Benson, Joan Clayton and Steward McLoughlin who do an outstanding job there.

In addition Jennifer and Stephen Benson run the Tarleton Library Family History Helpdesk on the first and third Mondays of each month from 10.00am to 12.00 noon.

On 25 June Janet Edwards gave us a fascinating talk on "The Historic Importance of Bank Hall". This Grade II listed property is a Jacobean Mansion built on the site of an earlier building on the site by the Banasteres in 1608 who were lords of the manor. The architect was George Webber and it was opened in 1833.

On 30 July Megan Roberts told us about "When Emigration Goes Wrong" – the tragic story of the coal miners and their families who went from Chorley to Hanna, Wyoming, only to be caught up in two devastating pit disasters.

At our meeting on 25 September our booked speaker Laurie Manton was unable to give his talk on "Digging Graves with the Graveyard Detective" and was kindly replaced at short notice by Anna Watson who gave us an excellent talk on "How to go about Finding Illegitimate Ancestors".

Her talk explained the background to the legislation and public perception and stigma of unmarried couples producing illegitimate children and them then becoming a financial burden on the parish. A dreadful similarity to the current storm against immigrants! There is nothing new under the sun.

She explained that fornication outside marriage was seriously frowned on by both church and government legislation. The church was likely to condemn them publicly and even ex-communicate them and local government was likely to impose punishments such as time in the stocks and flogging through

the town while women guilty of producing repeated illegitimate children could end up jailed with hard labour for a year. Her talk included an excellent handout and list of suggested reading which can be obtained on request by emailing stephen.t.benson@btinternet.com

Anna gave permission for her talk to be printed in our journal, but copies of the warrants and certificates etc needed to be reduced.

We are already planning our Jacob's Join Christmas Party and looking forward to another year of successful research.

Stephen Benson
Preston Branch Chairman

RIBBLE VALLEY **Virtual Branch Meetings by ZOOM**

With Ron Chapman

4th Thursday of the month at 6.45pm for 7pm start

Open for any members with Ribble Valley interests.
Check the Members Forum and Website for further information

ROCHDALE

Secretary: Mrs. Rosemary Fitton, 13 Bowlers Walk, Rochdale.
Lancs OL12 6EN

Tel: 01706 – 356135

Branch e-mail: rochdale@lfhhs.org.uk

We held our usual Research Evening in June. We hold these sessions to give members and visitors a chance to share information, discuss and ask any questions about their Rochdale research.

A few of our members met in July for our annual out visit at Rochdale Town Hall to have a look at the recently renovated building. The Town Hall is open each day between 10am and 4pm for anyone who missed the visit, guided tours can also be booked online; please check opening times before planning your visit.

Keith Mellor was our speaker for August with a fascinating talk on the History of the Motorbike. The original idea of a powered bicycle dates back to the mid-19th century. Keith explained the many changes that have been made since the original designs and how through these changes of technical ideas and the inventions which have gradually been introduced, we now have the motorbikes we know today. Keith had some wonderful pictures to accompany his talk showing how the motorbike has developed.

Our meeting on Wednesday 26 November will be our annual Christmas get together as there will be no meeting during December. On behalf of the committee I would like to thank all our members for your continued support and wish you all a peaceful, healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.

ROSSENDALE

Branch e-mail: rossendale@lfhhs.org.uk

In August, being holiday season and therefore missing some members, we had a discussion night.

Our speaker in September was Neil Coldrick of the Holcombe Moor Heritage Group. This is an area containing medieval and industrial archaeology, which they have been recording.

It is also a military training area, including using live ammunition! This means the group has to liaise with the military to arrange when it is safe to do their work, and when they are exploring and digging they have to keep a lookout for unexploded ordnance.

Their researches now include Holcombe Brook, Hawkshaw and Greenmount, and work on wills, census returns, maps and surrenders. They have a good website : holcombemoorheritagegroup.org

There is a very good section on local maps, including tithe maps.

The history of the Calder valley was the topic local historian Roger Frost spoke about in October. Roger is a very experienced lecturer, and gave us a fascinating, well-illustrated talk.

For November we are looking forward to our deputy chairman, Leo Turner, telling us about the railway crash at Helmshore in 1860, and we shall be having our Christmas Social in December, with Leo's famed potato pie!

John Dalton

The Society Membership Renewal form is a pull out in the centre of this journal.

Methods of payment are the same as last year, including Standing Order.

Please renew early to avoid the rush at the beginning of the new year.

*Seasonal Greetings to all our
members*

from all committees



Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society

Branch Locations



Face to face **BRANCH** meetings currently held at Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Irish Ancestry, Lancaster and Morecambe, Preston, Rochdale, and Rossendale.

Virtual Branch Meetings by Zoom are conducted by Blackburn & Darwen, Bury, Heraldry, Irish Ancestry (sometimes), Lancaster & Morecambe (sometimes) London & South, Pendle & Burnley, Ribble Valley, and Society Virtual Group.

YOUR SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP ENTITLES YOU TO JOIN IN ANY OF THE ABOVE BRANCH OR GROUP MEETINGS

THE LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY AND HERALDRY SOCIETY
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Minute Secretary – Sheila J. Court

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Tel: 01254 239919 (Answerphone)
For opening times see www.lfhhs.org.uk

Chorley Family History Centre, Astley Hall Farmhouse, Hallgate,
Astley Village, CHORLEY PR7 1XA Tel: 01257 231600
For opening times see www.cfhrc.com/bookings.html

PLEASE NOTE:

Changes of address and non-receipt of journals should be reported to **Membership Secretary**, 18 Glencross Place, Blackpool FY4 5AD. If you are aware of the death of any member kindly advise **Sue Foster** who will ensure that future magazines are not sent out. Thank you.



If undelivered please return to:

Membership Secretary, Sue Foster, 18 Glencross Place, Blackpool FY4 5AD

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