

LIVERPOOL FAMILY HISTORIAN



Volume 48 No. 3



September 2026

THE LIVERPOOL & S. W. LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

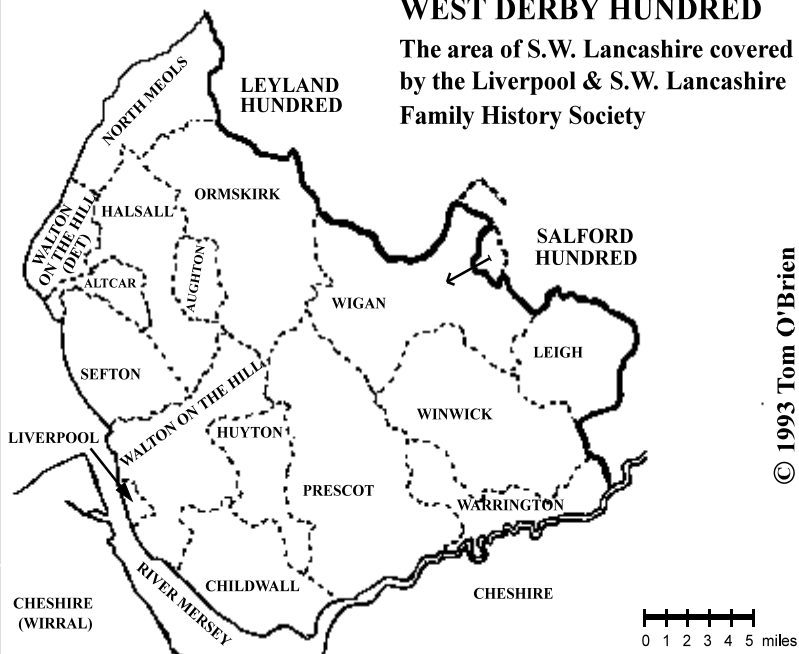
Founded 27 May 1976

Covering

*“the area of interest shall be that part of the ancient
County of Lancashire known as the Hundred of West Derby.”*

WEST DERBY HUNDRED

The area of S.W. Lancashire covered
by the Liverpool & S.W. Lancashire
Family History Society



Website: www.lswlfhs.org.uk



Front cover: Beatles Mosaic, Albert Dock, Liverpool

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Liverpool Family Historian

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Editorial

Hello everyone and a very warm welcome to our new members.

May 2026 saw the 50th Anniversary of the L&SWL FHS which was started by Joyce and Harold Culling on 27 May 1976. The Society now consists of five groups, Liverpool, Skelmersdale, Southport, Warrington and Widnes. Unfortunately, the Anglo-Irish and Leigh Groups are no longer with us. Please look at page 125 for the surprise celebration put on by members of Liverpool Record Office for those volunteers of the Society in attendance at the end of May.

A lot has been achieved in the past 50 years and genealogical research has changed dramatically in that time. Internet based research is now predominant but there is nothing quite like getting your hands on a document or book that highlights part of your ancestors life. I can remember my own visit to Liverpool Record Office and holding the Asylum records from Rainhill for the husband of one of my ancestors. They even had a photograph of him and he died in 1900! It was so exciting to see him and to read about the reasons he was in the asylum and his treatment. There really is no substitute for seeing and touching original documents (even when wearing gloves!).

It is with deep sadness that we report the news that our previous Minutes Secretary, **John de la Cruz**, died on 8 June 2026. Our condolences to his wife and children. Please see his obituary on page 126.

If anyone has any ideas or comments about the content of the Journal then please contact me at editor@lswlfhs.org.uk . I am always looking for content and ideas for articles or different items to include in the Journal.

I hope you are all enjoying this lovely, (very hot) weather we have been having recently and hope you all have an enjoyable summer.

Alison Anyon
(Editor)

Society News

We have new bank details for those members who pay by standing order.

To continue receiving copies of the Journal , please check your bank account now and (if necessary) update the details to:

Unity Trust Bank

Sort Code: 60-83-01; Account: 20466637

**Please quote
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER and SURNAME
as the Reference**

Ann Croft , Treasurer

Annual Conference

Warrington Group

A date for your diaries

This year's Annual Conference is being hosted by the Warrington Group. Details so far are that it will be held on **10 October 2026** at St Joseph's Community Centre, Penketh, Warrington.

This year we are pleased to announce that there is no entrance fee for members, as agreed by the Trustee Committee. For information about booking a place at the conference and for travel details, please see the yellow insert in the middle of the Journal.

This is a great opportunity to meet fellow genealogists and to catch up with friends. The talks sound very interesting and I'm particularly looking forward to the talks on the Overhead Railway and Finding Irish Ancestry.

Don't forget that everyone who attends will be entitled to a free goody bag plus a raffle and genealogy-related stalls.

Genealogy Related Courses And Conferences

There are many genealogical courses or conferences either on-line or in person. Below is a list of some of the websites for more information:

Eventbrite: eventbrite.co.uk/d/united-kingdom/genealogy

Strathclyde University: - strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy

The Family History Show: - thefamilyhistoryshow.com

Society of Genealogists: portal.sog.org.uk/event/list

Book no longer required

The **Dictionary of Heraldry** is a well illustrated and useful book, in good condition, but no longer needed. It's free to whoever would like it for cost of postage so a bargain. Please contact me and I will arrange delivery to you. Thank you

Jean Alker (1030)

Members Interests

As the Members' Interest's Secretary I am currently reviewing the current Members' Interests list with the Membership to ensure they remain correct and that emails have not changed since they were first registered.

If you wish to update your Members' Interests or to register a new email address please contact me on: **interests@lswlfhs.org.uk**

Sandra Roberts

(Members Interests Secretary)

50th Anniversary Trip

A trip to the Western Approaches Museum and on a Mersey Ferry had been scheduled for 26 June. Unfortunately, this had to be postponed due to problems with the ferry. However, a new date has been agreed for the trip to take place on Friday 14 August.

Ann Croft (Treasurer)

Heritage Open Days

11—20 September 2026

Heritage Open days are back between 11—20 September 2026. I have found 44 events in **Liverpool** and the surrounding areas, 1 within 5 miles of **Skelmersdale**, 9 events in the **Southport** area and 12 events in the **Warrington** and **Widnes** areas (some of those listed for Widnes overlap with Warrington).

Highlights include:

Ormskirk Masonic Hall, Ormskirk, L39 3BY

St John's Church, Thomas Lane, Liverpool, L14 5NR—this is a 190-year old church and includes The Sir Ken Dodd Happiness Hall for Church and Community.

Beyond **Haigh Hall**, WN1 1PE

Croxteth Hall, West Derby, Liverpool, L12 0HB

Free Drop-In visits to **The Old Dock** at Liverpool ONE, L1 8LW

Free Guided **Heritage Trail Tours** at Liverpool ONE

Hesketh Park Observatory, Southport, PR9 9LJ

Walton Hall Open Day, Warrington, WA4 6SN

CWGC Tours 2926 of **Bootle** (L20 6ET) and **Allerton** (L19 5NF) cemeteries

Everyday Histories at **St George's Church**, Everton Exhibition L5 3QG

Moonstruck: Without Restraint—Rainhill Hospital in the 19th Century WA9 4DE

Old Christ Church, Waterloo, is a redundant Anglican church located in Waterloo Road, Waterloo, L22 1RE. The church is recorded in the National Heritage List for England as a designated Grade II* listed building and is under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

They hold a monthly flea market between 10am – 1pm and on 12 September it is being combined with the Heritage Open Day. Please come along and support your Society as we will have a stall at this event.

And so many more

For more information please visit the website for more details
<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/whats-on/search-2026-events>.

Liverpool & Southwest Lancashire FHS
Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2025

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
<u>Fixed Assets</u>		
Library Holdings	435	497
Computer Equipment	496	459
General Equipment	- 931	- 956
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Stocks	1289	1356
Debtors	80129	80156
Prepayments	923	322
Cash at Bank & in hand	- 82341	- 81834
<u>Current Liabilities</u>		
Subs Paid in Advance	3004	1545
Accruals	380	380
Sundry Creditors	16 3400	42 1967
<u>Net Current Assets</u>	<u>78941</u>	<u>79867</u>
<u>Total Assets less Current</u>		
<u>Liabilities</u>	<u>79872</u>	<u>80823</u>
<u>Represented by:</u>		
<u>General Fund</u>		
Bal @ Beginning of Year	77775	78633
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year	(951)	(858)
Balance at end of Year	76824	77775
<u>Development Fund</u>		
Bal at Beginning of Year	3048	3048
TF to General Fund	-	-
Bal at End of Year	<u>3048</u>	<u>3048</u>
<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>79872</u>	<u>80823</u>

Liverpool & Southwest Lancashire FHS
Income & Expenditure
for the Year ended 31 December 2025

<u>Income</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
<u>Donations & Legacies</u>		
Subscriptions	9113	9643
Donations inc Gift Aid Refunds	1775	1647
Conference Fees	672	324
Magazine Advertisements	-	<u>60</u>
	11560	11674
<u>Charitable Activities</u>		
Sales of Publications	210	197
Misc Income & FFHS Royalties	<u>230</u>	<u>278</u>
	440	475
Investment Income		
Bank Interest Received	<u>1795</u>	<u>2311</u>
Total Income	13795	14460

Expenditure

Journal Printing Costs	4733	4026
Journal Distribution Costs	2154	2530
Publication Stock Movement	67	1425
Guest Speakers	1486	1259
Room Hire	1606	1435
Affiliations inc FFHS Membership	448	388
Group Running Costs	(622)	(607)
Gifts & Samples	25	-
Conference Expenses	738	547
Advertising	138	-
Travelling & Subsistence	10	106
Insurance	538	538
Storage	292	362
Postages	275	136
Printing & Stationery	64	286
Computer Subscriptions	443	498

Liverpool & Southwest Lancashire FHS
Income & Expenditure
for the Year
ended 31 December 2025

Expenditure continued:

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Computers & Software	156	55
Phone & Internet Charges	389	232
Accountancy Fees	380	380
EU VAT	16	10
Sundry Expenses	55	377
Donations Made	500	-
Depreciation	<u>442</u>	<u>1029</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>14746</u>	<u>15318</u>

Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	<u>(951)</u>	<u>(858)</u>
---------------------------------------	---------------------	---------------------

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Total Membership	887	926

The accounts for 2025 were finalised in April. As you can see expenditure is rising but membership is falling, it remains to be seen how 2026 will pan out with the changes made to the subscriptions.

Ann Croft

Treasurer

We would like to encourage our members to promote the Society where and whenever they can so that we can attract more members.

To this end, if anyone has any suggestions, please contact us.

Alison Anyon
Editor

L&SWLFHS 50th Anniversary Surprise

On Tuesday 26 May 2026 Liverpool Library Staff arranged a thank you party for the Family History Help Desk volunteers. Just look at all those scrummy cakes!!! Pictures courtesy of **Lesley Rotheram (8148)**



Pictured above L-R are: Joan Perra, Mary Allan (Zoom Admin), Susan Atkins (Chair), Ann Croft (Treasurer) and Lesley Rotheram

Pictured below L-R are: Paul (Liverpool Archives), Mary Allan, Thomas (Liverpool Archives), Susan Atkins, Joan Perra, Ann Croft and Lesley Rotheram



Obituary
John de la Cruz
1947—2026



It was with great sadness that I learnt of the death of **John De La Cruz** on 8 June 2026. Our condolences go to his wife and daughters.

I first met John several years ago at Liverpool Group meetings and he was always willing to join in. He even gave us a couple of talks. One was about his Scottish Ancestry of which he was very proud. He also told us how DNA helped find his ancestors/relations from the Philippines.

He was also on the Committee for quite a few years as Minutes Secretary—a job he performed very efficiently. He only gave up his Minutes Secretary Role a couple of years ago. He even helped me out by taking minutes of the Liverpool Group AGM in early 2025.

John was a very enthusiastic family historian and would willingly pass on his knowledge to anyone who asked for his help. He was also a lovely man who will be very sadly missed.

Susan

Chair Liverpool Group

Conference

Dinners of Diplomacy: Dialogue, Not Division

I am writing on behalf of the **Countess of Derby**, to request your society to help share news of an event she is hosting this autumn, which I believe will be of great interest to your members.

From 29–30 October 2026, she will be hosting ***Dinners of Diplomacy: Dialogue, Not Division***, a two-day conference at **Knowsley Hall** exploring the military, political, and diplomatic legacy of Yorktown and the American Revolution. The programme brings together leading scholars from the United Kingdom, France, and the United States to offer fresh perspectives on the alliances that shaped America, and on the enduring importance of international cooperation today.

As a direct descendant of General Lord **Cornwallis**, Lady Derby has a particular personal interest in this chapter of history, and is delighted to welcome this exploration of it to Knowsley Hall, the historic seat of the Earls and Countesses of Derby. In-person tickets include a guided tour of the Hall and lunch.

Dinners of Diplomacy: Dialogue, Not Division
29–30 October 2026
Knowsley Hall, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 4AJ

Tickets: <https://knowsleyhall.digitickets.co.uk/event-tickets/76875?catID=72250>

For more information: <https://knowsleyhall.co.uk/event/dinners-of-diplomacy-american-revolution/> and <https://thecountessoferby.com/>

Sue McHugh

Executive Assistant and Artist in Residence to the Countess of Derby

Please see photos on the next page:



Knowsley Hall



The Surrender of General Lord Cornwallis

John Winston Lennon

Introduction

I am Mike **Halligan**, a retired Merseyside Police Officer, and I have just completed my first season as a National Trust Volunteer and room guide at Speke Hall in Liverpool on Merseyside.

I first came to Speke Hall with my school back in the early 1970's, and I think that it was this visit that ignited my passion for history. This has since developed into an obsession for all things 'genealogy', and my policing experience has certainly helped with the research and evidence gathering in constructing my own family tree.

But it was my wife Sian who encouraged me to combine all of my interests, and she suggested that I apply to become a volunteer with the National Trust.

I elected to volunteer on a Thursday, and with the help and support of other experienced Thursday Team Members, under the leadership of Graeme **McGrath**, the Volunteering and Community Officer, I quickly settled into the role.

The experience has been thoroughly worthwhile and extremely rewarding, and I would certainly recommend to anyone to get involved.

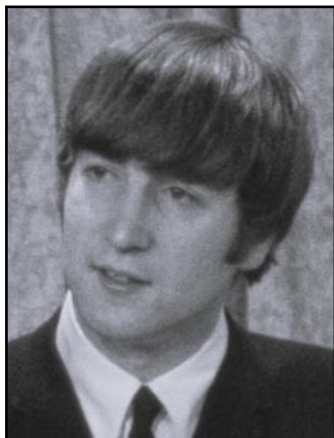
Who did I think I was?

'Who Do You Think You Are' is a family history documentary that airs on the BBC, and which invites celebrity participants to trace their family roots. If you are a regular viewer of the programme, you will no doubt be familiar with the contribution made by East Enders actor Danny **Dyer** in Series 13 back in 2016, when he discovered that he was the great grandson of Edward III in the twenty second generation.

But go back far enough and statistically we must all be connected. It is just a case of finding the links, or what is referred to in Genealogy circles as the '**Gateway Ancestor**'.

My ‘Gateway Ancestor appears to show that I am a distant cousin of John **Lennon**, on his father Alfred’s side.

John Winston Lennon



John Winston **Lennon** remains one of the most influential cultural figures of the twentieth century. As a founding member of The Beatles, a ground-breaking songwriter, a peace activist, and a deeply complex individual, Lennon helped reshape popular music and modern celebrity. His life was marked by extraordinary creativity, personal turmoil, political controversy, and a relentless search for truth. More than four decades after his death, Lennon’s voice—both musical and ideological—continues to resonate across generations.

John **Lennon** was born on 9 October 1940 at the Oxford Street Maternity Hospital in Liverpool, England, during the dark days of the Second World War. His childhood was unsettled from the start. His father, Alfred **Lennon**, a merchant seaman, was frequently absent, and his mother, Julia, struggled to provide stability. As a result, John was raised primarily by his strict but caring Aunt Mimi at her home, Mendips, in the Woolton area of Liverpool.



Mendips, 251 Menlove Avenue, Woolton, was the home of the former Beatle from July 1946 until mid-1963. Lennon’s widow, Yoko **Ono** bought the house in March 2002 and donated it to the National Trust.

This unconventional upbringing had a lasting impact on **Lennon**. Aunt Mimi encouraged his education but discouraged his musical ambitions, famously telling him, “*The guitar’s all right, John, but you’ll never make a living out of it.*”



His mother Julia, by contrast, introduced him to music, teaching him banjo chords and fostering his early love for rock 'n' roll. Her tragic death on 15 July 1958, when she was struck by a car driven by an off-duty Liverpool City Policeman, who was driving without a license and whilst unaccompanied, devastated the teenage **Lennon**, and left an emotional scar that would surface repeatedly in his song writing.

At Quarry Bank High School, **Lennon** was rebellious, witty, and artistically gifted, though academically indifferent. He formed his first band, The Quarrymen, in 1956, laying the foundations for what would become the most successful musical group in history.

A pivotal moment in **Lennon**'s life came in July 1957, when he met Paul **McCartney** (whose childhood home at 20 Forthlin Road is also a National Trust property) at St Peter's church fête in Woolton. Impressed by **McCartney**'s musical ability, **Lennon** invited him to join The Quarrymen. Soon after, George **Harrison** was added to the group, despite **Lennon**'s initial doubts about his young age. By the early 1960s, with the addition of drummer Ringo **Starr** (who replaced original drummer Pete **Best**), the group had become The Beatles.



The Beatles' formative years were spent performing long, gruelling sets in Hamburg, Germany, where they honed their musical skills, stage presence, and sense of camaraderie. **Lennon** emerged as a sharp, charismatic front-man, known for his acerbic humour and raw vocal style. His song

writing partnership with

McCartney would become legendary, producing an astonishing catalogue of songs that blended melody, Innovation, and emotional depth.

By 1963, The Beatles had conquered Britain, and by 1964 they had taken the United States by storm. Beatlemania was unprecedented: screaming fans, chart dominance, and constant media attention. **Lennon**, often the most outspoken Beatle, became both admired and controversial. His intelligence, wit, and sometimes cutting remarks made him a favourite of journalists, but also a target for criticism.

Musically, **Lennon** pushed boundaries. Early songs like “Please Please Me” and “All My Loving” gave way to more introspective and experimental works. **Lennon**’s writing often explored themes of love, loss, identity, and disillusionment. Songs such as “Help!”, “In My Life”, and “Strawberry Fields Forever” revealed a growing emotional honesty and psychological depth.

As The Beatles evolved, so did **Lennon**. He became increasingly interested in art, avant-garde music, Eastern philosophy, and political ideas. His use of LSD influenced both his worldview and his song writing, contributing to the surreal imagery and introspection of the band’s later work. In 1966, **Lennon** sparked outrage in the United States when he remarked that The Beatles were “*more popular than Jesus.*” Although intended as a comment on declining religious influence, the statement was taken out of context and caused record burnings, protests, and death threats. **Lennon** later expressed regret over the way his words were perceived, but the incident highlighted the immense power, and danger of celebrity.

By the late 1960s, tensions within The Beatles were rising. Creative differences, business disputes, and personal changes strained relationships. **Lennon**’s partnership with Japanese artist Yoko **Ono** became a central factor during this period. The two met in 1966 and quickly formed a deep artistic and emotional bond. While many fans blamed **Ono** for the band’s breakup, the reality was far more complex. The Beatles were already drifting apart, and **Lennon** was seeking a new creative identity. After The Beatles officially disbanded in 1970, Lennon launched a solo career that was both bold and deeply personal. His debut album, John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band, was stark and emotionally raw, addressing childhood trauma, loss, and identity. Songs like “Mother” and “Working Class Hero” stripped away the polish of Beatle-era production in favour of brutal honesty.

Lennon and **Ono** became highly visible peace activists, staging famous “Bed-Ins” and using their celebrity to protest war, particularly the Vietnam War. **Lennon**’s political songs, including “Give Peace a Chance” and “Power to the People,” made him a symbol of countercultural resistance. This activism drew the attention of the U.S. government, and **Lennon** spent years fighting deportation attempts due to his outspoken views.

In 1971, **Lennon** released “Imagine”, his most commercially successful solo album. The title track became an anthem for peace and unity, envisioning a world without borders, religions, or material divisions. Though praised by many, the song also attracted criticism for its idealism. Nevertheless, “Imagine” endures as one of the most powerful and recognisable songs in modern history.

Despite his public image as a peace advocate, **Lennon** was candid about his personal flaws. He acknowledged his struggles with anger, jealousy, and past violence, particularly in his early relationships. In the mid-1970s, Lennon separated temporarily from **Ono** during what he later referred to as his “lost weekend,” a period marked by heavy drinking and erratic behaviour spent in the company of American entertainer **Kris Kristofferson**.

The birth of his son, Sean, in 1975 marked a turning point. Lennon withdrew from public life and devoted himself to being a stay-at-home father, a role he embraced with pride. For five years, he stepped away from music entirely, focusing on family life and personal reflection.

In 1980, **Lennon** returned to music with *Double Fantasy*, a collaborative album with Yoko **Ono** that reflected their renewed partnership and domestic happiness. The album was warmly received and signalled a creative renaissance.

Tragically, this comeback was cut short. On the evening of 8 December 1980, John **Lennon** was shot and killed outside his home at the Dakota building in New York City by Mark David **Chapman**. He was 40 years old. The news shocked the world, prompting an outpouring of grief unlike anything seen since the death of Elvis **Presley**.

John **Lennon**'s legacy is vast and enduring. As a Beatle, he helped redefine what popular music could be; artistically ambitious, emotionally honest, and culturally significant. As a solo artist, he demonstrated that music could be a vehicle for personal truth and political expression.

Lennon's influence extends far beyond music. He challenged authority, questioned social norms, and encouraged people to imagine a better world. His flaws were as visible as his virtues, and his willingness to confront them made him relatable and human.

Today, **Lennon** is remembered not only for his songs, but for his voice, sometimes angry, sometimes tender, always searching. In a world still grappling with conflict and division, his message of peace and empathy remains as urgent as ever.

John **Lennon** did not simply reflect his times; he helped to shape them. And in doing so, he ensured that his words and music would continue to echo long after his voice was silenced.

People join the National Trust for a variety of reasons! They may want to contribute to the preservation of our national treasures, or they may take a keen interest in our nation's history; they may just be lonely and are seeking the company of others for a few hours. Whatever the reason, being a National Trust Volunteer Room Guide has proved to be very rewarding, and I would certainly recommend to anyone to get involved.

Mike Halligan (9801)

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WORSE THINGS HAPPEN AT SEA

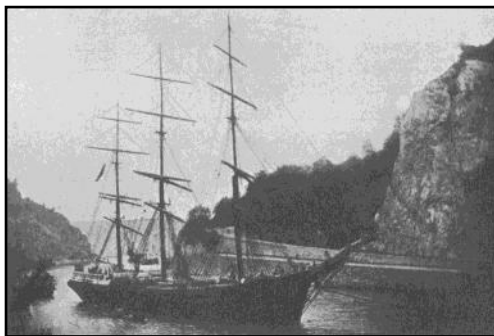
There must be many interesting maritime stories that could be told about our ancestors on Merseyside. This is just one of them in which I have attempted to tell the tale of a ship with a little of the family history of a few of those who sailed in her.

After a fifteen-week voyage from Liverpool, the sailing ship arrived at the approaches to the Karnaphuli River at Chittagong. It was due to discharge and load at one of the river wharfs before making the 10-day voyage to Calcutta. After the long journey from England the crew hoped to move on quickly. There was nothing at Chittagong to excite the crew after such a long time at sea. Unlike Calcutta, Chittagong was not a 'sailortown'. There was nothing there to tempt or amuse them. Calcutta would be different. Calcutta was a hive of drinking dens and where the naughty Nautch girls provided all a sailor could want. There was, however, a cost to be paid for these temptations; rum that would rot their guts and rot of another sort from the Nautch girls together with an almost ever-present possibility of catching cholera.

A brief stop and a quick move on to Calcutta was not to be. Their ship ran aground on the muddy shoals of the river. This, at best meant delay; at worst the ship could be lost.

★

Sailing Ship 'Regent' in the Bristol Channel



The sailing ship was the 'Regent' of 1260 tons, built by the **Harvie** family of Avondale, Nova Scotia in 1878, originally for Nova Scotia owners but later purchased by Andrew **Gibson** & Company of Liverpool. The 'Regent' operated on market demand, unlike a liner service, making

it cost effective for bulk commodities, often known as a tramp service. This voyage was to be from Liverpool to Chittagong and Calcutta then on to New York,



Its captain was George Miller **Treadwell**¹, born at St Andrew's, New Brunswick, Canada in 1845, the son of Nathan Niblock **Treadwell** a carpenter and undertaker and his wife, Elizabeth Black **Flaherty**. The **Treadwells** had moved from Connecticut to New Brunswick. The family, being loyal to the Crown, moved north to Canada at the time of American independence.

The **Treadwells** can be traced back to early 17th century England. Elizabeth is believed to have been born in Scotland.

***George Miller Treadwell**²*

George's career as a mariner had taken him to Liverpool where, in 1876, he married Eliza Jane **Simmons**, the daughter of Henry **Simmons**³, the master rigger who

would have worked on the 'Regent' when in port at Liverpool. Their home was at 2, East View, Rice Lane, Liscard. Eliza took to travelling to New Brunswick to visit her husband's family. On a return voyage in October 1889, she died of cancer on board the SS 'Etruria' as it entered the River Mersey. At that time Captain **Treadwell** was with the 'Regent' in Havana. From then on, their son, George Henry, age 7 at the time of his mother's death, was brought up by Eliza's sister Elizabeth. This was 17 months before George Miller **Treadwell** set out on his voyage to Calcutta.

Footnotes

¹George had previously sailed as mate on the SS 'Senator Weber' whose captain was his good friend, Joseph Hancock, elder half-brother of Edward John Smith. who was later to become Captain Edward Smith of the 'Titanic'.

²The photographs of George Miller Treadwell and his wife are not from my family archives. They were found, by chance, in the archives of New Brunswick where they had at some time been deposited by a member of the Treadwell family.

³Henry Simmons was my 3xgreat grandfather



Eliza Jane Treadwell nee Simmons

Preparation for a sea voyage was no easy matter. Probably the most difficult was the selection of a crew who were signed on, on 11 May 1891 to join the ship 2 days later and sail the following day. As well as Captain George Henry **Treadwell**, due to join the ship were a mate, 2nd mate, carpenter, sail maker, cook, steward and 18 ABs: the able seamen. Not unusually they were from all over the world. As well as England, Wales and Ireland, other places of birth were given as Canada, France, Germany, Sweden and the Azores. In addition, there were four apprentices, young men taken on by the shipping company to undergo a four-year

training period to become ships officers.

The mate, Daniel **Campbell**, was well known and trusted by the captain; they had sailed together before. Daniel, age 45, had been born at Prince Edward Island, Canada⁴. He had actually received his master's certificate 11 years before this voyage. This was not unusual as master's positions were hard to come by. He would, however, have had to be considered completely capable of taking on the role of master in case of need both by his captain and employer.

Daniel based himself in Liverpool, where Andrew **Gibson** & Company were located, living at 23, Dickinson Street. In 1880 he had married Margaret Jane **Walkinshaw** and over the next few years they had two children, Daniel Gordon and Anna Isabella. Less is known of the second mate, the unrelated Andrew **Campbell**, other than that he was born at Larne, Ireland, had a wife named Margaret and daughters, Jane and Mary.

Footnotes

⁴In a number of places on Ancestry Daniel Campbell is shown to have been born in Northern Ireland. This is not correct. I have a record trail that shows his true place of birth. The Daniel Campbell who married Margaret Jane Walkinshaw is a different person to the one born in Northern Ireland. The 1891 census show the Campbell family living at 141, Northumberland Street, Liverpool, the same address as shown on duplicates of Daniel's Mates and Masters certificates issued in 1892 and 1893.

Although taken on as 2nd mate he had his full mate's certificate.

*

As far as is known the voyage from Liverpool to Chittagong was uneventful until the grounding. The voyage from Liverpool had taken 15 weeks arriving on 26 August. The situation was saved by offloading to lighters enabling the ship to refloat and make its way to a river berth. There must have been other delays at the port as the 'Regent' was not able to leave for over seven weeks. This was probably due to a number of factors including the grounding, waiting for labour to offload and load and waiting for cargo. The ship eventually set sail on 16 October. No one was to know that the troubles at Chittagong were as nothing to what was to befall the 'Regent' and its crew during the rest of its voyage.

*

The day before the 'Regent' left Chittagong an important date occurred for one member of the crew; William Kinsey **Maysmor** completed his four-year apprenticeship. At this point an apprentice was reclassified as an AB just like all the other able seamen on board but there was a big difference. He could now apply for his second-mates certificate once he was back at his home port and the world of ship's officers in the merchant navy would open up to him. William had been born at Trelogan in Flintshire in 1870 to Charles **Maysmor**, a company secretary and bookkeeper and his wife, Margaret. By 1881 the family had moved to 22, Romeo Street, Kirkdale. William started his apprenticeship with William **Gibson** & Company in 1887.

Another of the apprentices on board, John Sterling **Fraser**, was to complete his apprenticeship 6 days later and he, also, was taken on as part of the crew as an AB.

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DEADLINES

The cut-off dates for material to reach the editor, for potential inclusion in the next issue are:



MARCH	Jan 25th
JUNE	Apr 25th
SEPTEMBER	July 25th
DECEMBER	Oct 25th

John, born 2 years after William **Maysmor**, was only 15 when he started his apprenticeship.

★

Eleven days after leaving Chittagong the 'Regent' arrived at the River Hooghly and the approaches to the Port of Calcutta. In her 'Journal of a Residence in India' published in 1812, Maria **Graham**, Lady Callcott, describes the scene:

"...the first land we made was Point Palmyras, or rather the tops of the trees which give their name to this low sandy cape. On anchoring in Balasore Roads, the breakers, and the colour of the water, told us that we were in the neighbourhood of land, though none was visible in any direction. The water looked like thick mud, fitter to walk upon than to sail through. Here we left the ship and proceeded in a pilot's schooner. Nothing can have been more desolate than the entrance to the Hugli. To the west, frightful breakers extend as far as the eye can reach, and you are surrounded by sharks and crocodiles..."

In 1895, not long after this voyage of the 'Regent', Rudyard **Kipling** gave his description of the approach to Calcutta on the Hooghly and in particular of the pilots who navigated its channels:

"...the Pilots of the Hugli know that they have one hundred miles of the most dangerous river on earth running through their hands—the Hugli between Calcutta and the Bay of Bengal and they say nothing.... a careless pilot can lose a ten-thousand-ton ship with crew and cargo in less time than it takes to reverse her engines.

There is very little chance of anything getting off again when once she touches in the furious Hugli current, loaded with all the fat silt of the fields of Bengal, where soundings change two feet between tides, and new channels make and unmake themselves in one rainy season."

The pilot safely navigated the 'Regent' to its moorings at Calcutta. It was probably from him that Captain **Treadwell** had the first indication of a then current virulent outbreak of cholera in the city. The captain would have known from previous visits to India of the consequences of letting his crew encounter anyone infected. If cholera took hold among the crew the voyage would probably have to be abandoned, then and there.

So it was that he decided that the crew must be confined to the ship. No delights of sailortown for them on this voyage but their disappointment was almost certainly overcome by the fear of the consequences. The captain and the 1st mate would be the only ones to go ashore necessitated by the need to conduct business with the port authority, stevedores, importers and exporters. And so it was that George Miller **Treawell**, himself, caught cholera⁵ and very quickly succumbed, dying on 18 November 1891, three weeks after arriving. His death must have been in the evening as his burial was the following day. It was always the case that a death had to be followed by burial the same day unless it occurred after sunset. George was buried at the Lower Circular Road Cemetery.



***Captain Treadwell's grave at the Lower Circular Road Cemetery, Calcutta
Photo provided by the Christian Burial Board of Calcutta***

Footnotes

⁵At this time cholera was usually fatal. It caused a considerable loss of body fluids far in excess of that caused by diarrhoea. Death could take place within 24 hours of catching the infection. Its prevalence is related to personal hygiene and quality of drinking water. Today, the treatment, which is simple if given in time, is the replacement of fluids with the right mix of sugar and salt.

There is an old English idiom, “*worse things happen at sea*”. This was certainly the case for this voyage of the ‘Regent’ and the unexpected and violent occurrence that was to happen during the next stage of its voyage.

Before leaving Calcutta the 1st Mate, Daniel **Campbell** was confirmed as master of the ‘Regent’ by the Master Attendant at the Registry of Seamen at the Calcutta Registry Office and by the Deputy Shipping Master at the Calcutta Shipping Office. One of the ABs was discharged. That was Frank **Belsay**, born in 1854 at Marseilles. He was in Howrah General Hospital suffering from venereal disease, something he denied despite it being confirmed by one of the hospital surgeons. In his place another AB was taken on. He was Joseph **Flynn**, born 1868 in Queens-town in County Cork. We shall hear more of **Flynn** later in this story.

On 30 November 1891, after 34 days in port the ‘Regent’ left Calcutta for New York but its next port of call, after 70 days at sea, was not to be in North America but at St Helena, a British colony in the South Atlantic. Several different accounts appear to show variations on what actually happened and the real reasons for what transpired could be open to interpretation. The first reports come from newspapers. They tell that when the ship arrived at St Helena the port authorities went on board and found the captain, Daniel **Campbell**, lying in a state of unconsciousness, with four bullet wounds in his head and body. He was removed to hospital where he stated that the crew, headed by the mate, Andrew **Campbell**, were in a state of mutiny, and had threatened to kill him and that he tried to blow his brains out in preference to facing the mutiny and being murdered.

The Governor of St Helena, W Grey **Wilson**, set up a Board of Trade inquiry headed by James Francis **Homagee**. James was a native of St Helena. He was the person the Governor turned to for all difficult jobs. James was the Police Magistrate and Chief Prosecutor for the Island and performed many other functions including that of Manager of the St Helena Savings Bank. In the Governor’s letter, regarding the results of the inquiry, to Viscount Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies, it was stated that the report showed that there was no mutiny but the captain, Daniel **Campbell**, was mad and inflicted the gun wounds himself. The Governor went on to say that the only mate on board, Andrew **Campbell**, has been and is hopelessly drunk and that there is no one who he could put in charge of the ‘Regent’ for its onward voyage

to New York. He asked that the Colonial Office inform the owners of the vessel of the state of affairs in order that they can send out a replacement captain.

During the inquiry the crew reported that after leaving Calcutta the captain showed some alarming symptoms as he became dangerously ill with fever. They also reported that he apparently recovered from the fever although his mind appeared unbalanced. The crew kept a close watch on him as they feared he might try to jump overboard. A fierce storm was encountered off the southern coast of Africa, but the ship withstood the gales and rounded the Cape safely. By this time, it was decided that they should make for a nearer landfall at St Helena. They further reported that as they approached the island, they heard gunshots from the captain's cabin, and he was found unconscious with bullet wounds in his head and body.

If this was not enough for a small outpost of the Empire to deal with there were numerous other incidents while the crew were on the island. As well as the Mate being permanently drunk while on St Helena, he was involved in several fights with other crew members and on more than one occasion had been knocked overboard. The Mate also stole money from the captain's cabin but avoided any punishment by agreeing to have it deducted from his future wages.

The island's surgeon was asked to report on Joseph **Flynn**, the AB who had been taken on at Calcutta, as he was also stated to be insane. The surgeon's report was so alarming that **Flynn** was taken to hospital and placed under guard. Another member of the crew had to be forcibly detained in hospital due to him suffering from extreme melancholia. Another problem to be dealt with by the St Helena authorities was how to get the deranged captain back to England. His condition was far too serious to contemplate him being taken on board the 'Regent' for the onward journey once the replacement captain arrived. Fortunately, the steamer 'Dunbar Castle' had arrived on route to England. The 'Dunbar Castle' doctor, Dr **Rideal**, agreed to take charge of Daniel **Campbell** for the voyage to London. Two of the four bullets had been removed at the St Helena hospital, and, on the voyage, Dr **Rideal** succeeded in removing the remaining two. Once at London, Daniel was handed over to Board of Trade officials.

After a 21-day stay at St Helena the 'Regent' departed for New York under the command of the replacement Master, Captain Henry **Cann**, who took all of the crew with him apart from the ex-master. By this time Joseph **Flynn** was deemed to have recovered from his madness and he was allowed to go with them on the understanding that he was not employed aloft. It must have been a great relief to the authorities and inhabitants of the small island of St Helena to see the 'Regent' set sail.

After a further 38 days the ship arrived at New York on 7 April. A further change of masters was to take place there with Captain John **Rutherford** taking over. Immediately on arriving in New York Rutherford discharged all of the crew and took on a new smaller complement. From all the problems previously encountered it can be seen why this may have happened although Captain **Cann** may have experienced additional problems on the voyage to New York. The 'Regent' arrived back in England over 13 months after it set sail from Liverpool.

A further inquiry was then held, this time by the Local Marine Board at Liverpool. At the outset of this inquiry, it was stated that the matter was not one of misconduct but rather incompetency resulting from Daniel **Campbell's** inability to discharge his duties⁶. As the mate, Andrew **Campbell**, was still under the influence of drink evidence was given from the steward, Samuel **Dodd**, and by one of the apprentices, J B **Fraser**. The inquiry covered the same ground but in much more detail. Medical evidence was given that the insanity was caused by the fever suffered by Daniel. Among the medical evidence given was reports by two London lunacy specialists who both stated that Daniel had now recovered and was now sane and competent. The inquiry found the charge of incompetency fully proved and said that his master's certificate should be revoked and he be issued with a mate's certificate in its place. It was further recommended that if, after 12 months, his service was satisfactory his master's should be reinstated.

*

Footnotes

⁶Maybe, both Daniel Campbell and Joseph Flynn both caught cholera but survived. In the 19th-century there were accounts of cholera outbreaks being associated with rapid mental unravelling. The experience of nearly dying, often characterized by extreme pain and rapid physical decline, could lead to post-traumatic stress and mental breakdown.

What happened to the people mentioned in this story.

I don't have information on all of them but do know details of some of the main characters.

George Miller Treadwell and his wife, Eliza Jane nee Simmons. We have seen that Eliza died on board the SS 'Etruria' in 1889 and George at Calcutta in 1891. They had one child, a son, George Henry, born at Liscard in 1882. Captain **Treadwell** died intestate and probate was granted to his wife's sister, Elizabeth **Clarke** nee **Simmons**, who had been caring for young George Henry when the captain was away at sea. Probate also confirmed Elizabeth as being the guardian, appointed by the captain, of his son.

Elizabeth was to administer the estate on George Henry's behalf until he came of age. Elizabeth was a theatrical landlady in Seacombe taking in performers at the local Irving Theatre and had been married to a mariner, Joseph **Clarke**, until his death at sea in 1882 at the age of 41. She then married Joseph's brother, Ebenezer, another mariner but that is another story. The administration of the captain's estate appeared to have not been an easy matter as two years later, William Edward **Heath** and Joseph **Hancock**, who has been previously mentioned, friends of the captain, took out an action in the Court of Chancery against Elizabeth. The actual problem was not very clear, but it appeared to be regarding the administration of the estate. Unfortunately, the record trail about this matter ceases after the commencement of the action.



***Grave of Eliza Jane Treadwell
with Memorial Inscription to
her husband
George Miller Treadwell –
St Hilary's Church, Wallasey***

Daniel Campbell

The Board of Trade inquiry resolved that he should have his master's certificate revoked and replaced by that of a mate and after 12 months of good service he could apply again for full reinstatement. What actually happened does not seem to tie in with the findings of the inquiry as Daniel does not appear to have received another master's certificate after the inquiry. Two years later his wife, Margaret Jane, died and his children went to live with Margaret's mother. Daniel does not appear to have continued his sea-going career as Margaret's death certificate describes him as a licensed victualler. Despite what was said at the inquiry it seems unlikely that anyone would want to employ him again as a ship's officer.

Andrew Campbell

At some time, he must have obtained his master's certificate although I doubt that he ever got to use it. The 1901 census shows him living at 19, Pound Street, Larne with his wife and two children. He is described as being an unemployed master mariner. Knowing his history, I would doubt that anyone would have employed him either.

William Kinsey Maysmor

A year after arriving back in England he received his 2nd Mates Certificate, his 1st Mates Certificate in 1890 and his Masters in 1898. A year before, in 1897, he had married Edith Mary **Davey** and they were to go on to have five children before William died in 1909, at Holyhead, at the age of 39.

John Sterling Fraser

He received his certificates for 2nd mate in 1892; 1st mate in 1894 and masters in 1897. In 1900 he married Margaret Elizabeth **Hails** at South

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Shields. Nine years later, at the age of 37, while 1st mate on the steamship “Routh”, he lost his life in the Bristol Channel. Reason for death was given as ‘disappeared’ which presumably means that he was probably lost overboard.

There is one other person I will give some further history on and that is **James Francis Homagee**, the chairman of the board of inquiry at St Helena. As mentioned, James performed many roles in the government of the colony including that of Crown Prosecutor, Clerk of the Peace, Judge of the Summary Court, Police Magistrate, Supervisor of Customs and Manager of the Government Savings Bank. How these roles could be made compatible in a criminal prosecution is unknown. For the roles he played he was obviously highly thought of as in 1906 he was awarded Companion of the Imperial Service Order in the King’s birthday Honours List of that year. However, in 1919 he was sentenced to 5 years in prison for embezzlement from the bank. He died in prison 6 months after sentencing.

Not a happy outcome for many involved in this tale.

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Probate Registry documents
Newspaper extracts from the St Helena Guardian
Court of Chancery Proceedings from the London Gazette

David Railton (3372)

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Members may publish up to ten family names that they are researching on our website **www.lswlfhs.org.uk** and in our Journal, the '*Liverpool Family Historian*'. Please print in block letters those names you wish to be included, using Chapman County Codes (shown overleaf) for the location.

Name:

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A/N	Name	Location	Date(s)
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7			
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10			

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Please tick this box to consent to the Society publishing your above details in support of your Members' Interests request.

Members Interests

When the Society was first preparing the Members' Interests database in 2005, there was concern about the lack of appreciation for the pre-1974 Chapman County Codes that Members are encouraged to use when giving place names for their ancestors. In one case the town name submitted was repeated over twenty times in an Index to Place Names in the British Isles.

To assist Members we have, since then, published a list of pre-1974 County Codes and would recommend the website link below to see the post-1974 County Codes that apply today, that some Members use even though their interests relate to dates earlier than 1974:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chapman_code

The present system is a continuous on-going service, with a restriction on the number of names put forward for publication to ten names published in the Journal. All Members can submit additional interests later, via this form or via e-mail, that will be published on the website.

Email addresses will be published on the website to enable other members to contact you, however the '@' in your email address will be amended on the website to read (at) for your protection. This is to meet the Society's responsibility under Data Protection legislation. No email addresses are published in the Journal.

It would also help if each Interest submitted was classified either as "New" or "Amended" so that the database is kept up to date, and does not include old and invalid information.

Good hunting.

CHAPMAN County Codes

England (ENG):

BDF	Bedfordshire	HRT	Hertfordshire	SOM	Somersetshire
BRK	Berkshire	HUN	Huntingdonshire	STS	Staffordshire
BKM	Buckingham	KEN	Kent	SFK	Suffolk
CAM	Cambridgeshire	LAN	Lancashire	SRY	Surrey
CHS	Cheshire	LEI	Leicestershire	SSX	Sussex
CON	Cornwall	LIN	Lincolnshire	WAR	Warwickshire
CUL	Cumberland	LND	London	WES	Westmoreland
DBY	Derbyshire	MDX	Middlesex	WIL	Wiltshire
DEV	Devonshire	NFK	Norfolk	WOR	Worcestershire
DOR	Dorsetshire	NTH	Northamptonshire	YKS	Yorkshire
DUR	Durham	NBL	Northumberland	ERY	Yks East Riding
ESS	Essex	NTT	Nottinghamshire	WRY	Yks West Riding
GLS	Gloucestershire	OXF	Oxfordshire	NRY	Yks North Riding
HAM	Hampshire	RUT	Rutland	IOW	Isle of Wight
HEF	Herefordshire	SAL	Shropshire		

Wales (WLS):

N.WLS	North Wales	S.WLS	South Wales		
AGY	Anglesey	DEN	Denbighshire	MON	Monmouthshire
BRE	Breckonshire	FLN	Flintshire	MGY	Montgomeryshire
CAE	Caernarvonshire	GLA	Glamorgan	PEM	Pembrokeshire
CGN	Cardiganshire	MER	Merionethshire	RAD	Radnorshire

Scotland (SCT):

ABD	Aberdeenshire	ELN	East Lothian	PEE	Peebleshire
ANS	Angus (Forfarshire)	FIF	Fifeshire	PER	Perthshire
ARL	Argyllshire	INV	Inverness-shire	RFW	Renfrewshire
AYR	Ayrshire	KCD	Kincardineshire	ROC	Ross & Cromarty
BAN	Banffshire	KRS	Kinross-shire	ROX	Roxburghshire
BEW	Berwickshire	KKD	Kircudbrightshire	SEL	Selkirkshire
BUT	Bute	LKS	Lanarkshire	SHI	Shetland Isles
CAI	Caithness-shire	MLN	Midlothian	STI	Stirlingshire
CLK	Clackmannanshire	MOR	Moray	SUT	Sutherland
DFS	Dumfriesshire	NAI	Nairnshire	WLN	West Lothian
DNB	Dunbartonshire	OKI	Orkney Isles	WIG	Wigtownshire

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CAR	Carlow	KIK	Kilkenny	OFF	Offaly (Kings)
CAV	Cavan	LET	Leitrim	ROS	Roscommon
CLA	Clare	LEX	Leix (Queens)	SLI	Sligo
COR	Cork	LIM	Limerick	TIP	Tipperary
DON	Donegal	LOG	Longford	WAT	Waterford
DUB	Dublin	LOU	Louth	WEM	Westmeath
GAL	Galway	MAY	Mayo	WEX	Wexford
KER	Kerry	MEA	Meath	WIC	Wicklow
KID	Kildare	MOG	Monagan		

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ANT	Antrim	DOW	Down	LDY	Londonderry
ARM	Armagh	FER	Fermanagh	TYR	Tyrone

Channel Isles (CHI)

ALD	Alderney	JSY	Jersey	SRK	Sark
GSY	Guernsey				

Isle of Man

IOM	Isle of Man
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Letters to the Editor

I received the following email from Will **Bramhall** in response to David **Railton's** article '*A Reluctant Mariner*'.

I was interested to read about David **Railton's** family connection with Bibby's, the Liverpool maker of cattle feed. My grandfather William John **Bramhill** (1883-1922), whose family came from Denison Street, was employed by the company as a palm oil extractor either side of the First World War.



Family lore said William John carried a man called **Smith** from a burning building. When I began my research, I jumped to the conclusion that this would be the 1911 dust explosion at Bibby's, in which 39 men died.

William John and Marie Bramhill

After several years of looking into that incident, my oldest cousin put me right. She said William John's act of heroism actually occurred after an explosion at a factory that made gun cotton, aka nitrocellulose, which is a replacement for gunpowder.

William John was living in the Rossendale Valley at the time, so the most likely candidate is the blast and fire at Spencer and Curedale's in Bury, in which two men died and six were injured on 30 July 1915. Try as I might I cannot find anything about William John's part in that incident. There are news reports, but detailed coverage was probably limited for the sake of wartime morale.



Back to Bibby's. The explosion in Formby Street on 24 November 1911, happened in "the devil's cellar" where a machine ground seedcake into meal. The cause was probably a belt that broke and hit

electrical wiring, which ignited dust. The first blast raised more dust from the rafters and gave rise to a much more violent second explosion, followed by a third and a fourth. A fire spread through several floors.

The incident was one of the three major dust explosions in the UK in the 20th century. I give a full account of the Bibby's incident in my family history files here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/17QZsvva4BVgyshqpYJ-HjJWTyxcGhmhjc4sms801DnM/edit?usp=sharing>

I mentioned Bibby's in an article in the *Liverpool Family Historian* nearly 30 years ago, after which a kind person contacted me to offer their souvenir tissue. This listed the dead and was probably made to help raise funds for the families.

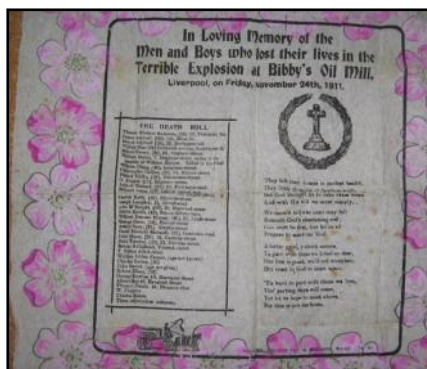
The poem

*They left their homes in perfect health
They little thought of death by night
But God thought to take them home
And with His will we must comply*

*We cannot tell who next may fall
Beneath God's chastening rod
One must be first but let us all
Prepare to meet our God*

*A bitter grief, a shock severe
To part with those we loved so dear
Our loss is great; we'll not complain
But trust in God to meet again*

*Tis hard to part with those we love
Tho' parting days will come
Yet let us hope to meet above
For this not our home.*



The death roll

Thomas Michael **Anderson**, (aged 56) 26 Thirlmere Road,
James **Aspinall**, (24) 149 Elias St, Robert **Aspinall**, (19) 32 Bevington-hill

William **Barr**, (24) Childwall Ave, Smithdown Road , Robert **Brown**, (26), 68 Bispham-street , William **Burns**, 7, Brighton-street, carter in the employ of William Harper, killed in the street, William **Clegg**, (40), Langham Street , Christopher **Collins**, (28), 34 Regent-street , Patrick **Duffin**, (26), Cottenham-street, G **Hogget**, (17), Edgware-street Andrew **Howard**, (24), 63 Fountains-road, Edward **Jones**, (17), baker's errand boy, 37 Naylor-street, Patrick **Kelly**, (32), Flinders-street, Joseph **Langden**, 31, Orwell-road, John **McNaught**, (19), 28 Marwood-street, Edwin **Morris**, (40), Prince Edwin-lane, William Duncan **Murray**, (40), 23 Lyall-street , George **Owen**, (18), Kinmel-street , Arthur **Parry**, (31), Gwydir-street , David Edwards **Richards**, (21), Jamieson-road John **Simon**, (25), 59 Hartnup-street, John **Thornley**, (20), 51 Denman-street , Robert **McClelland**, Vescock-street , T **Bellion**, Atholl-street William **Bolden**, Fanner, age not known, Charles **Byden**, (30), John **Stewart**, (age not given), George **Knowles**, 43 Harrogate-street Albert **May**, 46 Havelock-street , Thomas **Daniels**, 13 Pleasant-view W **Chapman** , Charles **Roberts**

Three initially unrecognisable bodies included Frank Faulkner **Nation** who was burnt when he tried to rescue some women workers. He was identified by his father.

Bibby's oil mill was the scene of another tragedy on May 5, 1930, when a dust explosion on the 11th floor caused five deaths and 100 injuries.

Bibby's official history, *A Miller's Tale*, was published by the company in 1978; it is occasionally available on eBay or World of Books. The book has a wealth of illustrations and the amazing fact that Bibby's led the way with an odd form of advertising: its travelling salesmen fitted a special India rubber band to their bicycle tyres, leaving in the dust, for all to see, the legend: "For Best Results, Use Bibby Cake."

Will Bramhill (5920)

Also, if anyone is interested in their Welsh heritage, Google Books have a book, *Pedigrees of Anglesey and Carnarvonshire* [sic]. Will has used a PDF editor and turned all the trees around: so no more cricked necks! Liverpool Family Historian readers can access it here: <https://www.bramhill.net/anglesey-pedigrees.html>

A Silent Wedding

A Victorian Wedding with a Difference

On a September morning in 1877, an unusual crowd gathered at St Paul's Church in Burnley, Lancashire. Some came out of curiosity. Others came because they had heard that something extraordinary was about to take place. Victorian weddings often attracted spectators eager to admire the bride's dress, inspect the groom's appearance, or simply enjoy a little local excitement. But on this occasion, the attraction was something entirely different.

The bridegroom, Thomas **Cunliffe** of Oswaldtwistle, and the bride, Mary **Kershaw** of Burnley, were both deaf and mute from birth. The marriage service would not be spoken in the usual way. Instead, the familiar words would be translated into the language of the "*deaf and dumb*".

A newspaper report published in *The Blackburn Standard* on 15 September 1877 described how "*a considerable number of persons*" attended the ceremony, including members of "*the sterner sex*", who rarely appeared at morning weddings. They had come to witness something they had never seen before: a church wedding conducted through sign language.

Transcription – The Blackburn Standard, Saturday, September 15, 1877 – Burnley

THE BLACKBURN STANDARD, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1877.
BURNLEY. SINGULAR MARRIAGE AT ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.— Curiosity is the spring that moves the majority of those who attend a place of worship to see a marriage, but it is in respect to the attire of the bride and her maids and the appearance of the bridegroom and his supporters that inquisitiveness is usually manifested. On Saturday morning, however, a considerable number of persons, including some members of the sterner sex, were led to visit St. Paul's Church by a desire to see the marriage service conducted, the novelty being that the well-known words were translated into the language of the deaf and dumb. The bridegroom was Mr. Thomas Cunliffe, Oswaldtwistle, and the bride, Miss Mary Kershaw, of Burnley, both of whom lack the senses of hearing and speech. The service was conducted with an impressiveness that enhanced rather than detracted from its solemnity by the Rev. J. Dowling, chaplain of the Manchester Deaf and Dumb Asylum, who was assisted by the Rev. R. Nicholson, vicar, and the Rev. — Bastow, curate.

Singular Marriage at St Paul's Church. –

Curiosity is the spring that moves the majority of those who attend a place of worship to see a marriage, but it is in respect to the attire of the bride and her maids and the appearance of the bridegroom and his supporters that inquisitiveness is

usually manifested. On Saturday morning, however, a considerable number of persons, including some members of the sterner sex, were led to visit St. Paul's Church by a desire to see the marriage service conducted, the novelty being that the well-known words were translated into the language of the deaf and dumb. The bridegroom was Mr Thomas **Cunliffe**, Oswaldtwistle, and the bride, Miss Mary **Kershaw**, of Burnley, both of whom lack the sense of hearing and speech. The service was conducted with an impressiveness that enhanced rather than detracted from its solemnity by the Rev. J. **Dowling**, chaplain of the Manchester Deaf and Dumb Asylum, who was assisted by the Rev. R. **Nicholson**, vicar, and the Rev. **Bostow**, curate.

A Silent Ceremony in a Noisy World

It is difficult to imagine today just how unusual this must have seemed to Victorian observers. Church services in the nineteenth century were dominated by sound. Congregations listened to sermons, hymns echoed through stone buildings, and marriage vows were spoken aloud before family and friends. Yet at St Paul's Church that day, much of the ceremony unfolded through movement rather than speech.

1877 Marriage solemnized at <u>St. Paul's Church</u> in the <u>Town</u> of <u>Burnley</u> in the County of <u>Lancashire</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
40	Sept 8 th 1877	Thomas Cunliffe	33	Bachelor	None	15 Hartley St. Oswaldtwistle	Henry Cunliffe	Carter
		Mary Kershaw	25	Spinster	None	14 High St. Burnley	James Kershaw	Coal Miner
Married in the <u>St. Paul's Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <u>John A. W. Dowling</u> or after <u>Recess</u> by me, <u>Rev. A. W. Dowling</u> Chap. & Rector St. Paul's.								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, <u>Thomas A. Cunliffe</u>			In the presence of us, <u>John A. W. Dowling</u> <u>Mary Butterworth</u>					

Thomas Cunliffe and Mary Kershaw Marriage Record—8 September 1877

So, Who Were Thomas Cunliffe and Mary Kershaw?

Thomas Ramsbottom **Cunliffe** was born on 27 August 1844, the eldest child of Henry and Agnes (Nancy) **Cunliffe** nee **McGregor**. Henry was a labourer, initially working as a mason's labourer and later as a printworks labourer. Thomas grew up with his family in Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire.

Mary **Kershaw** was born on 11 November 1851 in Cliviger, Lancashire, a mining area near Burnley. Her father, James, was, unsurprisingly, a coal miner. Her mother was Rebecca **Kershaw**, nee **Wild**. Mary was the only

daughter and had three brothers. Mary's mother passed away in 1865, and on the 1871 census, Mary was living in Habergham Eaves, south of Burnley, with her father, stepmother Alice, brother William and 4 stepsiblings.

Thomas and Mary were recorded on multiple census records as being “*deaf and dumb since birth*”. Despite growing up around 20 miles apart, Thomas and Mary eventually found one another through Lancashire’s close-knit deaf community.

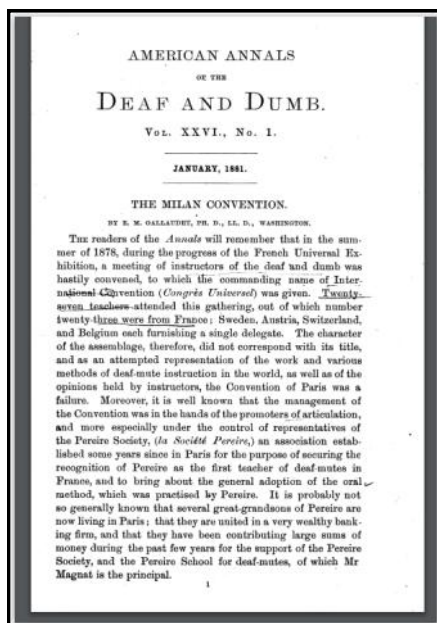
Life as Deaf Children in Victorian Lancashire

Like many deaf children of the Victorian era, Thomas and Mary may have attended the Manchester Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Old Trafford. Although no surviving record has yet been found proving this, it seems likely that an institution such as this—or the wider deaf community connected to it—provided the opportunity for a young man from Oswaldtwistle and a young woman from Burnley to meet. The asylum was more than a school. It was a social world where deaf children formed lifelong friendships and relationships, communicating through early forms of British Sign Language, fingerspelling, writing, and gesture.

A Monumental Shift for the Deaf

In the 1870s, deaf education stood at a crossroads. Traditional sign-based teaching methods still flourished, but a movement known as “oralism” was beginning to gain influence. Oralist educators believed deaf children should be taught to lip-read and speak, often discouraging the use of sign language altogether.

Just three years after Thomas and Mary’s wedding, the infamous Milan Conference of 1880 would promote oralism internationally and lead to the suppression of



sign language in many schools for decades. Their wedding, therefore, occurred during one of the last great periods in which sign language was publicly celebrated and respected within educational institutions.

Working in Lancashire's Cotton Mills

There is another fascinating aspect to Thomas and Mary's story.

Both spent their adult lives working in Lancashire's cotton industry, as we can tell from the census records, which recorded them as cotton weavers.

Lancashire's cotton mills were among the loudest workplaces in Britain. Thousands of power looms clattered continuously, creating a deafening environment where spoken conversation was almost impossible.

Hearing workers often relied on gestures, lip-reading and informal signs to communicate across the mill floor. Locally, this was sometimes known as "*mee-mawing*".

For Thomas and Mary, however, communication through signs was second nature. In a workplace where everyone struggled to hear, their fluency in visual communication may have given them an unexpected advantage. Their deafness in this workplace could have been their superpower.

A Curious Census Entry

Thomas and Mary had three children: Agnes (born 1879), James (born 1883) and Hannah (born 1887).

One census entry raises an intriguing question. In 1881, two-year-old Agnes was recorded as being "*deaf and dumb*".

As later census records and the course of her life showed this was not the case. Was this simply an assumption made by an enumerator who knew her parents were deaf? Did a neighbour perhaps say to him, "*They are all deaf in that house*"?

It is impossible to know for certain. At just two years of age, many children are only beginning to develop understandable speech. Agnes may have been perfectly capable of hearing but slower to speak because sign language was the primary language used within the home.

Whatever the explanation for Agnes's census entry, one thing is certain: Thomas and Mary raised a family that successfully bridged the deaf and hearing worlds.

Hannah's Story

Their youngest daughter, Hannah, is my great-grandmother. In 1910, Hannah married Robert William **Barnes** in Oswaldtwistle. Her mother Mary, died in 1909 and her father, Thomas, in 1913, not long before Hannah's own children were born. Hannah taught sign language to her two daughters, Cissy (my grandmother, born 1914) and Gladys (born 1918). My grandmother, in turn, taught sign language to her own children. Even after the original reason for learning those signs had faded with time, the language remained as a treasured family inheritance.

What makes this story even more remarkable is that the connection has continued into the twenty-first century.



Hannah Cunliffe with Cissie and Gladys circa 1920



Cissy Barnes, circa 1934

From Victorian Sign Language to Modern Auslan

A few years ago, my brother and his wife both decided to make a career change. After learning Auslan—the Australian sign language—they gained qualifications and commenced work in Queensland schools as Educational Interpreters, helping deaf children access education and communicate confidently in the classroom.

CODA, DODA and a Legacy That Continues

term widely used within the deaf community. We laughed as we realised that perhaps a new acronym could apply to us: DODA—“*Descendants of Deaf Adults*.”

Of course, it is not an official term, but it perfectly captures how the influence of Thomas **Cunliffe** and Mary **Kershaw** continues to ripple through the generations. Nearly 150 years after their wedding, their descendants are still connected to the deaf community, still learning its languages, and still helping to build bridges between deaf and hearing worlds.

Legacy of Love

When Thomas **Cunliffe** and Mary **Kershaw** stood at the altar of St Paul’s Church in 1877, the inquisitive crowd saw a novelty—a silent ceremony in a roaring industrial world. They could not have foreseen how beautifully that silence would flourish.

The dignity witnessed that day did not fade with the echo of the vows. It lived on through Hannah, through my grandmother Cissy and her sister Gladys, through the generations that followed, and now through Thomas and Mary’s great-great-grandson and his wife, who have worked with deaf children on the other side of the world.

For me, that is what family history is about—not merely names, dates and records, but discovering the remarkable human stories that continue to shape lives long after the people themselves have gone.

And perhaps that is the greatest legacy Thomas and Mary left behind: not simply a family tree, but a continuing story of connection, communication, and an enduring vocabulary of love.

Karen Thompson (9730)

Education for the Deaf in Liverpool

I was fascinated to read the previous article regarding a silent marriage. So much so, that I wondered what the provision was and/or had been for deaf and dumb people in Liverpool.

Education for the deaf in Liverpool began in 1825 with the founding of the **Liverpool School for the Deaf and Dumb**. The city's deaf history evolved from early manual sign-based instruction to the restrictive "*pure oralism*" of the late 19th century, eventually embracing modern inclusive and total communication practices.

In **1825** local businessman Edward **Comer** founded the **Liverpool School for the Deaf and Dumb** after attending a lecture on deaf education. It began on Wood Street as a pioneering day-school and later moved to Oxford Street in 1839.

In **1864** **The Liverpool Adult Deaf and Dumb Benevolent Society** (now the **Merseyside Society for Deaf People**) was established to provide religious and community access, initially operating out of the Oxford Street school.

During the late 19th Century and following the international shift that banned sign language, local education shifted to an oral-only approach (teaching speech and lip-reading) (**The Oralist Shift**).

Then in **1927: The Liverpool School for the Deaf** relocated to Lancaster Road in Birkdale.

By the the school was renamed multiple times to reflect changing terminology, becoming the **Liverpool School for Partially Deaf** (1948) and **Birkdale School for Hearing Impaired Children** (1973). It served as a primary educational hub on Merseyside. The Birkdale school closed in 2003, marking the end of traditional residential deaf education in the immediate area as policies shifted toward mainstream schooling and inclusive education.

Alongside formal schooling, the **Merseyside Society for Deaf People (MSDP)** has remained a pillar of the community, supporting the educational, social, and professional lives of deaf individuals. Their historic centre on Princes Avenue, opened in 1887, provided a vital space for the deaf community to learn, socialize, and receive support.

For further details on local deaf heritage, you can explore the archives at the [Merseyside Society for Deaf People](#) or historical reviews available via [University College London](#).

Alison Anyon (Editor)

Zoom Talks

Welcome to the listings for our Zoom talks coming up in the next few months.

Members will receive an invitation each month with a link to go to Eventbrite and book their ticket, which will arrive a day or two before the talk from the Zoom Admin email address. If you don't receive these invitations, please check that you have renewed your membership as that list is provided for the invitations to be sent to.

Generally speaking, we will hold these talks on Wednesday evenings, starting at 7pm, but this may vary depending on the time zone the speaker lives in. However, if it is at an unusual time we will usually ask the speaker if we can record their talk and place a link in our Members Area for everybody to catch up with.

2026 Itinerary

Sept	To Be Arranged - Do you have a tale to tell our members? Then get in touch via zoom-admin@lswlfhs.org.uk	
21 Oct	The Mourning Brooch - Book 3	Jean Renwick
18 Nov	Ragged, Poor and Mischievous or Young Thieves and Street Arabs	Linda Hammond
16 Dec	Poachers and Gangsters. The Jaques Brothers and the Notorious Long Company	Gareth Winrow

The link to watch the previous recordings is in the Members Area of the website—www.lswlfhs.org

An update on previous talks

We are finding that our Zoom Talks are very popular with our members. The last couple being very well attended -

In May **Darris Williams** gave us a talk about **Familysearch** and how to use it well, this is a very important website particularly for overseas

records as well as being a free site to use, although a free account needs to be created first.

In June we had an extra talk in celebration of the Society's 50 Anniversary, and our good friend **Hilary Hartigan** regaled us with the history and doings of her great grandfather who was a member of the Police Force here in Liverpool.

Finally, our July talk by **Brian Groom** covered over 900,000 years of **These Isles** with many references to Liverpool and the South West Lancashire area, both archeological and political.

All of these speakers allowed us to record their talks and a link to them is in the Members Area of our website so that you can enjoy them if you missed them.

Mary Allan
Zoom Administrator

**The link to watch the previous recordings is in the
Members Area of the website**

www.lswlfhs.org

Apology



I would to apologise to Marie **Paterson (5296)** for putting the wrong name to the picture of her mother in the June 2026 Edition of the Journal.

Her article was titled '*Unsolved Family History Mysteries*' and Marie included a photograph of her mother Connie **Cregeen**. For some unknown reason I appended the name of Colleen **Cregeen** by mistake.

Connie Cregeen at age 21

New Members

New and old Members' Interest's detailed below consist of the membership number and interest in terms of **SURNAME and INITIAL, LOCATION and DATE.**

**A maximum of only ten interests
can be published for the sake of space.**

**Anyone needing more than ten interests
can see the extra numbers published on our website.**

Members reading this section who identify an interest they are looking for, should note the membership number of the contributing member and contact them through the '**Members Only**' area of our website:

www.lswlfhs.org.uk

We welcome our new members, numbers **9837—9848** who have joined most recently and wish them every success with their research.

9837	G Riley	9838	A Laws	9839	G Ashcroft
9840	L Howard	9841	W Lowther	9842	J & R Anderson
9843	N Jones	9844	C Clarke	9845	L Young
9846	W Dawson	9847	R Caren	9848	N Griffin

Members' Interests

9840

Mallerby	Joseph	LAN/Liverpool	1840<
Witherup	William	LAN/Everton	1840-1860
Smith	Ellen	LAN/Liverpool	1837-1870
Smith	Samuel	LAN/Liverpool	1808-1900

What is a Gateway Ancestor?

In previous articles Mike **Halligan** has used the phrase “*Gateway Ancestor*” and I thought it might be a good idea to provide some information on what a “*Gateway Ancestor*” actually is. I hope you find this useful.

A **gateway ancestor** in British genealogy refers to an ancestor in your family tree who serves as the “*bridge*” or entry point between every day, working-class ancestry and well-documented medieval nobility or] royalty. Proving a lineage to one opens the door to thousands of years of recorded pedigree.

How the Gateway Works

- **The Social Divide:** Historically, average citizens left sparse records. However, the aristocracy, landed gentry, and nobility were highly documented.
- **The Connection:** A gateway ancestor is typically a younger son, an impoverished noble, or someone who fell from wealth. Because they were related to elite families, their births, marriages, and inheritances were recorded.

The Link: Once you connect your family tree to this single documented ancestor, you can trace your lineage back through their aristocratic connections to British or European royalty.

Common Triggers & Clues in UK Records

When researching UK family history, you can identify potential gateway ancestors by looking out for the following historical and genealogical markers:

- **Heraldic Visitations:** If you find your ancestor listed in official pedigree records maintained by the College of Arms during historical visitations.
- **Occupational Titles:** Mentions of “Esquire” (Esq.), “Gentleman” (Gent.), or “Clergyman/Vicar” in records before the 19th century.

- **Wills and Landed Estates:** Tracing an ancestor who inherited or owned a specific manor or estate via The National Archives can lead to the gentry.
- **Monumental Inscriptions:** Elaborate family crests or coats of arms on gravestones or inside local churches.

Verifying a Royal Connection

To ensure a connection is factually correct, genealogists rely heavily on peer-reviewed, authoritative compendiums rather than online family trees. Key resources for UK research include:

- **The Plantagenet Ancestry:** A multi-volume series by Douglas Richardson that documents royal and noble gateway lines.
- **Magna Carta Lineage:** Many gateways tie directly to Magna Carta surety barons. You can use the Magna Charta Sureties to verify these aristocratic links.

Alison Anyon
Editor

Lancashire Parish Register Society

Registered Charity No. 511396

<https://www.genuki.org.uk/LPRS>



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News from the Groups

Liverpool Group Page

Chair: Susan Atkins

Secretary: Geoff Bibby

In 1981 it was realised that members based in and around Liverpool itself, were the only group unrepresented in the Society and so the Liverpool branch was formed with its own local committee. We continue to meet each month, with several founder members still attending regularly. Half of our regular's travel from the Wirral, North Wales and all parts of Lancashire and we frequently welcome overseas members to the meetings or visitors who have arrived via the weekly Help Desk.

The Liverpool group have volunteers who hold a weekly help desk each Tuesday, 1:00pm till 3:30pm, at the **Liverpool Central Library, 3rd Floor, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EW.**

Our monthly Meetings are held in **Room 2, 4th Floor, Liverpool Central Library, William Brown Street, Liverpool, L3 8EW** on the second Tuesday of each month. Doors open at 5:30pm for a 5:45pm start and meetings finish no later than 7:45pm. £1 for refreshments.

8 Sep	Ag Labs & Farm Workers	Ian Cooper
13 Oct	Members Evening: Occupations	Everybody

**No meetings are held in July and August or
November and December (due to the Christmas Market)**

On Tuesday 26th May the Liverpool Central Library staff surprised the Help Desk volunteers with elderflower cordial and cakes to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of LSWLFHS. The other helpers who couldn't make it that day include **John Orrett, Gill, Sylvia and Margaret Clare.**

Unfortunately, the combined day out of a river cruise and the Western Approaches museum, with a guided tour, to celebrate the anniversary had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the River Mersey Ferry's going out of action.

Also, our last meeting before the summer break on 9th June took an

unfortunate turn when the wife of the guest speaker **David Hearn** ended up in A&E for the evening. So, it too will be rescheduled for the future as everyone was looking forward to David's talk on "Liverpool's Links with Ireland." Our best wishes for a speedy recovery go to Mrs **Hearn**.

Skelmersdale & Upholland Group Page

Chairman: Bill Fairclough

Secretary: Caroline Fairclough

Welcome to the Skelmersdale and UpHolland group's page. Here you will find information relating to our group, where we meet, upcoming speakers and any projects we are carrying out. Traditionally there are no meetings in July and August, please see our programme page on the website for full details. Project work may well continue into July and August though not in the Community Centre.

New members are always welcome at any of our meetings and our members are always willing to try and help break down a '*brick wall*'.

The Group meets at **Upholland Methodist Church, Alma Hill, Upholland, WN8 0NR** at 7:00pm for 7:30 pm on the first Tuesday of each month - unless stated otherwise.

1 Sep	Welcome Back Evening	No Speaker
6 Oct	AGM and Help Night	No Speaker
3 Nov	West Lancashire War Heroes	Dot Broady-Hawkes
1 Dec	Christmas Bring and Share	No Speaker

Previous Talks

Louise Wade came and did a PowerPoint presentation on 2 June 2026 entitled **A Trip to the Zoo**.

It was interesting to hear a brief history of zoos and how they started and people going to visit them. The main focus of the presentation was Bellevue Zoo in Manchester.

Southport Group Page

Chairman: Ian Cooper

Secretary: Paula Reese

Your current committee consists of **Ann, Ian, Paula, Shelagh and Vicki**. Our aim is to provide a programme that you will enjoy consisting of talks on various subjects from guest speakers, group meetings where we will share our findings with others and outings to record offices. Non-Society members are welcome.

Programme

Meetings are on the second Friday of each month, 7.00 for 7.15pm, except for August. Meetings will be at the **Station Master's House**, between **Birkdale Station, PR8 4AR**. and the station car park. Buses 49 and X2 also stop outside.

The building has been made fully accessible for wheelchairs and buggies, with a permanent ramp to the front door and a lift for anyone who needs it.

Refreshments from 7.15pm.

No Meetings are held in July and August

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------------|
| 11 Sep | Southport Streets—Street names, how they originated and why they were changed | David Walshe |
| 9 Oct | A walk through of our website | |
| 13 Nov | What did you do in the war, Daddy? | |
| 11 Dec | Christmas Meal | |

Southport Group Meetings

Friday 8 May 2026

Wills & Probate, a talk by Susan Atkins

Susan's talk focussed on the history of wills and probate in England & Wales-Civil Probate from 1858 and Church Court System pre1858 plus other related records. She also spoke about where to find pre1858 probate records for Lancashire which is most likely in one of three places -Lancashire Record Office at Preston, Prerogative Court of York at Borthwick Institute in York and Prerogative Court of Canterbury on The National Archives website with a mention of Family Search as well. Susan

also briefly touched on the other areas of the British Isles- Scotland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands plus Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland.

Friday 12 June 2026

Family Stories True or False. A group chat.

Susan Atkins had been searching since the 1980s for her Great-Grandfather, John Henry **Barsby**, who was supposedly lost at sea around 1870, Susan discovered via Ancestry that he had actually eloped to Australia in 1859 to lead a double life. Before abandoning his UK family for good and raising a second family under alternating names, he briefly returned to England in 1862, resulting in the birth of his daughter Emma whose mother fabricated the shipwreck story to cover up the scandal. Now armed with the truth and a photo from his Australian descendants, Susan's presentation proves that there is often only an ounce of truth in a pound of family legend—so you must never give up on a brick wall!

Sally **Moss** captivated the group with a story about a family story linking her family with Isaac **Newton**. She described her thorough research, but alas, much to our disappointment she discovered that there was no family connection.

Vicki **Smith's** family story claimed that her paternal granddad, Henry **Pierpoint** (born 1894), ran away to sea, was shipwrecked on his first voyage, and had to be rescued from Ireland by his mother—a tale she could never substantiate. Instead, records reveal he was formally indentured at age fifteen in 1909 and successfully climbed the ranks to earn his Master's ticket by January 1918. The real drama occurred in 1917 aboard the troopship **SS Tyndareus**, which miraculously survived striking a mine off South Africa, ensuring the safe rescue of all 3,500 troops, their five pet dogs, and the ship itself.

Ian **Cooper** spoke about two theories as to why there was a falling out between his 2x great grandfather James **Blundell** and his father George **Blundell**. Ian's mother suggested that someone in the family had married a "farm girl", while her sister's point of view was that a family member got a farm girl pregnant. Through his research, Ian discovered that both were right, James had married a farm girl and his father had got a farm girl pregnant.

Friday 10 July 2026
Visit to Southport Lifeboat Station

Elaine **Almond** and Andy **Greenyer** led a very interesting and enjoyable history talk and tour of the Southport Lifeboat Station.

We discovered that entirely run by volunteers and available 24 hours a day, the Southport Offshore Rescue Trust operates two D-class small boats and two drones—flown by commercial pilots—and two quad bikes to cover a massive 35-square-mile area of the Sefton Coast, stretching from the Mersey to the Ribble and 25 miles out to sea. This is a challenging terrain encompassing everything from beach, mudflats and sand dunes to marshes and pinewoods.

Over 150 years, 300 ships have been wrecked here, often washed up by southwest winds, including the **Star of Hope** at Ainsdale in 1833. The early service relied on local fishermen and vessels like the **Eliza Fernley**, which had to be horse-pulled to the water and rowed with oars.

Infamously, on the 9th of December 1886, the **Mexico** sank off the Southport coast. The **Eliza Fernley** was launched as was the Lytham boat, the **Laura Janet**. All told 27 lifeboat crew members were lost — including family members serving side-by-side on the same boat, leaving only two survivors, both from the **Eliza Fernley**.

While the original station closed in 1922, Cath **Watson** launched a fundraising drive in 1987 following the heart-breaking loss of her son, Geoffrey **Clements**, and two others, Colin **Brookfield** and Stephen **Woodbridge** off the Southport coast during a severe storm, there being only one survivor, Patrick **Vaccano**. This resulted in the new station, which was opened in 1989.

Ian Cooper

Warrington Group Page

Chairman: Peter Joliffe

Secretary: Agnes Ingram

Meetings are held at **Penketh (Meeting Lane) Community Centre Meeting Lane, Penketh, Warrington WA5 2BG, UK**. Meetings start at 7:00pm (doors open at 6:30pm) on the fourth Monday of each month, except for December. Refreshments are provided for £1.

28 Sep	Irish Records	YouTube
26 Oct	Film Night	No Speaker
23 Nov	Members Evening & Quiz	No Speaker

Please note: there is no meeting in December

The helpdesk is based at **Warrington Library, Museum Street, Warrington, WA1 1JB** on the following Saturdays between 10am and 12 noon:

26 September; 24 October; and 21 November.

For further details please contact: [**warrington@lswlfhs.org.uk**](mailto:warrington@lswlfhs.org.uk)

The Warrington group will be having a presence at Penketh's village fete on the 29th of August which is held on **Greystone Recreation Ground, Warrington Rd, Penketh, Warrington, WA5 2EU**.

They have also reached an agreement with Golden Square Management to hold an open day in September, along with some local history groups, in the centre of Warrington. Golden Square are most enthusiastic to support us and we are looking to make it an annual event.

More details to follow on our website.

www.lswlfhs.org.uk

Widnes Group Page

Welcome to our group page from your committee members Claire, Gill and Sue.

Widnes Family History Group was formed in 1994 and is one of the five groups that form part of the Liverpool & Southwest Lancashire Family History Society.

We meet at 7pm on the last Wednesday of each month, except December, at **Upton Community Centre, Hough Green Road, Widnes, WA8 4PF.**

Meetings currently consist of members research evenings, with our library available to browse. Help is offered from our committee members and members of the group.

23 Sep	Members Research Night	No Speaker
28 Oct	Members Research Night	No Speaker
25 Nov	Members Research Night	No Speaker

1911 Liverpool General Strike

AKA

“Great transport workers strike”

The strike began in Southampton on Wed 14 June 1911 when the National Sailor’s and Fireman’s Union (later to become the RMT in 1990) were demanding better pay (50/- old shillings a year increase) and improved working conditions for their workers. Many other workers across the country also went on strike in support, including those in Liverpool. They included dockers, railway workers, sailor’s and other tradesmen.

On 5 August 1911, railway workers in Liverpool walked out in an unofficial strike and the action spread across the city until over 50,000 workers were on strike. Liverpool dockers then boycotted rail traffic in solidarity and they were locked out by their employers. The strike

paralysed Liverpool commerce for most of the summer of 1911.

The following Sunday, over 85,000 people gathered outside St George's Hall, Lime Street, Liverpool to demonstrate in support of the strikers and to listen to Tom **Mann** give a speech.

Over 350 men, women and children were injured when the police began to brutally attack the demonstrators. This led to fighting between the police and the Liverpool working class which continued over several days and nights.

On 15 August, demonstrators attempted to free prisoners from a van taking them to prison. Troops opened fire and shot dead John **Sutcliffe**, a transport worker and Michael **Prendergast**, a docker. Soldiers also bayoneted several other workers.

King George V urged the Liberal government to give the military a “*free hand*” to teach “*the mob*” a lesson. He urged that strikes should be banned and if that was not possible, that picketing should be outlawed.

In response to the 3,500 soldiers who were deployed to Liverpool, a strike committee, chaired by Tom **Mann** and which was formed to represent all workers in the dispute, called a general strike. In Liverpool around 60,000 workers walked out and the city was virtually paralysed. Nothing could be moved without the permission of the strike committee. Both employers and government were terrified by the display of militancy and solidarity in Liverpool.

The strike also transformed trade unionism on Merseyside. For the first time general trade unions were able to establish themselves on a permanent footing and become genuine organisations of and for the working class.

As **Mann** said, the ruling class “...saw that there was a power in the hands of the workers that they had never dreamed of. Solidarity had truly worked wonders and many of the capitalists thought that already, the social revolution was upon them”.

The then Home Secretary, Winston **Churchill**, had a cruiser, HMS Antrim, anchored in the Mersey, ready for all-out war against the strikers.

72 days after the strike began, the strike committee called an end to the action on 24 August 1911.

The Labour party leadership advocated tough legislation clamping down on strikers' rights. These proposals were rapidly abandoned after outraged protests from party members.

What the Liverpool general strike achieved was a decisive shift in the balance of class forces in the city. Workers who before the strike had been too scared of the sack to join a union, won improved pay and conditions. Union membership across the city rose dramatically. Nationally between the years 1910 to 1914 union membership increased from 2.5 million to 4.5 million members.

Alison Anyon (Editor)

Victorian Liverpool



The **Church of Our Lady and St Nicholas**, often referred to as St Nick's or the Sailors' Church, is one of Liverpool's oldest and most symbolically important buildings. A place of worship has stood on this site for more than 750 years, overlooking the River Mersey and serving the city's maritime community. The earliest chapel, St Mary del Quay, is recorded in the mid-13th

century and was used as a chapel of ease for the main parish church at Walton.

As Liverpool grew into a busy port, a larger church became necessary. Land was granted in 1353 to build a new chapel, and the Church of St Nicholas was consecrated in 1361–62. St Nicholas, the patron saint of sailors, became closely associated with the city's seafaring identity. For centuries, the church was the first and last landmark sailors saw as they entered or left the Mersey.

The church has been rebuilt several times. A distinctive lantern spire, which was added in 1746, collapsed dramatically in 1810, killing 25 people, mainly children from a local charity school; the tower was rebuilt by

1815. The medieval church was later replaced, and the current building, designed by Edward C. **Butler**, was completed in 1952 after wartime bombing destroyed much of the earlier structure.

Today, Our Lady and St Nicholas remains the Parish Church of Liverpool, a Grade II listed building and a living symbol of the city's maritime heritage, resilience, and long-standing Christian community.



The **Albert Dock** symbolizes Liverpool's maritime power, and is one of the city's most iconic landmarks, and a masterpiece of 19th-century dock engineering. Designed by Jesse **Hartley** and Philip **Hardwick**, construction on the dock began in 1841 and it was officially opened in 1846, with structural completion following in 1847.

It was revolutionary for its time; the first dock complex in Britain built entirely from cast iron, brick, and stone, with no structural wood, making it far more fire resistant than earlier warehouses.

When it opened, the Albert Dock transformed the way goods were stored and handled. Its secure, fireproof warehouses allowed valuable cargo, such as cotton, sugar, tea, and tobacco, to be unloaded directly from ships into bonded storage. According to the dock's own historical account, traders could even conduct business before import taxes were due, speeding up commercial activity and cutting ship turnaround times dramatically.

By the late 19th century, the dock was one of the busiest in the world, reflecting Liverpool's dominance in global trade. However, as shipping technology changed, the dock declined and eventually closed to commercial traffic in the 1970s.

A major restoration project in the 1980s brought the Albert Dock back to life. It reopened in 1988 as a cultural and leisure destination and it is now home to the Merseyside Maritime Museum, Tate Liverpool, and The Beatles Story.

Today, the Royal Albert Dock stands as a symbol of Liverpool's maritime

heritage and one of the most visited attractions in the city.



Moving away from the waterfront and inland, **Liverpool Town Hall** is one of the finest surviving examples of Georgian civic architecture in Britain, standing prominently near the junction of High Street, Dale Street, Castle Street and Water Street in the heart of the city. The current building was begun in 1749 and completed in 1754, designed by the

distinguished architect John **Wood the Elder**. After **Wood's** death, later extensions and alterations were carried out by John **Foster Senior** and supervised by James **Wyatt** from 1785, giving the building much of its present grandeur.

The Town Hall occupies a site associated with Liverpool's civic administration for over 500 years, replacing earlier municipal buildings that The Town Hall occupies a site associated with Liverpool's civic administration for over 500 years, replacing earlier municipal buildings that once stood nearby. Its elegant Georgian façade, domed roof, and richly decorated interiors reflect Liverpool's rapid rise in the 18th century as a major port and commercial centre. The building is now Grade I listed and described as "*one of the finest surviving 18th-century town halls*" in the country.

Over the centuries, Liverpool Town Hall has witnessed royal visits, civic ceremonies, political events, and public celebrations. Despite suffering damage from fires and later from bombing during the Second World War, it has been carefully restored and continues to serve as the official seat of the Lord Mayor of Liverpool.

Today, the Town Hall remains a symbol of Liverpool's civic identity, admired for its architectural beauty and its deep connection to the city's maritime and political history.

St John's Market has been a central part of Liverpool's commercial life for more than two centuries. The original market hall was designed by

John **Foster** Jr. and opened on 7 March 1822, following construction that began in 1820. At the time, Liverpool was expanding rapidly, and the new market was celebrated as one of the most advanced buildings of its kind. Covering almost two acres, it was the first large-scale covered market hall in the country, lit entirely by gas and supported by a forest of cast-iron columns that impressed visiting architects and visitors alike.



The market quickly became a bustling centre of trade, offering everything from fresh produce to textiles. Its location on Great Charlotte Street placed it at the heart of the growing city, close to Lime Street Station and the civic buildings around St George's Plateau. By the late 19th century, the exterior was rebuilt, giving the market a more imposing Victorian façade.

Despite its importance, the original hall was demolished in 1964 to make way for the new St John's Shopping Centre, part of Liverpool's post-war redevelopment. A modern indoor market opened on the site in 1971, continuing the tradition of local traders and independent stalls.

Today, St John's Market remains a symbol of Liverpool's trading heritage — an evolving space that reflects the city's resilience, reinvention, and long history as a hub of commerce and community.



The **Liverpool School for the Blind**, originally known as the **Liverpool School for the Indigent Blind**, was founded in 1791 and is one of the most historically significant institutions of its kind in the world. It is the oldest continuously operating school for blind pupils, and

uniquely, it was the first ever founded by a blind person, the poet and abolitionist Edward **Rushton**.

Rushton, blinded after contracting ophthalmia while resisting the brutal treatment of enslaved Africans aboard a slave ship, became a passionate advocate for social justice. With the support of allies including the blind musician John **Christie** and the Reverend Henry **Dannett**, he established the school to provide education, training, and dignity to blind children and adults at a time when no such provision existed in Britain.

The school's first premises were on Commutation Row, before moving in 1800 to a purpose built site on London Road, where residential accommodation was introduced for the first time. It later became known as the **Royal School for the Blind**, reflecting its national importance and pioneering role in disability education.

The institution was remarkable not only for its early date but also for its progressive approach. It was the first school in the world to offer structured education and vocational training to blind adults as well as children, helping generations of students gain independence and employment.

Today, the **Royal School for the Blind** continues to operate in Liverpool, preserving more than 230 years of history and remaining a symbol of the city's long-standing commitment to inclusion, education, and social reform.



Visitors to Liverpool often arrive via the city's **Lime Street Station**. Lime Street, which is one of the world's oldest and most historically significant railway termini, officially opened on 15 August 1836. This new city centre terminus of the pioneering Liverpool and Manchester Railway replaced the earlier Crown Street station at Edge Hill. Designed

by John **Cunningham**, Arthur **Holme**, and John **Foster Jr**, the station quickly became a vital gateway linking Liverpool's booming port with the industrial towns of Lancashire.

The station's early success meant it needed expansion almost immediately. Within six years of opening, demand had grown so rapidly that major extensions were required. Lime Street soon became one of the busiest passenger stations in Britain, and today it is recognised as the oldest still-operating grand terminus mainline station in the world.

A key engineering achievement associated with the station is the Lime Street–Edge Hill tunnel, one of the earliest railway tunnels ever constructed, designed by William **Mackenzie**. Over time, Lime Street became a major hub for the London and Northwestern Railway, and later the London, Midland and Scottish Railway, reflecting its national importance.

The station has continued to evolve through the 20th and 21st centuries, undergoing major modernisation while retaining its historic character. Today, it remains Liverpool's principal rail gateway, serving millions of passengers each year and standing as a symbol of the city's central role in the birth and development of the railway age.

Mike Halligan (9801)

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Quebec Quay, Liverpool

The links between Liverpool and Canada go back to at least 1772, when Charles **Dixon** sailed from Liverpool in the Duke of York, to found a family dynasty in Nova Scotia. The plentiful timber available along the Canadian coast was a prime attraction - hence the port of Liverpool's Canada Dock. Emigration to Canada via Liverpool continued throughout the 19th century and in 1847 emigration peaked owing to the Irish famine.

The last scheduled passenger service from Liverpool to Canada was the Empress of Canada, which sailed for Montreal on 7 November 1971.

Quebec Quay in Liverpool is now a modern residential waterfront development built between 1996 and 2002 on the historic southern dock system near Coburg Dock and the South Ferry Basin (locally called the 'Cocklehole').

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Little Canning Street, Liverpool

This photograph was taken in June 2013 and shows the small street which is located behind Huskisson Street. The tide began to turn noticeably in the 1990s and the area is now much sought after.

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The **Georgian Quarter** is on the eastern edge of Liverpool city centre, England, characterised by almost entirely residential Georgian architecture. The area stretches from **Gambier** Terrace and **Roscoe** Street in the west to **Falkner** Street in the east, with Upper Parliament Street to the south and Mount Pleasant and Oxford Street to the north. The name 'Canning' comes from one of its principal thoroughfares, Canning Street, which is named after George **Canning**, (1770–1827), a British politician who served as Foreign Secretary and, briefly, Prime Minister. In 1800, the area was built for and populated by the extremely wealthy of Liverpool. With the city's decline in the 20th century, the area grew unfashionable, and much of it became derelict. Areas along Upper Parliament St, Grove St and Myrtle St were demolished. The area's changing fortunes over time were explored in the 2018 BBC Two documentary series ***A House Through Time***, when historian **David Olusoga** researched the lives of the inhabitants of 62 Falkner Street from 1841 to the present day.

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