

**WLCT**

heritage & arts

# PAST FORWARD

Produced by Wigan Heritage Service

Issue No. 63

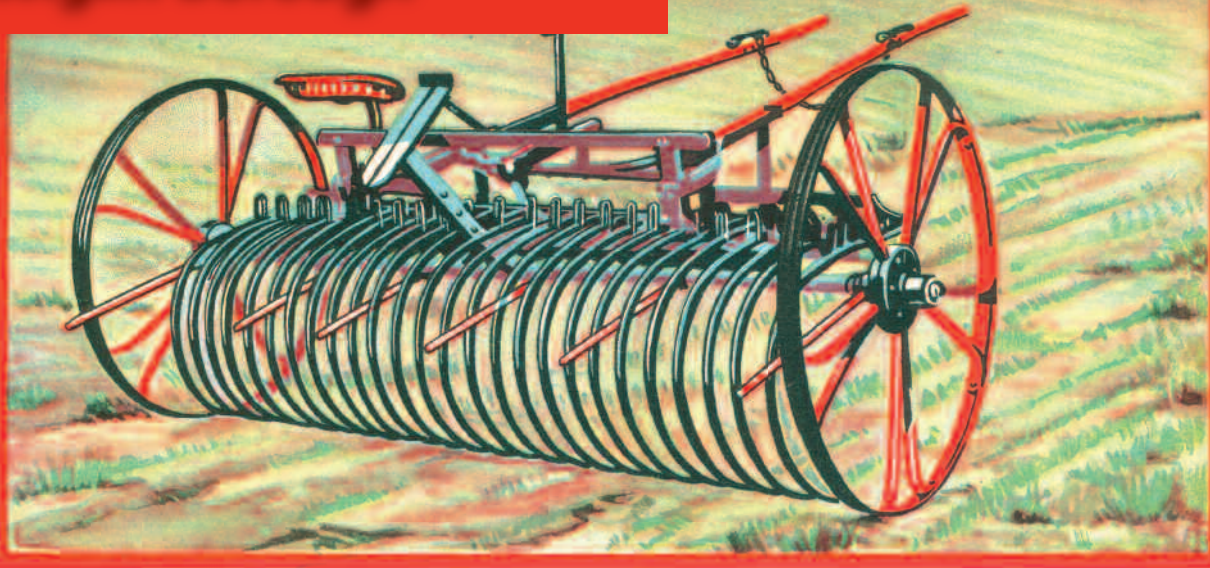
April - July 2013

# Allion

## EXPANDING HORSE RAKES

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**Make It, Spin It, Can It:  
Getting Down to Business  
in Wigan Borough**



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**FRONT COVER**

Advertisement for machinery produced by Harrison, McGregor at the Albion works, Leigh.

## Letter from the Editorial Team

Welcome to Issue 63. As usual, this issue includes articles on all manner of different subjects, from Second World War air raid shelters, to the leisure time of mill workers and the restoration of a small part of Wigan's industrial heritage.

The issue also includes two articles placed as runners-up in our recent Essay Competition, by Max Finney and Peter Tyldesley.

Readers will also notice a few articles on the theme of diaries. The Archives Service is now beginning to publish manuscripts from the Edward Hall Diary Collection with the help of the many volunteers working on these unique social records.

The new temporary exhibition has opened at the Museum of Wigan Life. Entitled, Make It, Spin It, Can It, the exhibition charts the Borough's rich industrial and commercial history. Entry is free and the exhibition is on until September 2013.

And finally, a few members of the Heritage team are shortly to leave the service to well-earned retirement: Linda Marsh, Terry Meehan, Christine Watts and Yvonne Webb. We would like to thank them for their contribution to the service over many years and wish them happiness and good health for the future.

### Information for Contributors

We always welcome articles and letters for publication from both new and existing contributors.

If you would like to submit an article for **PAST FORWARD**, please note that:

- Publication is at discretion of Editorial Team
- The Editorial Team may edit your submission
- Published and rejected submissions will be disposed of, unless you request for them to be returned
- Submissions may be held on file for publication in a future edition

- Articles must be received by the copy date if inclusion in the next issue is desired

**Submission Guidelines**

- Electronic submissions are preferred, although handwritten ones will be accepted
- We prefer articles to have a maximum length of 1,000 words
- Include photographs or images where possible – these can be returned if requested
- Include your name and address – we will not pass on your details to anyone unless you have given us permission to do so

We aim to acknowledge receipt of all submissions.

**CONTACT DETAILS:** pastforward@wlct.org or The Editor at **PAST FORWARD**, Museum of Wigan Life, Library Street, Wigan WN1 1NU.



## Make It, Spin It, Can It

A new and exciting exhibition has opened at the Museum of Wigan Life, celebrating the Borough's past and present achievements as a powerhouse of industrial creativity, innovation and productivity, and focusing on some of Wigan's biggest names including Heinz, Poole's and Bulldog Tools.

Many products are on display as part of the exhibition including furniture, shoes, soft drinks, pharmaceuticals, pewter and a self-heating can of Heinz soup from the Second World War.

The exhibition showcases the best of industry in the Borough, including firms still operating today such as Bulldog Tools, Poole's Pies and Waterfields, as well as the contribution made by local workers.

Wigan's written business history dates from the reign of Henry III and the granting of Wigan's first charter in 1246 that gave the corporation the right to trade and charge fees for markets and fairs.

Early industries included clock making, pewter and bell founding. In fact, Wigan's pewter industry rivalled the output of London in the late seventeenth century. Heavy engineering and iron working based on the transport, coal and textile industries replaced these earlier industries. The availability of natural resources, such as coal, iron ore, chemicals and water fuelled a rapid industrial growth.

The Borough also produced innovators. For example did you know that the man who invented the motor used in the Bullet Train came from Atherton?

A highlight of the exhibition is historical film footage of the Borough's industry in action which is complemented by images from the Archive Service Collections.

'Make It, Spin It, Can It' runs from the 18 February to the 28 September 2013 at the Museum of Wigan Life on Library Street.



### Copy Deadline for Issue 64

Contributors please note the deadline for the receipt of material for publication is Friday, 28 June 2013.



# Edward Hall

## The early years

One of the gems in the Wigan Archives is a collection of diaries and documents donated by Edward Hall. For the past few years a team of volunteers have been transcribing the diaries to enable them to be made available on the internet and as books. At the time this work started little was known about Edward Hall, but the collection contains some of his personal papers and it has been possible to build up a profile of his long and interesting life. This piece outlines Hall's story from his birth until 1926, and more details will be available on the Archives Service website.

Hall was born in 1898 in Barnsley, into a family of wealthy foundry owners. His grandfather was one of the co-founders of the firm of Qualter Hall (which still exists today) and which in the early 1900s was run by his father and uncles. In 1908, the increasing prosperity of the business enabled Edward's father to build a handsome stone house to his own design, complete with a large garden, tennis court and greenhouses. He also purchased a car, a large open tourer.

It was here that Edward began his life long battle with his father who used him as gardener, groundsman and general skivvy without any financial remuneration. He also had to keep the car in pristine condition, a duty that he claimed left him with a lifelong aversion to the motor car. However, as Edward recorded, there were many happy memories of playing with his four sisters and younger brother in the garden, attending lavish Christmas parties and as a teenager going to balls and dances.

Following in his father's footsteps he attended St Mary's School for Boys followed by two years at grammar school. His favourite subjects, at which he excelled, were history and literature; useless in his father's opinion for a career in engineering. He left school and joined the family firm at the age of 14 as an apprentice in the drawing office where he was paid the princely sum of £0 3s 7d a week.

On 25 August 1915, Edward went out of the house as usual but instead of going to work he joined the army,

becoming No. 1559 Private Hall of the 12th Battalion (Sheffield Pals) York & Lancs Regiment, and in the process doubling his pay to seven shillings a week. Hall falsified his age and if his father had wanted to, he could have had him brought home but he chose not to, taking the view that it would teach him a lesson. At some point in his military training he obtained a transfer to the Royal Flying Corp where he was given a commission and in 1917 qualified as a pilot. This increased his pay to £1 a day rising to £1 8s 0d when he got his wings.

He was posted to a submarine bombing squadron based at Bangor, from where they patrolled the approaches to Liverpool and where he twice had narrow escapes when he had to land in the sea due to engine failure. On another occasion he observed turbulence and oil on the surface of the sea; after dropping his bomb, he informed the navy who found and sank a German submarine. At some time during his service he was awarded the Air Force Cross, which he received from King George V at Buckingham Palace in 1919.

Edward's time as an officer was probably the only period of his life when he had the full approval and support of his father. His parents visited the squadron and were told by Edward's Commanding Officer of the high esteem in which he was held. By Edward's own account he was held in high regard by the local ladies and he played the field, that is until 'a chance meeting upon a Southport platform with my future wife, resulting in a mutual and permanent attraction which dated from the exact moment we set eyes upon one another'.

Edward was demobbed in 1919 and went back to his job as a draughtsman at the foundry on a wage of £5 10s 0d a week. For his 21st birthday his father gave him £500 worth of War Bonds and £1000 worth of foundry shares which yielded 30% per annum tax free. On 3 April 1920, at St Peter's church, Birkdale, Edward married Emily (Em) Littler, an engine driver's daughter from Wigan. They bought a house in Park Grove, Barnsley for £500 with money advanced by his father, who also loaned them money to furnish it. Within four months of the marriage his mother died, and with the money she left him he was able to repay his father.

After his mother died his father retired, buying a property in Darton near Barnsley where he lived in retirement, with his eldest daughter Amy Louisa. His other three daughters all married around this time and it became a family custom to congregate at Darton for Sunday lunch followed by games of tennis or cricket. Their father provided ample supplies of drinks, cigars and cigarettes.

Edward described his marriage as a 'financial failure'. Both he and Em had tastes and aspirations beyond their means, he from his life as an officer and Em, so he claimed, because she had been educated above her station in life. It was at this time that Edward developed a passion for antiquarian books and each Saturday afternoon they would go into Leeds where Em would shop for clothes and Edward for books, signing cheques with abandon. More and more of Edward's time was spent on reading and studying his collection. He began to question the traditional religious and political beliefs he had been brought up with and this, along with his literary and artistic interest, led to the rest of the family regarding him as a bit of an oddity. He joined a literary society and began writing articles for newspapers and magazines in the hope that it might provide some additional income. His hopes were pinned on the Journal of Miss Weeton, an early

nineteenth century Lancashire Governess, which he was editing with a view to publication. He had discovered this in a Wigan second hand shop and had bought it for nine pence.

There was also the expense of children. Their first born was a boy who died, aged 4 months, and then in 1922 they had a daughter Joan, followed by a son, John, born in 1925. They had a live-in servant to help Em run the house and to baby-sit so that they could maintain their normal social life.

By the end of 1925 the family's life was in crisis. They were living beyond their means and had sold off the War Bonds and run up an overdraft with the bank who were pressing for repayment. The final straw was the birth of baby John and the expense of this, plus their other debts left them with no option but to sell Park Grove, dismiss their servant girl Jenny, and move into a rented house. In February 1926 they moved into 'The Homestead' at Stairfoot, and with the proceeds of the sale of the Park Grove house they were able to pay off most of their debts.

*If you would like to find out more, look for the next edition of Past Forward or search the Archives Service website.*



The wedding of Edward Hall and Emily Littler



# Under the Weather

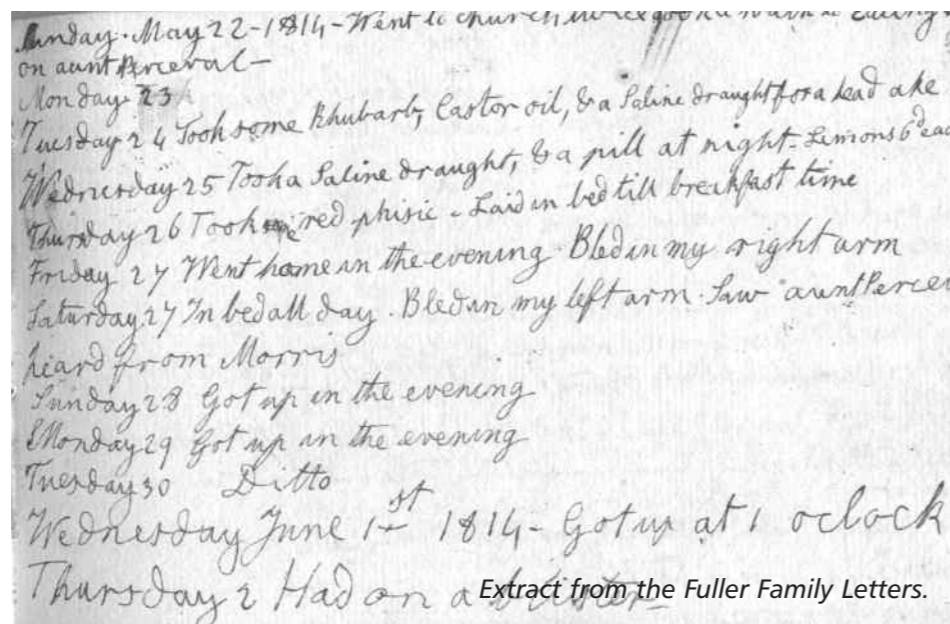
## in Victorian Times

by Gillian Lloyd

Amongst the treasures in the Edward Hall Collection is a volume of letters sent to the Fuller family of Chesham in Buckinghamshire (EHC/201). The majority of the letters were directed to John Fuller, a young man living and working in London during 1805 and 1806. His family approached the task of writing from a sense of duty and affection for him, rather than with any enthusiasm. Nevertheless, their contributions were cherished by the recipient and bound into book form.

Various topics were covered, including local events, politics and military affairs, but the reluctant writers often resorted to those useful page-fillers, weather and health. Weather was important for this farming family, but for Mrs Fuller, the most prolific correspondent, health came first.

Minor ailments were often mentioned. Mrs Fuller believed in preventative measures against the common cold. She advised John to have his clothes aired, sent him nightcaps and a flannel waistcoat and told him to buy six pairs of



Extract from the Fuller Family Letters.

stockings. Mrs Fuller suffered from aches in her teeth and head, but had no remedy for these, other than the worrying possibility of having a tooth drawn. For John's teeth she suggested a charcoal preparation advertised in the papers. Her mother, on the other hand, was well equipped for her own toothache with twelve bottles of Parsons Sims' tincture, which had been effective previously.

In the case of stomach and bowel disorders Mrs Fuller recommended drinking warm water or water-gruel instead of warm brandy and water. She remarked to John, 'I have not heard if you was obliged to apply to Mr Field - whether the magnesia and

rhubarb with abstinence from fruit and vegetables was alone sufficient.' Presumably Mr Field was a medical adviser in London.

At home in Chesham the family relied on Mr Rumsey, an apothecary and surgeon. He was consulted when Stratton had an unspecified problem with his nose, and placed leeches on either side of it. His mother praised Stratton's stoicism, saying, 'Stratton is a pattern of patience. When the leeches were hanging from his nose and one of them tickling so as to make his eyes water, he did not stir his hand or finger, but sat like a statue.'

After the leeches had done their work, a diachylon plaster

was applied. Diachylon 'spread on the thinnest white silk' was made from the juices of several plants, with the possible addition of other substances, such as litharge of gold, lead, pine resin or yellow wax. The saga of Stratton's nose continued for several months, even after the plaster had been removed. By this time the lad was living away from home, but Mrs Fuller declared, 'his poor nose is continually before me'. She sent him a bottle containing milk of roses to protect it from the cold weather.

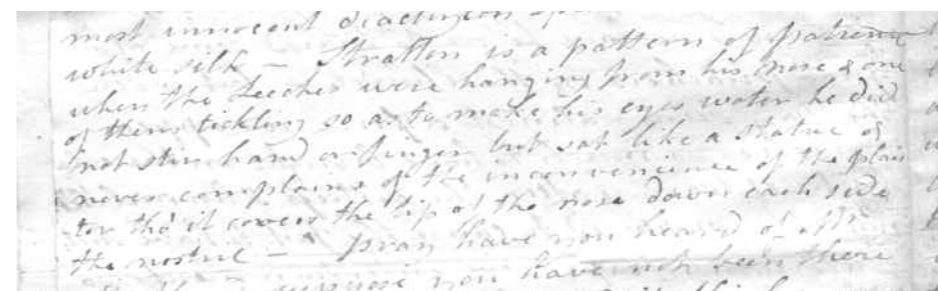
Some papers from 1794 described in great detail the medical care given to Samuel Stratton, Mrs Fuller's father, for chest trouble. First he consulted Doctor Andree in Hertford, who prescribed an emetic, demulcents to sooth irritation, balsam, gentian, musk, scilla, Tunbridge waters and cantharides, made from dried beetles and causing blistering of the skin. In Chesham Mr Rumsey took over and carried on with the musk draughts, adding diuretics and various potions containing ingredients such as digitalis, julep, camphor and gum, but concluded, 'I never found any real, permanent good, from any medicine, till he began the digitalis.' There was often great rivalry between physicians and

surgeon-apothecaries, so Mr Rumsey was delighted that his treatment was more effective, but his triumph was short-lived, as Samuel died later that year.

The mortality rate was particularly high amongst the young. One sad case was that of a schoolboy, Raleigh Trevelyan in another volume from the Hall Collection (EHC/191). He started his diary just a few years after the letters to John Fuller ceased, and described his experiences at a boarding school in Middlesex. The diary dealt with similar subjects to the Fuller letters, but also included school matters such as the frequent floggings. Like the Fullers, he often mentioned the weather, and gave a graphic account of a storm in Brentford which drowned chickens, broke panes of glass and caused water to pour down the stairs in torrents.

Poor Raleigh had more to concern him than the weather. His sufferings began in the summer holidays of 1813 when he was unwell and took an emetic. Back at school in the following spring he had violent headaches and was given rhubarb, castor oil, saline draughts and 'red physic'. He was taken home, where he had to endure bloodletting and blistering.

Extract from the Diary of Raleigh Trevelyan.



After a brief spell at school where the headaches recurred and he had more saline draughts and pills, he came home for the last time. There, nose bleeds compounded his misery and Doctor Pemberton applied six leeches to his temples, but to no avail. Bloodletting, blistering, purging and using leeches were all intended to draw out toxins and cure infections, but certainly did not help Raleigh. Probably he did not have an infection, but many children did succumb to contagious diseases like tuberculosis, and scarlet fever with its 'putrid sore throat'. The recently developed vaccine for smallpox evidently had still to prove its worth, for Stratton observed, 'Some of the volunteers have brought home the small pox from Wiccomb [sic] and it happens at a very unlucky time, as the parish is going to be vaccinated and it will not be known, I suppose, whether some may not have taken the small pox and so bring the other into disrepute.'

Vaccination was an innovation, but many of the procedures and medicines had been used for centuries and were gradually superseded. As well as offering a glimpse of medicine before modern developments, these documents provide a record of everyday life and more unusual happenings like sighting royalty and beating the parish bounds.

Sources:  
*Medicine & Health through Time* by Ian Dawson and Ian Coulson, and *Old Wives' Tales* by Mary Chamberlain.



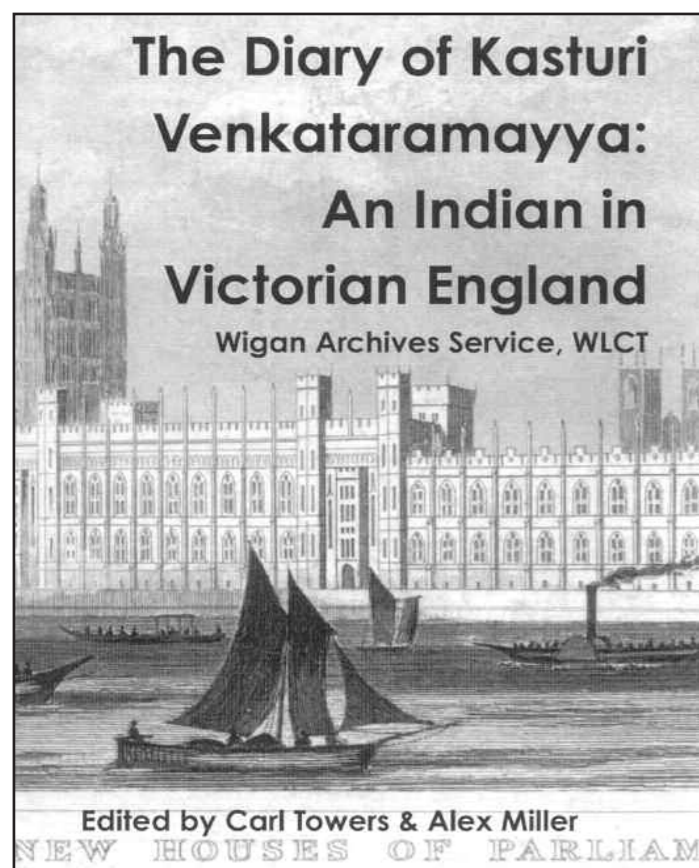
## Your Archives

We are delighted to announce the publication of a diary from the Edward Hall Diary Collection. This is the first diary to be published from the Hall Diary Collection since Hall himself published the Journal of Ellen Weeton in the 1930s.

We decided to begin publishing the diaries as a way to widen the audience for this fascinating and nationally important collection of over 250 diaries and manuscript journals. The first diary chosen was the Diary of Kasturi Venkataramayya, a record made by an Indian gentleman in London in the early 1860s.

Thanks to the hard work of Archives Volunteer, Carl Towers, who transcribed the diary in full and has produced a wonderful introduction to the diary, we were able to release the volume to the wider readership that it deserves. Kasturi Venkataramayya's account is in the form of letters to his brother in Madras and includes details of the long journey by sea to England, as well as the adventures he has in London, the growing metropolis and capital of the empire.

*The Diary of Kasturi Venkataramayya, published by the Wigan Archives Service.*



In the next few months we will be working on the publication of further diaries from the Hall Collection, including the diary of a First World War, Royal Flying Corps pilot, Major Eric Sherbrooke Walker, and the diaries of Mrs Walker, a regency diarist and unhappy resident of Manchester as she follows her soldier husband to the town.

**The Diary of Kasturi Venkataramayya is available from the Museum of Wigan Life or the Archives Service, priced at £8.99.**

On the subject of diaries, we are also pleased to announce that we will be hosting an event at the Archives on the subject of Women's Diaries, as part of the Leigh and Wigan Words Together Literary Festival. We will be joined by academics, Zoe Kinsley (Liverpool Hope University) and Claire Jones (University of Liverpool), as well as Dr Irving Finkel from the Great Diary Project. More details and booking information can be found at [www.facebook.com/WiganArchivesService](http://www.facebook.com/WiganArchivesService) or on the Festival website

## Recent Acquisitions

New listings continue thanks to the work of Archive staff and volunteers. Collections accepted or listed in the last few months include:

- Local music collection (folk, jazz) (Acc. 2012/77)
- Upholland photographic collection, 1892-1940 (Acc. 2012/78)
- Records concerning the 'Wigan Kebab' (Acc. 2012/79)
- Programme for the "Trafalgar Day" Matinee, held in aid of the Mayor of Leigh's Bickershaw Colliery Disaster Relief Fund, 1932 (Acc. 2012/84)
- Records of Wigan County Borough Police Force (Acc. 2012/85)
- Records of Leigh Conservative Club (Acc. 2013/1)
- Golborne British School Records (Acc. 2013/10)

Thank you to all recent donors and depositors of records to the Archives.

Details of the collections listed above are available from the Archives Service, as is further information on other recent acquisitions. A full list of acquisitions made by the Archives in 2012 is available on the Archives Service – Collections webpage.

## Collections Corner:

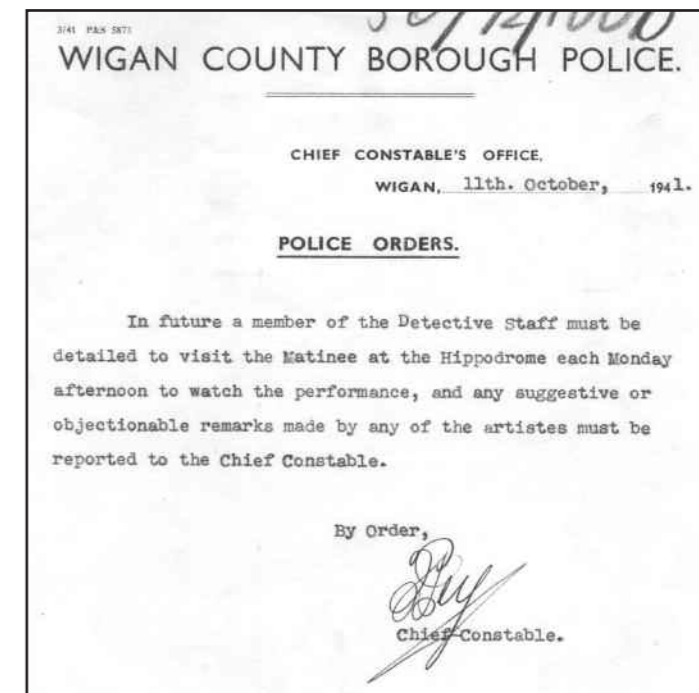
At the end of 2012, Lancashire Archives asked if we would accept the return to Wigan of the records of the Wigan County Borough Police Force. We swiftly accepted their offer and so the Police Force records are now back in Wigan at the Archives.

These records will give researchers of local and family history an enormous amount of information both on members of the local constabulary and the attitude to crime and punishment within the Borough at the time of the records.

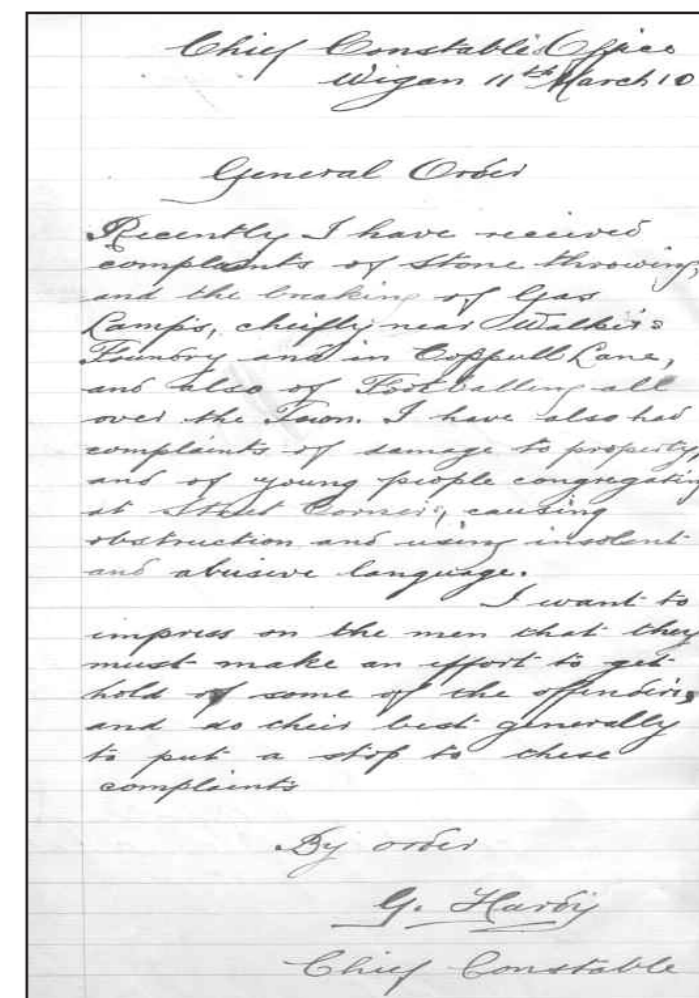
The oldest record dates from 1878 – an appointment and sick book – and the most recent from 1968 when the Wigan Borough Police Force merged with other forces to become the Lancashire Constabulary.

The collection includes annual reports of the Chief Constable, licensing records for a variety of different activities, orders made by the Chief Constable, charge sheets, wages books, watch committee report books and police occurrence books. The latter are a wonderful record of life in the town, recording as they do every incident reported to or investigated by a member of the police force, regardless of whether it proceeded to prosecution of any kind. This could and does include everything from the clichéd attendance at a cat stuck in a tree, to reports of shadowy figures seen in locked buildings late at night. The police orders are similarly varied, everything from wartime orders for plain-clothed policemen to monitor seditious behaviour at Wigan Hippodrome to reprimands issued to officers in Pemberton for riding without payment on the trams.

Most of this collection is already catalogued, at reference code PL/Wi; the full catalogue list will be available shortly on the Archives Service website. Please note that some of the records are closed to public access, but staff will be happy to offer advice on which records are available at present to consult.



*Police Order for the observation of performances at the Wigan Hippodrome, 1941.*



*Stone Throwing: Chief Constable's Orders, 1910.*



# The Diary of a Rambling Life as a Soldier's Wife

BY JOAN PIKE

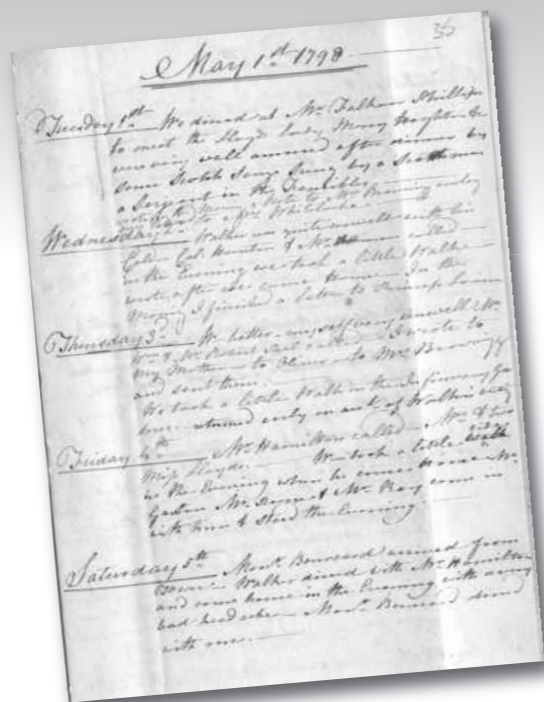
It is often said that behind every great man there is a great woman and Anna Walker was such a woman. She was born on the 24 May 1763 the only daughter of Rachael and Richard Allen of Bury, Lancashire.

On 9 July 1789 she married George Townshend Walker, a dashing Captain Lieutenant of the 14th Foot in the British Army. From her wedding day until the day she passed away, in March 1814, Anna kept a detailed account of her life with her 'dearest, beloved, Walker' (as she affectionately refers to him). Her diaries chronicled her day-to-day life and her many travels made in supporting her husband's career. Sadly, she did not live to see the dividends of her efforts. It was only after her death that Walker went on to become Sir Baronet KCB and Colonel Commandant of the Rifle Brigade.

These diaries, 14 of which are in the Edward Hall Collection (EHC1/M769) provide a unique insight into eighteenth century life and reveal much of the fascinating similarities between modern day life and the era of the Walkers.

In 1797, after much house hunting, they bought a house in Queen Ann Street, East London for £950. Mrs Walker details her shopping trips for furniture, 'We went to Lord Guilford's sale, were highly entertained with Christie'. In April, she moved in alone and wrote of 'being alone to take Possession of a New Home Made me quite Melancholy', Walker having been deployed to Lisbon.

While waiting to hear from Walker she is staying with friends in Yorkshire and feeling lonely, writes of her friends 'I almost feel inclined to envy them the Comfort of the Country Parson's Retreat - when comparing it to my own rambling Life as a Soldier's wife.'



Extract from Mrs Walker's Diary, May 1798.

On her eighth wedding anniversary, alone once more, she commented 'I sat down to write - very low Spirited contrasting the present pain of separation to the happy Days which have gone before... A fortnight since my Walker sailed - Remained in Dreadful Anxiety & Suspense... Letter from Walker saying he hoped to be with me this Evening - I was in Momentary expectation of him all Day & he arrived just 1/2 past one.'

Walker returns in November but by February 1798 he is sent to the Manchester Fencibles. Depressed at leaving her new home to be rented out, Anna laments 'Left my poor house with very great regret to the Mercy perhaps of thoughtless people who will destroy all my furniture only just neatly arranged'. She follows Walker with Anna, their ten month old baby. Anyone who has ever taken their children on a road trip would feel for

Mrs Walker, when in February, they set off from London to Manchester a journey of 186 miles taking five days at a cost of a princely £13 11s 6d

Travel at this time was not as genteel as it appears to be in a Jane Austin film. Road rage and drunken driving were two events that Mrs Walker documents in her own unique fashion, '...the Stupid Postillion drove against Some Trees with such violence that the pole broke and the trees gave way at once with the Shock. The Driver & Horses went off and left us stuck fast in the tree - Luckily, or we must have been overturned & crushed to atoms - a very civil old woman opened her doors to receive us & took us in - till a Chaise could be procured'.

On another occasion, after their return from taking the waters at Buxton Spa, the coachman wanted to charge more than Walker thought reasonable. A fray ensued and Walker was struck. 'He did not take this loosely - Several people attended Walker I saw him fall. The Man I believe got a good thrashing' Anna gleefully reports.

When returning from a dinner at Heaton Hall 'the Driver was so tipsy that we were obliged to make him get off his horse & let our servant drive.' Mrs Walker gives a very detailed account of this journey, from the cost of the turnpikes to the price of the meals and rates of the inns they stayed at.

Of the White Horse at Towcester:

'...but I was a little angry to see a Restive Horse put in the Carriage - to remove which I found, from the inability of the Land lord, my Remonstrations would have but little effect but for the civility of a Gentleman who insisted on the horse being changed.'

Of the Sugar Loaf at Dunstable:

'Very well accommodated, rather highly charged... to our Friend Harrison's, the cross road to which was so bad I was afraid of hurting the children - in the Carriage and made the Servants walk with them the last Mile & Half.'

Of accommodation at Wilmslow: '...approach to Manchester was pretty. A number of new built Houses rearing their Heads in Testimony of the Opulence of the Manchester people these being their Country Residence. The smoke and dirt upon the approach to Manchester was abominable and gave little hope of being pleased with'

The Napoleonic War, in which Walker is involved, does not go entirely unnoticed. A simple remark in the margin reads:

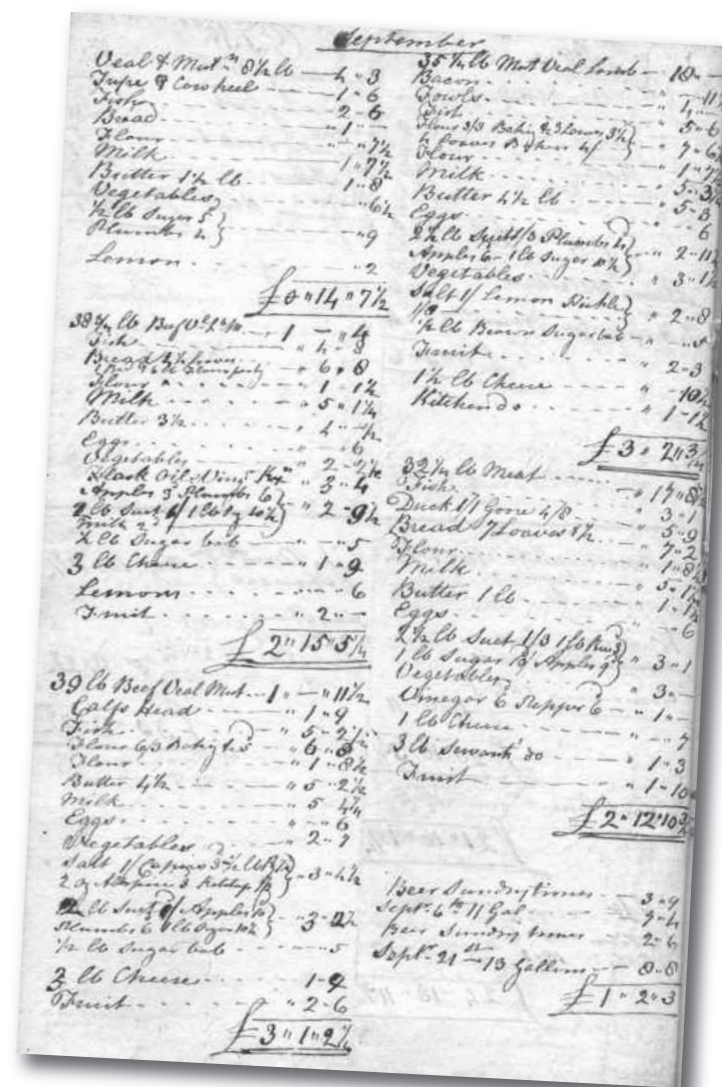
'A mutiny at Portsmouth among the Sailors the grand Fleet who would not sail without an increase of wages' a far cry from the sensationalist coverage of today's media.

She follows this with a full diary entry shortly afterwards: '...my Brother called to tell me the delightful News of the Fleet at the Nore having all returned to their duty - the only painful Circumstance was Lut: Delham's having lost his leg by the firing from those ships that still remained Refractory. Had a very unpleasant dream of Walker.'

On 4 October 1798 she exults at the news when 'Admiral Nelson completed a victory over the French on the Nile. The whole town in the utmost confusion - Mad with Joy'.

Her diaries continue until a few days before her death, the last entry remarking of a party she has attended. The period in which Anna lived and wrote was one of which we have a clear impression from sources such as the novels of Jane Austen. Anna's diaries should show a life with the same highs and lows, obstacles and achievements, joys and disappointments of any of Austen's fictional characters.

Extract from Mrs Walker's Household Accounts, September 1798.





*With the 2014 centenary of the First World War approaching, community groups and individuals are busy collating ideas on how to commemorate the anniversary. Many will probably be researching how the war affected local people. With this in mind, we thought it might be a good time to let readers know the types of resources available at Wigan and Leigh Local Studies.*

## Newspapers

In 2010, Christine Watts, Local and Family History Officer, announced that volunteers would index local publications for the war years. These have now been completed by Museum of Wigan Life volunteers Les Norburn and Kate Irvine who have produced indexes for The Wigan Observer, The Wigan Examiner and The Leigh Journal. The indexes contain lists of local

men who were either been killed, wounded, made a POW or awarded a medal. These are a fantastic resource for family historians and we will be looking in the future towards digitising these records.

## Local Publications

There are also a number of publications relating to the topic. 'Just Like Hell', 'The Finest of All' and 'They Lived with Death', is a trilogy of books written by local historian, Fred Holcroft, about local men who fought at Gallipoli, the Somme and in the Passchendaele campaign respectively. The books tell the stories of the campaigns and offensives through the words of local men.

Cyril Ward and Evelyn Finch's 'Leigh and the Somme' contains memories and local reports on the effect of the Battle of the Somme on the local community. Leslie Smith's 'The German Prisoner of War Camp at Leigh' uses sources from local newspapers to tell the story of Etherstone Mill which was

temporarily transformed into a POW camp for German soldiers. The account describes the arrival of the prisoners and several dramatic escape attempts by POWs.

There are also publications and cuttings about the Manchester Regiment. The majority of the information is housed at Wigan Local Studies. Publications include: George Derbyshire's '5th Battalion the Manchester Regiment: The Colours'; 'The Manchester Regiment' edited by Wolmer Whyte; 'Exhibition notes taken from the Wigan Military Chronicle: Volumes 1-3' by George Derbyshire; scrapbooks and Dawn Wadsworth's exhibition text for 'The Collier Battalion : a history of the 5th Manchester Regiment'. Both Wigan and Leigh Local Studies hold copies of the Roll of Honour for the 5th Manchester Regiment. Leigh also has 'Soldiers died in the Great War: The Manchester Regiment'.

For more information please contact Leigh Local Studies on 01942 404559.

## Local Studies Book Review

Hannah Turner,  
Local Studies Officer

In 2001, Philip Taylor and his wife Susan published 'Jonathan Dewhurst – The Lancashire Tragedian', a biography of Jonathan's great-great uncle, the eminent actor, Jonathan Dewhurst. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this first book which looked at Jonathan's early life and acting career which took him to London, Australia and India before he settled in his home town of Leigh as the manager of the Leigh Theatre Royal.

Since publishing the first book, living descendants of Jonathan Dewhurst have contacted Philip and Susan. They have gathered more information which they have used for their new book, *Jonathan Dewhurst – The Curtain Falls*. The story this time follows the lives of Dewhurst's extended family, some who chose the theatrical world but also some who went a different route such as Jonathan's grandson, Paul Francis Christopher, who fought in the Spanish Civil War.

The book is an entertaining account of Philip and Susan's journey, which lovers of both family and local history will appreciate and enjoy.

Copies of Jonathan Dewhurst – The Curtain Falls are available from the authors for £10 (plus

£2.50 UK p&p). Cheques, payable to 'P Taylor' should be sent with mailing details c/o Philip & Susan Taylor, 2 The Driftway, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire CV36 4QH.

*Books added to the reference stock of the Museum of Wigan Life*

## Genealogy Transcripts

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*The last German Prisoners of War leaving the camp in Leigh, 1919.*

*Wigan Territorial Force soliders, with trench messenger dog at Cuinchy, January 1918.*





By Peter J Tyldesley

# The Tyldesley Monument

## A brief history of its inscription

The Tyldesley Monument marks where Sir Thomas Tyldesley fell whilst fighting for the Royalist cause at the Battle of Wigan Lane on 25 August 1651. Originally erected in 1679, the monument now stands in an enclosure at the junction of Wigan Lane and Monument Road.

During restoration work in 1886 a slate plaque was affixed to each side of the monument. These plaques replaced a rather more elegant arrangement, a single brass plate in a shaped recess on the west face. This plate is evident in the sketches taken by Latham in 1823 and by Whitehouse around 1829.

Only two of the slate plaques are inscribed. That facing south records Henry Park to have been Mayor of Wigan at the time of the restoration. Of more interest is the plaque on the west side which bears, in capital letters, the following inscription:

*An High Act of Gratitude, which conveys the memory of Sir Thomas Tyldesley to posterity. Who served King Charles the First as Lieutenant Colonel at Edge Hill Battle, after raising Regiments of Horse, Foot, and Dragoons, and for the desperate storming of Burton-upon-Trent, over a bridge of 36 arches received the Honour of Knighthood, He afterwards served in all the Wars in great command was Governor of Lichfield, and followed the fortune of the Crown, through the three Kingdoms, and never compounded with the Rebels, though strongly invested, and on the 25th August A.D. 1651 was here slain, commanding as Major General under the Earl of Derby, To whom the grateful Erector, Alexander Rigby, Esq. was Cornet: and when he was High Sheriff of this County A.D. 1679 placed this High Obligation on the whole family of the Tyldesleys, to follow the Noble Example of their Loyal Ancestor.*

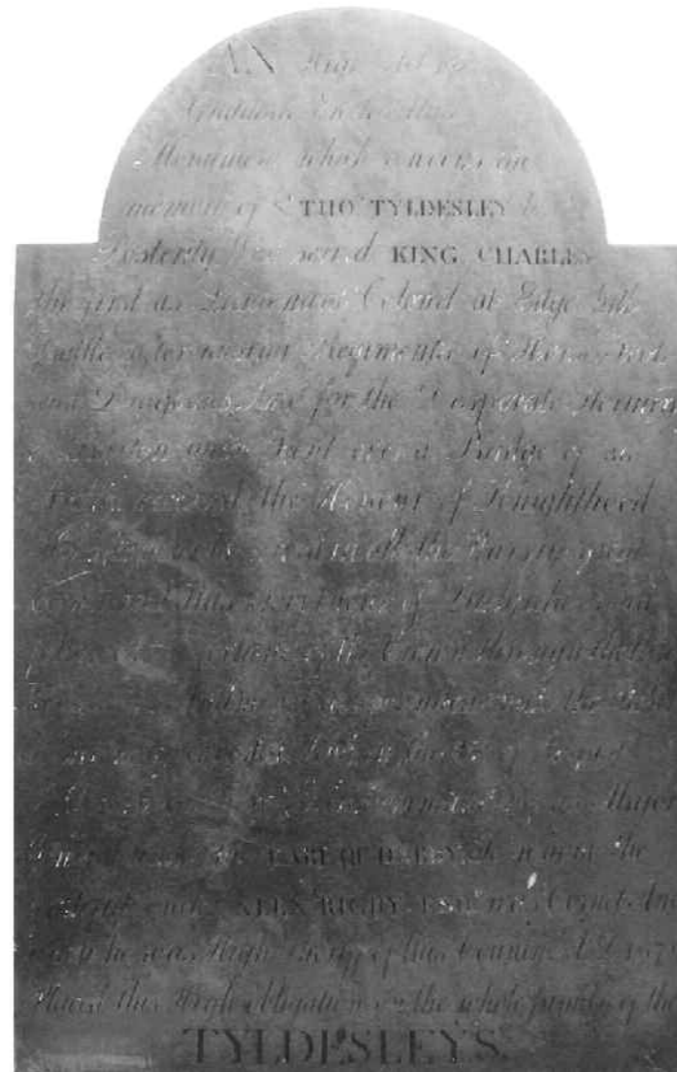
(Sketch by William Latham, Lancashire Record Office, Ref: DP 291/16)



Without the final nine words, it would be unclear what obligation is placed on the Tyldesleys. Yet a letter to the Wigan Examiner in May 1886 complained that these words were a modern addition by the restorers. Is this correct?

Remarkably the brass plate removed from the monument survives and was located by Simon Mills in the safekeeping of Lichfield Heritage Centre. On its reverse is a bolt and thumb-nut, suggesting the plate was originally bolted to an internal fixing point. The plate provides conclusive evidence of the former inscription:

*AN High Act of Gratitude, Erected this Monument, which conveys the memory of S.R THO.S TYLDESLEY to Posterity. Who served KING CHARLES the first as Lieutenant Colonel at Edge hill Battle, after raising Regiments of Horse, Foot and Dragoons. And for the Desperate Storming of Burton upon Trent, over a Bridge of 36 Arches received the Honour of Knighthood. He afterwards served in all the Wars in great Command. Was Governour of Litchfield, and followed the Fortune of the Crown through the three Kingdoms - And never compounded with the Rebels tho strongly invested. And on the 25th of August A.D. 1650 was here Slain Commanding as Major-General under the EARL of DERBY. To whom the grateful Erector, ALEX.R RIGBY, ESQ.R was Cornet. And when he was High Sheriff of this County AD. 1679. Placed this High obligation on the whole family of the TYLDESLEYS.*



The brass plate removed from the Monument.

Plainly, the disputed words are not included. Other differences are apparent between the two inscriptions. Most obviously, on the brass plate the year of the Battle of Wigan Lane is erroneously stated to be 1650, a mistake which is carried through into a number of early transcriptions, including those by Seacombe in 1793 and Britton in 1807.

The brass plate is not, however, the end of the story. It was itself added to the monument in an earlier restoration. In 1750, a letter to the Adams Weekly Courant noted that the monument had been dismantled. The inscription was on a piece of black marble, which the correspondent had located in a nearby alehouse. Though the gilded letters were 'much injured' they read as follows:

*A high Act of Gratitude erected this Monument, & conveys the Memory of SIR THOMAS TYLDESLEY to Pofterity. Who ferved K: C: 1ft as Left: Col: at Edghill Battell; after rais'd Regiments of Horfe, Foot & Dragoons. And for the deperate Storming Burton*

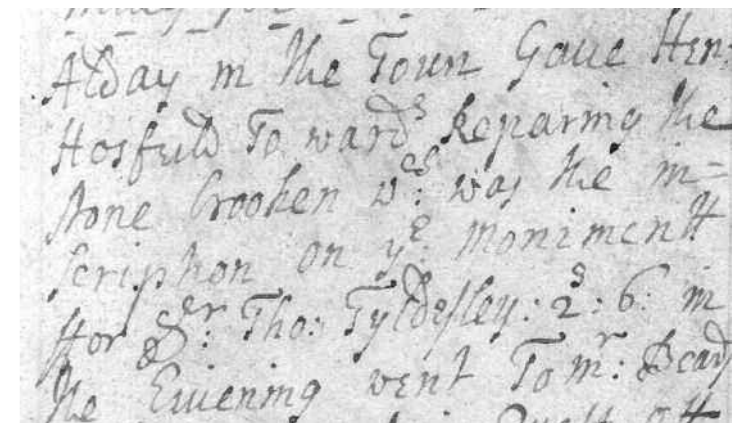
*upon Trent, Over a Bridge of 36 Arches, Received the Honour of Knighthood. He after ferved in all the Warrs in great Commands; Was Governour of Litchfield And followed the Fortune of the Crown through the 3 Kingdoms. Would never compound with the Rebels, though ftrongly invefted And on the 25th of Aug: Anno 1650, Was here Slain, commanding as Major General under the E: of DERBY; To whom the gratefull Erector, ALEX. RIGBY, Esq; was Corne: And when hee was High Sheriff of the County of Lancafter Anno 1679, placed this high Obligation On the whole Family of the TYLDESLEYS.*

Is this the earliest available transcription? Although the monument was seen by Brockbank in 1693, Kuerden around 1695 and Fiennes in 1698, they did not record the inscription. Nor did Thomas Tyldesley, grandson of Sir Thomas Tyldesley, when noting in his diary the cost of the repairs required in 1713 'Gave Hen: Hosfeild Towards repairing the stone brooken, weh was the inscription on the monimentt ffor Sr: Tho: Tyldesley, 2s: 6'

Where then, did the final words of the present inscription originate? In 1876, Picton included them when noting that the monument had been, 'repaired about thirty years since at the expense of a gentleman near Liverpool who claimed connexion with the Tyldesleys'. However the earliest mention appears to be by Raines in 1867, citing a manuscript at Knowsley House, then the seat of the Stanleys.

Sir Thomas Tyldesley and James Stanley, the seventh Earl of Derby, had been friends and comrades during the Civil War. It would be unsurprising if the 'original inscription had been transcribed for the Stanleys prior to 1750. Could the manuscript, if located, offer evidence that part of the 1679 inscription was lost to damage by 1750 and was merely reinstated during the 1886 restoration?

*Diary of Thomas Tyldesley, grandson of Sir Thomas Tyldesley, 1713.*





Deacons at St Paul's  
Congregational  
Church, c.1865

BY MAX FINNEY

# William Medlen Hutchings

## 1827-1876: Evangelical Preacher, Writer, Debater, Printer and Journalist

One of the most prominent men in the town during mid-Victorian times was William M Hutchings, who was born in 1827 in Devon. He was the Editor of 'The Colliery Guardian' which initially started in London, but after a few years moved to Wigan.

The earliest mention of Hutchings in Wigan appears in 1850 when he wrote the words to the hymn 'Mothers of Salem', especially for the anniversary of the Sunday School of St. Paul's

Congregational Church in Standishgate. In spite of his young age, he was already the Superintendent of the Sunday school. In 1859 the first Evangelical Revival Meeting was held in Wigan, and Hutchings was present on the platform, along with members of the local clergy, and other prominent citizens. In the same year at the Wigan Sunday Schools Conference he suggested that two of the topics for discussion could be 'the desirability or

otherwise of the mixture of sexes in senior classes', and that they should publish a magazine of their own, listing the reasons why it would be successful. Neither of these was taken up. Eventually there was a Wigan Sunday School magazine\*, but whether this was a result of his proposals is not known.

In 1860 he was involved in a public debate at the Drill Hall in Powell Street, with Charles Bradlaugh MP. The event was

advertised as 'Mr Iconoclast v The Bible' and held over two evenings.\*\* 'Mr Iconoclast' was the pseudonym of Bradlaugh but he refused to take the oath, and was expelled and re-elected regularly for six years until he took the oath and his seat. In the debate Bradlaugh denied the stories in The Bible were true, and that they could not be authenticated. Hutchings took a leading part in opposing these views, as also did a number of clergymen who were present. Bradlaugh's comments aroused those present, and at times the debate became noisy and unruly, causing the police to be called in.

The Congregationalists were the leading proponents of Evangelicalism but were mainly middle class. Hutchings believed that they did not show any interest in welcoming the working class to their services. Accordingly he was dissatisfied with this state of affairs, and founded a Workingmen's Congregational Church. Its first meeting was held in the Congregational Meeting Room behind Nicholson's Temperance Hotel in Wigan in 1862. He was their first preacher, taking his sermon on the topic of 'Separation not Schism'.

Their second anniversary celebrations in 1864 consisted of a tea party and musical entertainment, and he again took a leading part in the reading of several pieces by well-known authors, and also delivered his discourse on Two Whole Years at another one of the services. This as based upon Acts xxviii, 30, comparing the Workingmen's Church with St. Paul's

imprisonment in Rome, during which he wrote his epistles to the Galatians, Timothy, the Ephesians.

In 1865 the church started to build a new chapel in Warrington Lane at its junction with Darlington Street East, in an area known as the Silverwell Field. It became the Silverwell Congregational Church. Within the non-conformist circles he was invited to be a lay preacher at many of their churches and chapels in the Wigan area, as well as taking part in local secular and social affairs.

Hutchings had many interests, one of which was the Temperance Movement in Wigan, and when one of their leading personalities died Hutchings was appointed as Secretary. In 1853 when 58 miners were killed at Ince Hall Pit, he was listed in the Wigan Observer, as one of the first persons to give a donation. In that same year there was a proposal to inaugurate a Mechanics Institution in the town, and he was appointed as one of its directors, representing them at a meeting of all of the institutions of Lancashire and Cheshire at Knowsley Hall, the seat of the Earl of Derby.

In 1856 he was guest speaker at the Westhoughton Branch, with his subject being 'Mary, Queen of Scots'. At the 'Exhibition, Tea Party and Bazaar' held by the Wigan Institution in 1860, he moved a vote of thanks to the ladies who had given donations and contributed. In his speech he stated that it was all classes of ladies who had contributed, from the titled ladies of Haigh Hall to the factory girls who called in at

night on their way home from work. Regular social evenings, in which public readings and musical entertainment took place, were organised by the institution and he was often advertised as one of the readers.

The Cotton Famine in 1862 caused great hardship in the town, and there were various relief funds and schemes organised, and he was a committee member of various organisations dealing with the problems. In a speech he gave at the Hindley Free Reading Room and Library, he commented that not long ago the opinion of many educated people was that it would be dangerous to educate the lower classes, as it would only lead to disastrous results. Fortunately, this attitude had now changed and the majority of people now realised what a great deal of good this had produced. In his summing up, he gave examples of self-educated men who had overcome all difficulties, and quoted a few lines from Longfellow to emphasise his points. In 1867 'The Colliery Guardian' had become so successful as the leading international magazine for the mining industry that it returned to London, and Hutchings left Wigan. He died a few years later in 1876, but the magazine continued publication until 1991.

#### Notes:

\* No copies of this magazine have been traced.

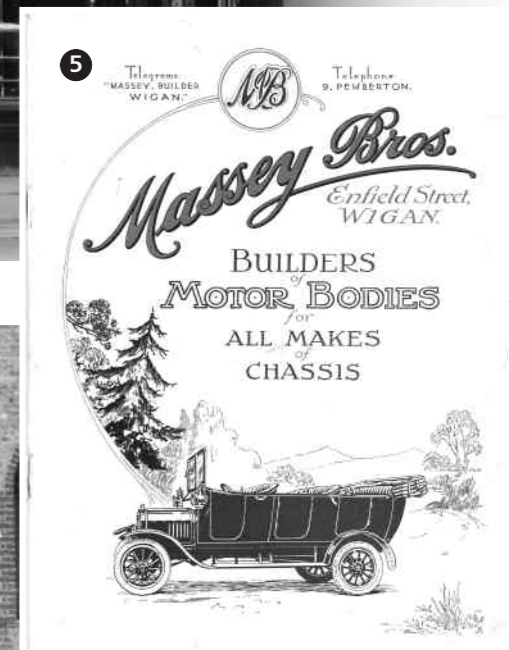
\*\* An iconoclast was one who attacks and seeks to overthrow traditional or popular ideas to institutions, or a destroyer of sacred images.



## MAKE IT, SPIN IT, CAN IT

As part of the new exhibition, we're keen to collect photographs, records and objects relating to local business. Please get in touch with the Archives if you have anything of interest.

- 1 Coops – fashion plate showing the range of their men and boys' clothing in 1876, including the Coop factory in the background.
- 2 Lord & Sharman Ltd, Pemberton – shoe manufacturers. Factory girls on holiday in Blackpool 1936; they are wearing shoes made in the factory.
- 3 H J Heinz factory guides, 1969. Visitors to the newly opened Heinz factory in Kitt Green were shown round by these seven women.
- 4 A photograph of the original Poole's tea rooms on Wallgate, Wigan.
- 5 Advertisement for Massey Brothers of Pemberton, engineers.
- 6 Sovereign Toffee, Church Lane, Lowton – sweet manufacturer. Delivery van outside the factory.





# The Restoration of Gullick Dobson Ltd. of Wigan

## 1986 Track Ballaster, No. BL009

by Dave Timperley

In the 1970s about 20 per cent of the time worked at an NCB colliery was spent in the transport of minerals, men and materials. The average face worker spent about 45 minutes travelling to his work and a similar time travelling out at the end of his shift. Slower diesel locomotives could travel underground at 6mph. However, larger locomotives with 50, 65 and 100hp engines were available and a 25 ton twin engine 216hp diesel-hydraulic locomotive for underground service at Easington Colliery in County Durham could transport 126 men in man-riding cars at speeds up to 25mph.

Unfortunately the existing NCB underground narrow gauge track standards were generally not adequate enough to cope with higher speeds, so a programme to improve track standards with mechanical tamping machines was introduced. In line with the NCB policy at the time of buying British equipment wherever possible, Gullick Dobson Ltd. of Wigan was sponsored to develop a flameproof tamping machine for use in NCB mines.

Gullick Dobson was a component of the Dobson Park Industries Group. They later merged with Dowty in 1993 and became part of Joy Mining Machinery Ltd in 1995. The company still exists on the site of the former Gullick Dobson works just off Manchester Road, alongside the Wigan to Manchester railway line. Although empty, the factory buildings still survive, with the remains of the Gullick Dobson sign still just readable in the old



*The Gullick Dobson Track Ballaster, painted yellow from its original NCB white and with extended cab roofs, after its use on the Welsh Highland Railway. Photographed, March 2008.*

paintwork. Joy Mining Machinery is situated in the office behind the factory buildings. Gullick Dobson were experienced manufacturers of flameproof mining equipment and suppliers of mining equipment, powered roof supports and control systems; they diversified to include the production of free steered rubber-tyred vehicles for use in mines in addition to the mines tamping machines.

By 1984, the first three tamping machines had been delivered to the NCB, at a cost of about £100,000 each. Trials had taken place at two collieries, Lea Hall in the Western Area and Blidworth in the North Nottingham Area. Relaying track at Lea Hall had allowed man-riding speeds with existing locomotives to be increased from 8mph to 15mph and it was planned to raise the speed even further with new locomotives.

The complete tamping machine weighs almost eight tons and is about 25 feet long. It consists of

two separate parts which are articulated and have different functions. The locomotive driving unit has a wheelbase of 8ft 2in with four hydrostatically driven wheels. The locomotive unit houses the power pack containing the engine (a Motoren Werke Mannheim), auxiliary equipment and a driving cab. It provides power to the tamping unit through 13 hydraulic connections, with a maximum locomotive track speed of 9mph.

The separate tamper unit which is carried on two rear idler wheels has a cab and in addition to the tamping equipment, has extensible legs on a beam to allow track re-alignment with clamps, so that the track can be lifted and slewed while the sleeper is tamped by vibrating tines either side of the rails. To allow the tamping machine to be used on the variety of rail gauges in NCB mines, the gauge of the tamping machine could be varied.

By the late 1980s many collieries were closed or run down and most

of the Gullick Dobson tamping machines were abandoned underground as the cost of recovering them would have been greater than their scrap value. However, three seemed to have survived on the surface. One was seen in a very derelict condition at Bewick Drift Stockyard in Northumberland in 2005 before the site was cleared. Two were obtained by the re-formed Yorkshire Engine Company (YEC) from Staffordshire Locomotives Ltd. Both machines were moved to Long Marston in Warwickshire in January 1996.

Tamping machine BL005 had apparently survived on the surface as it had been due for an overhaul by British Coal. It was allocated YEC number L137 and was stated to have come from Harworth Colliery, having been earlier noted on the surface at Gascoigne Wood Colliery. In 2000 it moved from the YEC to Trackwork Ltd in Doncaster for possible use on an Isle of Man contract, but it appears to have suffered an engine failure and seems to have subsequently been scrapped.

The sole surviving tamping machine, BL009, had just had an overhaul in a British Coal workshop, possibly at the ex NCB Central Workshop at Walkden, when it was obtained by the YEC. Built in 1986, it was originally at the NCB Trentham Training Centre.

*Locomotive unit with new rear coupling and windows, March 2012.*



Meanwhile, the Welsh Highland Railway (WHR) had embarked on significant construction work and was looking for a narrow gauge tamping machine. In 1997 the WHR bought the tamping machine from the YEC and paid for its modification to make it more suitable for surface use. The modifications were then carried out by the YEC at Long Marston as rework number L136.

Tamping machine BL009 was then sent to Bala Lake Railway in June 1997. Following wiring and testing there, the tamping machine was delivered to the WHR at Dinas Junction on 19 July 1997.

The tamping machine successfully tamped track from Caernarvon to Dinas Junction in 1997, and then in June 2000 the locomotive unit and the tamping unit were separated and moved by road to sidings at Cae Wernlasddu. The tamping unit floor was extended after this, but it appears that the WHR found the tamping machine hydraulic traction system unsuitable for their use and following a mechanical failure in its traction system resulting in a seized wheel motor it was left in a siding at Dinas.

It was bought privately from the WHR in 2007 and moved for restoration to the Derbyshire Dales Narrow Gauge Railway at Peak Rail's Rowsley site in Derbyshire in March 2008.



*The remains of the Gullick Dobson Ltd. factory in Wigan, September 2011.*

Although BL009 had been left outside for over 10 years in Wales, externally the tamping machine was in reasonable condition, but all the hydraulic motor components had been removed and the seized wheel motor was locked solid. Bullet holes were also apparent in the rear cab windows.

The tamper unit was connected to the locomotive unit by a large swivel joint and only had two rear wheels. Before restoration work could start, it was necessary to separate the two units and design, build and fit a new front wheel axle to the tamper unit. The locomotive unit was then jacked up and sat on sleepers to allow the seized wheel motor to be removed.

All the locomotive unit chassis and body box sections had to have drain holes drilled in them to let out accumulated rain water. New rear and side 5mm polycarbonate windows were then fitted to the cab and having removed the non-compatible rear coupling plate, a universal two slot pin and bar coupling was designed, built and fitted to allow easy interconnection with other rail vehicles. The seized wheel motor has now been refurbished and will be ready for re-fitting when the brakes have been renewed. Work is now taking place on the electrical system, with major work still outstanding on refitting the hydraulic pump equipment.



By Yvonne Eckersley

# The Anderson Shelter in Wigan Borough

Air raid shelters at Gidlow Middle School, c.1940



Psychologically evocative, the Anderson shelter, along with gas masks and child evacuees, is an iconic image of the Second World War.

This article is not a critique of the Anderson shelter per se. It is an attempt to give an overview of the provision of air raid shelters in the Wigan Borough area.

Contrary to some opinions, the British government was in the process of preparing for war long before 1939. From 1935, councils had been required to compile increasingly detailed, provisional, annual plans designed to protect their populations against the hitherto unknown probability of heavy aerial bombardment.

After war was declared some councils were not as prepared as others. Possibly the period of the 'phoney war' gave few hints of the bombing raids to follow? Ince had very detailed plans in 1938 but as late as January 1940 their shelter provision was dismally inadequate. Aspull required overt pressure from the Home Office before they provided plans, and Ashton's provision was 'above average'. The rest lay somewhere in between.

Provision of shelters fell into three broad categories; domestic, for people based at home; public, for people on the streets, schools, hospitals and industrial, which although ostensibly a responsibility of the Factory Inspectorate, councils were required to undertake or overview the work.

The Anderson shelter was the first choice for protecting people in their homes. However, they were not popular as design oversights created enormous problems. Logistics aside, 600 Leigh shelters arrived without nuts and bolts; the semi-sunken Anderson shelters were cold and damp and tended to flood. By 1942 Leigh Council had drained 2,976 of its 7,746 shelters. From 1940 steel shortages made Anderson shelters impractical and the government advised councils to stop distributing them. Surface brick and concrete communal street shelters to accommodate 50 were being substituted. Problems occurred when a wrong mix of concrete and sand was used and many had to be rebuilt. Regional Air Precautions (ARP) Officers inspected a small sample of

23 (of several hundred) shelters in Atherton and 15 needed rebuilding. This created increased demand and a shortfall in shelter provision.

The Morrison shelter, comprising of what was in effect a steel cage fitting inside private houses was an unrealistic proposition for most of the housing in the area. Leigh had just 118 in 1942. By 1943 steel shortages were acute. Atherton ARP minutes record governmental instructions to dismantle and buy back Morrison shelters, offering £7 for unassembled shelters and 'any offer' for others.

The first trench shelters, 7 foot deep and roofless or with a corrugated iron roof covered by two feet of earth were dug, as a response to the Munich Crisis, on open spaces such as Alexandra and Mesnes Parks in Wigan, Jubilee Park in Ashton and Marsh Playing Fields, Leigh. After the crisis they were mothballed. By 1939, their inadequacy was obvious and rebuilding was essential. The government produced exact criteria. New trench shelters were to have pre-cast concrete linings, with proper drainage, lighting and basic sanitary requirements (pail toilets). However, shortages of materials resulted in insufficient completed trenches in and beyond September 1939.

Town centres posed particular problems. In densely developed streets, trench shelters were not practical. A pragmatic approach was necessary. Existing basements in commercial premises such as Makinson's Arcade, department stores in Market Place, under Wigan's Market Hall, in Public Houses across the Borough

(once re-enforced) provided shelter for staff and people caught in the streets. Shelters were built by bus stops and railway stations at Bamfurlong and railway arches in Queen Street, Wigan. Necessity led to innovation. Ashton built a number of Pill Box public shelters, whilst investigating the possibility of utilising Leyland Green Pit. The government sanctioned the creation of shelters by demolishing the top part of disused buildings, saving and strengthening their first floors and utilizing the resultant debris. Complete coverage was impossible. Wigan Council provided public shelters for 3000, but on Saturdays there could be upwards of 12,000 people out and about in central Wigan.

Factories and workshops employing more than 50 people were required to provide shelters. Factory and workshop basements were strengthened according to government criteria and a large, complex, sunken shelter was constructed under Mesnes Park for Rylands Mill, which still exists.

It seemed to some Wigan Councillors that it would be advantageous to provide shelter for the 5000 people from Worsley Hall by tunneling into local pit heaps. It would appear from the 1951 (Cold War) Survey that Anderson shelters may have been provided instead. A Pit Heaps Committee was established in 1938, coinciding with the parliamentary debate on the unhealthy, dangerous and unstable condition of tips. MP's for Wigan, Ince and Leigh presented evidence to Parliament in support of the second reading of the Public

Health (Coal Mines Refuse) Bill. Joe Tinker (Leigh) emphasised the potential danger of burning spoil-tips as a guide to enemy aircraft. The government recognised this and later closed down the Pemberton Coking Plant because of its night-time glow. Parkinson (Wigan) and Gordon MacDonald (Ince) both stressed the noxious fumes and the danger of instantaneous combustion, labelling the tips 'our Etnas and Stromboli's'. In 1938 Ashton Council was concerned by Garswood Hall Collieries' reluctance to address their burning spoil tip whilst one Bickershaw Collieries' tip erupted into flames during 1941.

Keeping miners safe was a particular problem. Although surface shelters were constructed in pit yards (Parsonage Pit Leigh, dug into adjacent railway embankments) it was suggested that miners could remain underground during air attacks. At the same time the problem of how to get miners from underground should the winding engine or headgear be bombed was paramount. This was resolved by the provision of mobile winding gear stationed locally.

A high priority for all the districts was the protection of children. Each School was provided with a designated shelter. Council leaders were concerned that these should be used appropriately, and only after some debate were the public admitted out of school hours.

Sources.  
*Council Minute Books 1938-1946, Borough-wide ARP Minute Books 1951 Shelter Survey Wigan Observer, Leigh Chronicle.*



# A Contented and Productive Workforce

By Bob Evans

Until their closure and demolition in the latter years of the last century, the Victoria Mills of J & J Hayes were one of the major employers in Leigh. In an account of the firm's history published in a trade journal the author comments not only on the efficiency of the manufacturing processes which were adopted and the resultant quality of products but also on the support and concern given to ensure the well-being of employees. Many of these workers were recruited locally and remained with the firm for many years, often including several generations of the same families. As well as being attentive to the working conditions of the labour force they also provided a range of personal welfare services together with social and recreational opportunities as represented by the bowling-green and tennis courts alongside the mills.

Company records show that members of the Hayes and Thorpe families were involved with the local cotton and silk industries in the 1820s. In the 1840s Robert Thorpe and James Hayes were partners in what was known as Barlow's Factory and in 1856 they erected the first of the Victoria Mills. Company records include evidence that the firm began to import cotton from the Nile Valley in the 1850s and this source of Egyptian cotton was to

provide a reliable supply during the years of the cotton famine when the civil war between the Northern and Southern states made American cotton unavailable to manufacturers. As a result the factory was able to continue production and the owners appear to have accepted Robert Owen's principle that a contented and educated workforce was a valuable asset to a successful company.

The company gave support for the formation of a social club "open to all persons employed at Victoria Mills of the age of 16 years & upwards." A small notebook, entitled the "Rules and Minutes of the Victoria Institute," provides a list of rules agreed on the 13 of October 1868. These state that membership was generally to

be 2d each week to be paid fortnightly in advance but "Big piecers and Card Room hands" were to pay one penny per week. There was to be no intoxicating liquor, swearing or gambling in the institute. A management committee of seven was formed and principle officers chosen to be President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The notebook continues with minutes recording decisions taken between 1868 and 1871 to provide not only social and recreational activities but also support for education. Within the first month it was agreed that there should be a night school, initially for boys and a little later for girls. The necessary materials were purchased – slates, copy books pens, ink wells and paper. The following year a school

master, Henry Winterbottom, was appointed. A library was established including both local and national newspapers together with a varied range of educational journals and classical and popular novels. Arrangements were made for books to be loaned with labels attached specifying the time allowed for reading and a penalty of 1/2d for late return or damage. With the approval of the committee, the library was opened to all residents living in the immediate area from Atherton to Leigh Road northwards along Kirkhall Lane and defined as from "Barnhouses and the Workhouse to the Parsonage railway crossing."

The only information concerning the premises which were occupied at this time is that they were capable of accommodating up to two hundred people and that initially rotas of members took responsibility for keeping them clean. Twelve months later Mrs Winterbottom, presumably the wife of the schoolmaster, was appointed as a full-time cleaner receiving a wage of 1s-0d per week in the summer months and 2s-6d in winter. It was in these premises that the committee was able to bring the members together in what were referred to as tea-meetings. The first was organised for 4-30 pm on the Saturday prior to Christmas 1868. The room was decorated and provisions ordered for 250 people who were each charged 7d. Wives and sweethearts of employees were also invited. Following tea there

90	lbs of Currant Bread	at 4	d
60	" " Seed	"	4
80	" " Plain	"	1 1/2
30	" " Lump Sugar	"	5 1/2
2 1/2	" " Tea	"	3
9	" " Fresh Butter	"	1
12	" " Quarts of Milk	"	3

Extract from the tea-meeting accounts.

was entertainment which included singing and reciting.

At the first meeting in the new year the committee congratulated everyone on the success of the venture which must have secured the finances of the Institute as it was possible to refund the 5s which each committee man had been obliged to contribute for the initial Institute expenses. The opportunity for the workforce to meet together was repeated in succeeding years with the inclusion of additional post-tea entertainment. In the spring of 1869 John Lomas was paid 5s 6d to "fiddle for us" and in 1870 for four players from a brass band were offered 1s 6d and one boy came free to play bells and triangles.

The Institute's activities had the support and approval of the firm's management and owners. Several of the tea meetings were presided over by Mr Alfred Thorp or Mr James Hayes. Mrs Hayes donated books and 10s. James Thorp gave a large map of the world and James Hayes presented

two sets of chessmen following which the committee decided it was necessary to purchase a rule book. There is no indication if Mr Hayes agreed to the request for a skittle ground. The minutes also are unclear as to what was the purpose of an "Electrifying machine" which was purchased.

Though the archive records do not contain any further references to the Institute they do provide some evidence that the firm continued to recognise the importance of providing basic education for young recruits. As well as the payments for school books noted in the Institute minutes, further payments appear in a Thorpe and Hayes petty cash book in the later 1870s. Items include 2s -0d for school books for half-timers, 4s-0d for two "Register School Books" and 2s-0d for a "School Book Register". In 1880 12s-0d was paid for "School Certificate books."

## SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This account is based on records of the firm, particularly the Institute Minute Book and an account of the firm's history originally published in Skinner's Silk and Rayon Record of September 1952 with an updated reprint dated 1960. These are amongst the documents referenced D/Dy/Ha., in the Wigan Archives. Thanks are due to the archivist and staff for making them available for study.

J & J Hayes Mill, Leigh.



Extract from the Institute Rule Book.

Rule 10<sup>th</sup> That no intoxicating drinks, swearing, or gambling be allowed in the Institute.



# FROM HILLTOPS TO BUNKERS

BY DON RAYNOR

During the 1914-1918 war my family lived in Darlington Street. This was right under the path of Zeppelin L61 which dropped bombs all the way to The Top Place Iron Works in New Springs.

At the time, no proper warning system for these raids was in place. This problem was acknowledged in the 1920s and in 1924 a branch of Special Constables were trained as 'Spotters'. In 1926 the Observer Corps was formed to take over and to issue warnings in four South Eastern counties. By 1929 the control of the Corps had passed on to the Royal Air Force.

In 1937 the area covered now included the North-west of England with a Group HQ in Manchester. In a wartime situation a post sighting an aircraft, friendly or otherwise, would pass on its height and direction to its Group HQ. Its track would be plotted with the aid of other posts. If necessary, fighter aircraft would intercept and public air-raid sirens would sound. The Wigan area had three spotting posts, Atherton, Billinge Beacon and my own post, named Parbold but sitting atop Hunters Hill. By the time hostilities began post crews were a mixture of full-timers and part-timers; they were from all walks of life, a real mixture. Usually there would be three observers on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

During my time in the RAF, working in Air Traffic Control, I developed a keen interest in all things aeroplane. An acquaintance happened to be Chief Observer at Parbold. This was in the 1950s and I was invited to attend a post meeting at The Rigby Arms at Highmoor, not

very far from the post site. I persuaded a pal of mine from RAF days to come with me. Come Friday evening off we both set off on our BSA Bantams to the pub. We were getting off our bikes and saw a car arrive and these blokes, all wearing RAF 'officers' raincoats went into the pub. John took one look and said to me "we're not joining this lot, they're all b----- officers".

It certainly looked that way. I should explain that other ranks in the Air Force were given overcoats and a waterproof cape. We did join and got the 'macs'. I stayed with the Corps until Stand-down in 1991. We found that some of the members were from war-time days. They had chosen to remain in the Corps; they were the Chief, Gordon Alstead – his father, a former MP and one-time mayor of Wigan – and Cliff Taylor, well known for his shops in Wigan, who had run factories making army uniforms in the Second World War. There were two ex-air crew, one of whom became the Headmaster of the Bluecoats School. Several more were teachers and another owned a well known town centre tobacconists. All in all it was like a gentleman's club. 1941 was an auspicious year for the Corps, the title 'Royal' had been granted by the King. Women were admitted and the post at Parbold was ready for use.

Soon after I joined in 1957, a national exercise was planned and I would have my first experience of spotting planes. I had seen the film, Battle of Britain and remembered the part when German bombers destroyed radar installations in Kent. Air Vice Marshall Dowding said "all we have now is the Observer Corps". It was with this in mind we walked up the hill to the post. I had expected a little more than what

appeared. This place on the hill where guys spent nights and days was not much more than a dug-out with a couple of shutters which folded back and a sheltered area to escape the weather; and of course a telephone and a 'bush'.

What was missing was the planes; in the later fifties there were very few about. We were given synthetic information which we reported to Group Control. To the plotters, this information would appear authentic – OK for them but not for us. Sadly it seemed the future of the ROC was not too bright. I had only just joined, but radar was better now, planes flew higher and faster; who needed the Observer Corps?

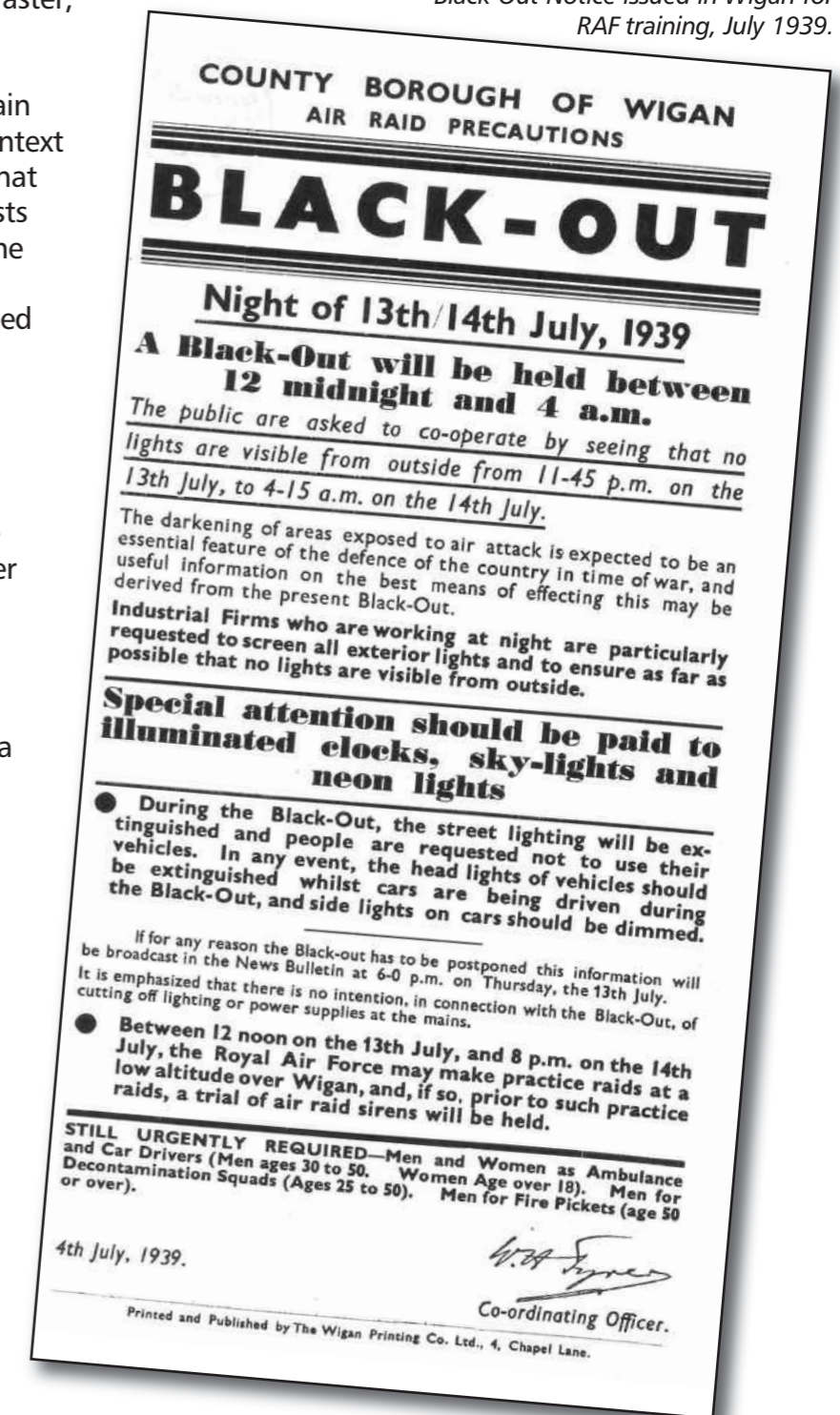
By 1960, the British Government was again seeking a new warning system. In the context of potential nuclear warfare, it was felt that with adequate information of bomb bursts and the likely path of fall-out, much of the population could survive. The ROC was chosen to carry out a review. It would need a substantial investment. Over 1500 underground bunkers were built, above ground Controls were replaced with underground two storey buildings. Posts like ours, now on low ground in Wrightington were equipped to measure the bearing, height, pressure and whether the burst occurred at ground level or in the air.

A ground burst was classed as a 'Dirty Bomb'. The local post would also sound a siren to warn of a raid (a Red Warning). Fall-out warnings (Black) would be by pyrotechnics. Fall-out measurements at regular intervals were plotted at centres and with the help of meteorologists could predict the path of radiation and time of arrival. A warning time of four minutes was aimed for.

The break-up of the Soviet Union, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the ending of the Cold War inevitably led to defence cuts and in 1991 the ROC was disbanded. I had been the Chief Observer for eight of the 34 years service. We had remained close to the RAF, we could attend annual camps and be close to the aeroplanes after all. Through the Corps I met many of

the top people in Government. I met the two top Royals at a Garden Party. I was told I would be introduced to Philip but half-way through the introduction he said, "bugger this" and stalked off. He did speak to me later, but the Queen was nice as she passed by. We also met 'Ban the Bomb' people during our exercises. Some of the posts were sold, but at Wrightington the farmer has taken over the brick building which had housed the 'Wigan Beacon', a former aid to aircraft navigation; but that is another story for others to tell.

*Black-Out Notice issued in Wigan for RAF training, July 1939.*





# Whit Monday

By Tom Walsh

Whit Monday morning has finally arrived. I live at the back of St Patrick's Church. Mam has been up and about for hours, ironing, making last minute alterations, cleaning and polishing, not to mention baking, in preparation for the many visitors we would most certainly receive on this very special day.

The first thing I hear is the sound of the bands and the bagpipes tuning up. Mam has left the job of getting me up and ready for as long as she dare, in case I get over excited. I always need persuading to get from under the eiderdown, except on Whit Monday, Christmas Day, and Easter Sunday. The teachers have been drilling us for weeks, on walking day etiquette: don't walk too close to the pavement, don't wave to people you know, and definitely do not take money. The latter instruction was almost universally ignored.

The excitement is palpable; it has been for weeks, possibly months. It is difficult to explain how important a day this celebration of Whitsun is in the homes of the Catholic community. Lining up outside school the teachers and the

*Catholic Churches Walking Day, Whit Monday on Standishgate c.1955.*



helpers would remind all the children again on the etiquette of the day, adding not to walk too fast. Starting off at St Patrick's Church we would process down Rupert Street, on to Darlington Street. Very poor territory for me as I knew only a handful of people from that street, although my Dad had an auntie, who if she remembered me, might have been minded to give me sixpence, or being a relative, maybe a shilling. I looked unsuccessfully every year for Auntie Maggie; had she spotted me she would undoubtedly have given credence to the old maxim that blood is thicker than water.

After the poor pickings of Darlington Street, into Chapel Lane, then onto Caroline Street where the welcome (though not in financial terms) was absolutely unbelievable. The parishes of St Joseph's and St Patrick's, both with large Irish communities, had an affinity that was tangible, even to a

child. I remember with great fondness the shouts of 'Come on The Pats' from the old ladies of our sister parish.

On reaching the Market Square we met the other parishes, the two already mentioned, with St Mary's, St John's and Sacred Heart. The heightened excitement was taken to an even higher level with the addition of hundreds and hundreds of people. The cacophony of sounds all added to the solemnity of the day and contrasted with the silence as the conductor mounted the rostrum to lead the bands and the laity in hymns and The National Anthem. I think you would have needed to have been present to understand the feeling of nostalgia and pride. When Faith of our Fathers was sung, hairs on the back of your neck would stand to attention. The National Anthem was sung with equal gusto and then what seemed the long walk back to our parishes loomed.

The road ahead was going to be difficult, but realising that my best patch lay not too far away gave renewed vigour to my little legs; Scholes, Wellington Street and Hardybutts, full of Aunts, Uncles and older cousins, now working and with a disposable income. I would probably be able to buy a bike, or at the very least a scooter.

The end result was a few Dinky Toys and a Yo-yo. I didn't want a bike anyway and scooters are only for babies.

On finally reaching home we were treated like returning heroes, having walked seven miles. Forgive the poetic licence: be it seven, or three (nearer to the truth), it was a long way for the aforementioned little legs. Now the business of the day to count the coins collected. We hadn't ignored the instruction 'Not to Take Money', but it would have been churlish to refuse. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Your home would be full of visitors, the table groaning with home baked pies, meat and potato, apple, jam lattice and of course two flavours of jelly, along with Carnation milk. Few in the parish had a refrigerator in those far off days, although most could boast a meat safe, a cupboard with a mesh front, usually painted cream or white to make believe we had the next

best thing to a fridge. I've never worked out why this devise would keep meat, milk, or anything else for that matter any cooler than an ordinary cupboard.

All the women would pitch in making pot after pot of tea, cutting the pies and cakes into equal sizes. They had to be equal to save any arguments among the children. As a child I always wondered where all the uncles and older male cousins were, and was told they were having a chat. Only years later did I realise that the 'chat' was taking place in one of the many public houses that adorned Scholes in those days.

After the feast, the post-mortem. Mam had given orders that there should be no gossiping, everybody had done their best and that's what mattered. This diktat, alas, was largely ignored. It was agreed that all the children looked lovely, but our parish just edged it; this sentiment would be common parlance in the homes of the other participating parishes of the walk.

Then to the nitty gritty, the women of the parish, and their outfits. Agnes such-a-body had that suit on display in Vi Almonds window. 'It looked very nice in the window', pause, enough said, and then just to ram home the point, 'It wasn't right for

the fuller figure', and 'the fur trim wasn't appropriate for spring'. Mary so-and-so had 'that same hat that made three appearances before, or was it four, my memory's awful nowadays!' The conversation goes on. Not gossiping you understand just expressing an opinion; 'you can do that even in Russia, Auntie Janey (Mam)', says one cousin sullenly, having been admonished for unflattering remarks about a parishioner's choice of frock. 'I think the K.G.B. might have something to say about that', mutters one of the more politically aware cousins, almost under her breath.

After a long day, all the guests have gone home. Mam has tidied the house, and so to bed. Sleep doesn't come easily after all the excitement of the day and thoughts of next year running through my head. I will be a year older and will consequently know more people, who I will not want to offend by refusing the well intended donation, and maybe, just maybe, my Dad's-Auntie-Thingy might spot me; she's very well off, she used have a chip shop, and if she does, I bet she'll give me ten shillings, to make up for past years. What with that and my new found friends I might get enough for a racing bike, with a dynamo, and in any case I will be a year nearer to being able to have a chat with my uncles. Sweet Dreams!



# YOUR LETTERS - CAN YOU HELP

## Dear Editor

In his letter published in the last issue of Past Forward Derek Winstanley questioned the accuracy of my article "The Street-Names of Old Wigan." (Past Forward No.61). I hope that you will give me the opportunity to reply.

I argued that street-names such as Wallgate and Standishgate are derived from the Old Norse gata meaning "road". This becomes gate in Middle English, so Standishgate means, "The road to Standish".

Mr Winstanley, however, believes that these street-names refer to gates in the defensive walls that once surrounded Wigan. In former times such constructions were known as "bars" not "gates", for instance, Micklegate Bar in York. His "evidence" consisted chiefly of a lengthy descriptive passage from David Sinclair's *History of Wigan* (written in 1882) in which town gates are mentioned several times. However, if one reads Sinclair more thoroughly one comes across the following passage:

"In the most ancient towns, the Danish termination gate, meaning a street, is preserved. The fact that the names of the principal streets in Wigan have this termination would not be proof in itself that the town had once been fortified by a wall, but would simply imply that the streets or roads led to, or had direct connection with, some place indicated by the previous part of the name. Standishgate was the road to Standish etc". (Volume 1, p.42)

So what I wrote was in accord with Sinclair's position, which is also that of modern historians.

Bob Blakeman

## Dear Editor

I read with interest the article on Nurse Martha Hogg JP written by Tom Walsh. I would be most grateful if you would pass on to him just how interesting I found this article.

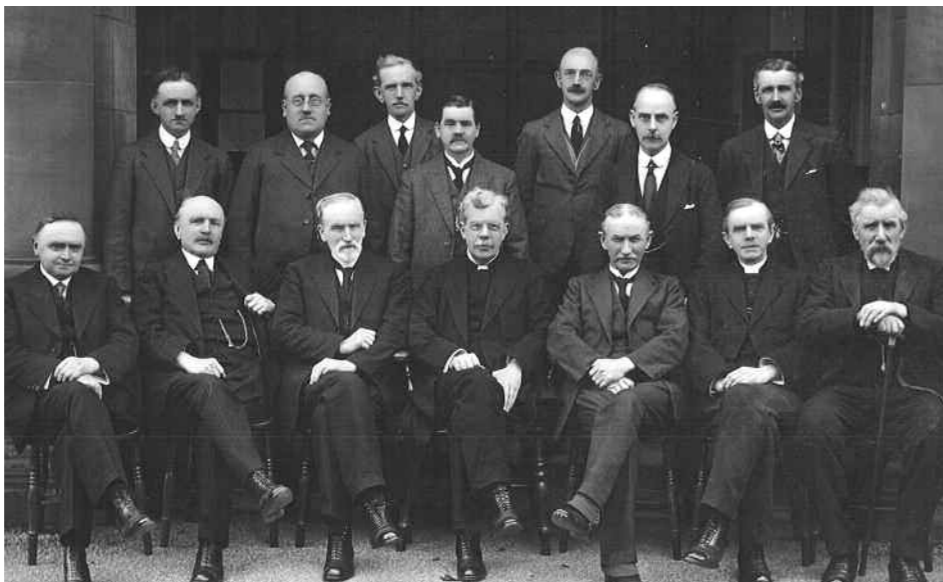
I have been receiving copies of Past Forward for many years due to the kindness of my son who lives in your area and there is always something of interest to read; it is then passed onto my local library in Colwyn Bay for any other 'Northerners' to enjoy.

Marjorie Lawton

## Dear Editor

I have enclosed a picture (below) that we came across in a box from one of our Parks and wondered if you would print it in one of your upcoming editions of Past Forward. We have no idea when or where it was taken or who the men are; the photographer appears to be Rowland's of Llandudno. We would appreciate any help your reader's could give us to identify the men pictured or the reason for the image being taken?

Cheryl Harold  
WLCT Parks Activities Service



## Dear Editor

I was pleased to see my article on the St Helens-Lowton Line in print in Past Forward Number 62. However, further research has prompted me to contact you again on a couple of points.

First, the present St Helens Central station on Shaw Street was not the western terminus of the line. That was another "St Helens Central" which stood to the west of Birchley Street and has long since been demolished to make way for car parking and an office development.

Second, my attention has been drawn to what seems to be a comprehensive list of Railtours excursions at [www.sixbellsjunction.co.uk](http://www.sixbellsjunction.co.uk). If the information there is correct, the final visit to Ashton in Makerfield station for fare-paying rail passengers would have been via 'The Makerfield Miner', special train on 24 August 1968.

Anthony Pilgrim

*If you have any information concerning the image, please submit it to [pastforward@wlct.org](mailto:pastforward@wlct.org)*

## Dear Editor

In his description of the train journey from Bolton to Preston, George Bradshaw's nineteenth century Railway Guide mentions Blackrod as having a 'sulphur spring'. Do any of your readers have any information on the whereabouts of this spring and what kind of spring it was?

It gets a mention in the *History of the County Palatine* and also in *The History of Lancashire Volume 2*, as being near to Arley Hall. Examination of the 1908 Ordnance Survey map does not reveal anything. Wigan, of course, had several 'springs'. Many of these were associated with mine workings and had various chemical make-ups, depending on whether they were gaseous from plant decay or had an inorganic mineral constituent (usually iron salts).

It would be interesting if this little mystery could be solved.

Brian Liptrot

## Dear Editor

I was wondering if it would be possible to put an appeal in Past Forward for information.

I'm looking for any information concerning the wartime Ministry of Supply, Ammunition Factory at Bradley Hall, Standish, that was managed by ICI.

I would also be interested to hear from anyone who worked for Heinz at Bradley Hall in the early post war period and had any information concerning Heinz's maintenance of the site and the wartime machinery stored on behalf of the Ministry of Supply.

Mark Gaskell

[mark.gaskell@outlook.com](mailto:mark.gaskell@outlook.com)  
07930-979275



## Dear Editor

We are investigating a historic image (above) passed down through the family. We think it may be an amateur dramatic group, dating perhaps from 1917-1920, although we are only calculating the date on the appearance of Ann Hall, front row left.

William Hall, her father, is seated centre middle row and I'm afraid we don't know the names of anyone else in the photograph.

There may be some connection to the Leigh Institute, but that is

speculative. William was a miner and worked for Fletcher Burrows in Atherton.

Please can you publish the image in Past Forward to see if any readers of the magazine can help us with any details of the people or event shown?

Kath Graham,  
Ken and Florence Hall

*If you have any information concerning the image, please submit it to [pastforward@wlct.org](mailto:pastforward@wlct.org)*

## Are you the volunteering type?

Here at the Archives Service we really can't thank our volunteers enough for all their hard work, commitment and enthusiasm. Without them we would not be able to offer the service we do to researchers. They are so good in fact that we now have a large backlog of catalogues to be typed up. If you would like to volunteer, especially as a typist, please do get in touch. You will be handsomely rewarded with tea, coffee and biscuits!

For more information, please contact Joan Livesey on **01942 404 430** or [j.livesey@wlct.org](mailto:j.livesey@wlct.org)

Image:  
*Lancashire Evening Post & Chronicle,*  
Brock Mill Office, Wigan





## Aspull and Haigh Historical Society

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at Our Lady's RC Church Hall, Haigh Road, Aspull at 7.30pm. All are welcome, contact Barbara Rhodes for further details on 01942 222769.

## Atherton Heritage Society

Meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month in St. Richard's Parish Centre Mayfield Street, Atherton at 7.30 pm. Members £1, Non Members £2, refreshments included. Contact for information 01942 884893.

8 April  
The Green Man  
Speaker – Mark Olley

14 May  
The Leech Family  
Speaker – M Powell

11 June  
Fun with Antiques  
Sheila Dean

9 July  
Propellers and Projectiles  
Speaker – David Kaye

## Billinge History and Heritage Society

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at Billinge Chapel End Labour Club at 7.30pm. There is a door charge of £2.

Committee includes:  
Mr Geoffrey Crank (Chairman),  
Dr Charles Mather (Vice Chairman),  
Mrs Jennifer Budd (Secretary)  
and Mrs Susan Mather (Treasurer).

Contact us on 01695 624411  
or 01744 892430.

## Hindley & District Family History Society

Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 7.00pm at Tudor House, Liverpool Road, Hindley. Please contact Mrs Joan Topping on 01942 257361 for details for details.

## Leigh & District Family History Society

Monthly meetings held in the Derby Room, Leigh Library at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month, except June and July.

A weekly Help Desk is run by members of the Society each Monday from 1.30pm-3.30pm in the Local History Section of Leigh Library.

For more information contact Mrs M Harrop (Chairman) 01942 743428, Mrs G McClellan (Secretary) 01942 729559 or email: leighfhs@blueyonder.co.uk

## Local History Federation Lancashire

The Federation holds several meetings each year, with a varied and interesting programme. For details visit [www.lancashirehistory.org](http://www.lancashirehistory.org) or call 01204-707885.

## Skelmersdale & Upholland Family History Society

Meetings held at 7.30pm on the fourth Tuesday each month at Hall Green Community Centre, Upholland. There are no meetings in July or August. For more information contact Sue Hesketh (Secretary) 01942 212940 or [Suehesketh@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:Suehesketh@blueyonder.co.uk) or visit [www.liverpool-genealogy.org.uk/SkemGrp/Skem](http://www.liverpool-genealogy.org.uk/SkemGrp/Skem)

## Wigan Civic Trust

If you have an interest in the standard of planning and architecture, and the conservation of buildings and structures in our historic town, come along and meet us. Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm. The venue is St George's Church, Water Street, Wigan WN1 1XD. Contact Mr A Grimshaw on 01942 245777 for further information.

## Wigan Family & Local History Society

For further information on the society and future meetings please call (01942) 713146 or visit [www.wiganworld.co.uk/familyhistory](http://www.wiganworld.co.uk/familyhistory)

## Wigan Archaeological Society

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month, at 7.30pm, in the Standish Suite at the Bocket Arms on Mesnes Road - on the first Wednesday of the month (except January and August) at 7.30pm. There is a car park adjacent on the left. Admission is £2 for members and £3 for guests. For more information call Bill Aldridge on 01257 402342. You can also visit the website [www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk](http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk)

# Write 1000 words - Win £100!

Do you have a passion for local history? Is there a local history topic that you would love to see featured in Past Forward? Then why not take part in Wigan Borough Environment and Heritage Network's Local History Writing Competition?

## Local History Writing Competition

1st Prize - £100  
2nd Prize - £75  
3rd Prize - £50



Winners from the Wigan Borough Environment & Heritage Network Awards, 2012

### Criteria

- Articles must be a maximum of 1000 words.
- Articles must focus on a local history topic within the geographical boundaries of Wigan Borough.
- By entering the competition you agree to your work being published in Past Forward. The winning article will be published

in Past Forward Issue 65. Other submissions may also be published in Issue 65 or held on file for publication in a future edition. If selected for publication the Past Forward Editorial Team may edit your submission.

### How to enter

- Articles must be received by e-mail or post by Friday 11 October 2013.

- Electronic submissions are preferred although handwritten ones will be accepted.
- You must state clearly that your article is an entry into the Local History Writing Competition.
- You must include your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address (if applicable). We will not pass your details on to anyone.

- It will not be possible for articles to be returned.
- You are welcome to include photographs or images however they cannot be returned.

### Submit to

[pastforward@wlct.org](mailto:pastforward@wlct.org) OR  
Local History Writing Competition,  
Past Forward, Museum of  
Wigan Life, Library Street, Wigan  
WN1 1NU

## Trencherfield Mill Bank Holiday Heritage Day

Wigan's Trencherfield Mill will host a bumper Bank Holiday Heritage Day on Monday 6 May, 11am-5pm.

The Heritage Day will include: classic cars, traction engines, a climbing wall, funfair rides, canal trips, vintage attractions, crafts activities and street theatre provided by the award winning drama school ALRA.

There will be an action packed programme for all the family. Some activities will incur a small charge.

Refreshments available at the Red Pepper Café in the Wigan Investment Centre.

FREE Parking will be available at the Wigan Investment Centre, WN3 5BA.



# HERITAGE & ARTS EVENTS CALENDAR

## Mondays

**FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 10.30am - 12.30pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
Family history workshops. £5, document pack £2  
Subject to staff and volunteer availability  
To book, telephone 01942 828128

**LEIGH FAMILY HISTORY DROP IN, 1.30pm - 3.30pm**  
Leigh Local Studies, Leigh Library  
Wigan & Leigh Local Studies - Leigh Family History Society are available to assist with any enquires and requests concerning your ancestry. This includes how to go about tracing your family line back through the ages. For further information telephone 01942 404559.  
**FREE**

**FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 2.00pm - 3.30pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
Family history workshops. £5, document pack £2  
Subject to staff and volunteer availability  
To book, telephone 01942 828128.

## Tuesdays

**FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 10.30am - 12.30pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
Family history workshops. £5, document pack £2  
Subject to staff and volunteer availability  
To book, telephone 01942 828128

**FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 2.00pm - 3.30pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
Family history workshops. £5, document pack £2  
Subject to staff and volunteer availability  
To book, telephone 01942 828128

## Thursdays

**FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 10.30am - 12.00 pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
Family history workshops. £5, document pack £2  
Subject to staff and volunteer availability  
To book, telephone 01942 828128

**FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 1.00pm - 3.30 pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
Family history workshops. £5, document pack £2  
Subject to staff and volunteer availability  
To book, telephone 01942 828128

## Fridays

**FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 10.30am - 12.30pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
Family history workshops. £5, document pack £2  
Subject to staff and volunteer availability  
To book, telephone 01942 828128.

## Saturdays

**HOMEWORK HELP, 11:00am - 3.00pm**  
Museum of Wigan Life  
We recommend phoning ahead so that we can prepare the resources for your Homework Help visit.  
For further information telephone 01942 828128.  
**FREE**

## Sundays

**TRENCHERFIELD MILL STEAM ENGINE**  
Trencherfield Mill, Heritage Way, Wigan Pier Quarter  
Session times:  
On non steaming days - 11.00am to 12.00 noon and 1.00pm to 2.00pm  
On steaming days - 1.00pm to 2.00pm  
See one of the finest working examples of its kind, meet the engineers and find out more through an audio-visual presentation.  
Small charge for admission  
For further information please ring 01942 828128 or visit [www.wlct.org/heritage](http://www.wlct.org/heritage)  
Group visits on other days by arrangement

## Other Events and Activities

**EXHIBITION  
MAKE IT, SPIN IT, CAN IT**  
Monday 18 February – Saturday 28 September 2013  
Museum of Wigan Life  
**FREE**

Wigan Borough was a powerhouse of industrial productivity, creativity and innovation. The exhibition celebrates the Borough's past achievements, but also looks at the present.  
Opening times: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10.00am- 5.00pm, Wednesday closed, Saturday 11.00am-3.00pm • Telephone 01942 828128

## EXHIBITION

**GILLIAN AYRES – WORKS ON PAPER**  
Turnpike Gallery, Leigh  
Saturday 6th April – Saturday 1st June  
**FREE**

A beautiful display of prints and paintings from Alan Cristea Gallery by Gillian Ayres, one of the leading British artists of her generation.

Opening times: Tuesday – Friday 10.00am – 5.00pm, Sat 10.30am – 3.30pm • Telephone 01942 404420.

## BANK HOLIDAY HERITAGE DAY

Monday 6 May 2013 • 11.00am – 5.00pm  
Trencherfield Mill, Heritage Way, Wigan Pier Quarter  
Join us at Wigan's Trencherfield Mill to enjoy a bumper Bank Holiday Heritage Day, with classic cars, traction engines, climbing wall, funfair rides, canal trips, vintage attractions, crafts activities and street theatre provided by the award winning drama school ALRA. Lots of fun for all the family! Plus of course the magnificent Trencherfield Mill Steam Engine  
Some activities will incur a small charge.  
Refreshments available at the Red Pepper Café in the Wigan Investment Centre. **Free parking** available at the Wigan Investment Centre.  
For further information please ring 01942 828128.

## FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP

Monday 13 May 2013 • 1.00pm – 2.30pm  
Leigh Local Studies, Turnpike Centre  
£5.00  
Booking essential  
For further information telephone 01942 404559.

## PALAEOGRAPHY PRACTICE

Monday 13 May 2013 • 2.00pm-3.30pm  
Museum of Wigan Life  
**FREE**

## FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP

Monday 20 May 2013 • 1.00pm – 2.30pm  
Leigh Local Studies, Turnpike Centre  
£5.00  
Booking essential  
For further information telephone 01942 404559.

## CARVED IN STONE – LEIGH CEMETERY WALK

Tuesday 21 May 2013  
10.00am – 11.00am  
Discover stories about some of the borough's past residents, including brave and infamous individuals interred in local cemeteries. Meet at the cemetery gates.

£2.00 Booking essential.  
Outdoor wear advisable. Please be aware dates may change due to the weather.  
For further information telephone 01942 404559.

**"CARRY ON CLEANING" @ WIGAN ARCHIVES**  
Wednesday 29 May 2013 • 10.00am – 3.00pm  
Wigan Archives Service, Leigh  
**FREE**

## PALAEOGRAPHY PRACTICE

Monday 3 June 2013 • 2.00pm-3.30pm  
Museum of Wigan Life  
**FREE**

## FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP

Monday 10 June 2013 • 1.00pm – 2.30pm  
Leigh Local Studies, Turnpike Centre  
£5.00 Booking essential  
For further information telephone 01942 404559

## FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP

Monday 17 June 2013 • 1.00pm – 2.30pm  
Leigh Local Studies, Turnpike Centre  
£5.00  
Booking essential  
For further information telephone 01942 404559.

## CARVED IN STONE – ATHERTON CEMETERY WALK

Tuesday 18 June 2013 • 10.00am – 11.00am  
Discover stories about some of the borough's past residents, including brave and infamous individuals interred in local cemeteries. Meet at the cemetery gates.  
£2.00 Booking essential.  
Outdoor wear advisable. Please be aware dates may change due to the weather.  
For further information telephone 01942 404559.

**"CARRY ON CLEANING" @ WIGAN ARCHIVES**  
Wednesday 26 June 2013 • 10.00am – 3.00pm  
Wigan Archives Service, Leigh  
**FREE**

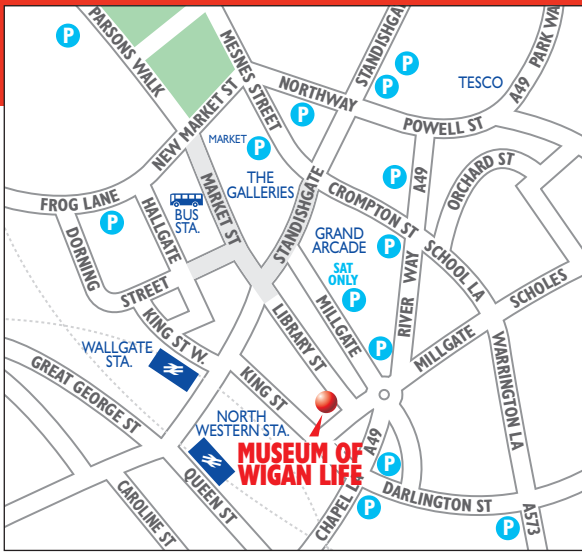
## PALAEOGRAPHY PRACTICE

Monday 1 July 2013 • 2.00pm-3.30pm  
Museum of Wigan Life  
**FREE**

**"CARRY ON CLEANING" @ WIGAN ARCHIVES**  
Wednesday 31 July 2013  
10.00am – 3.00pm  
Wigan Archives Service, Leigh  
**FREE**



# How to Find Us



## Museum of Wigan Life

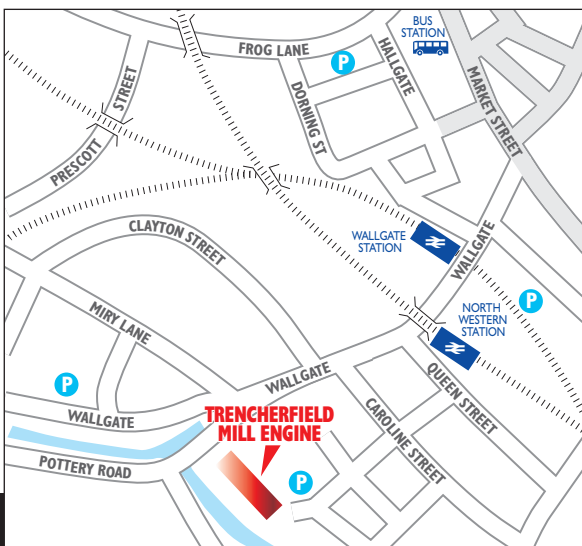
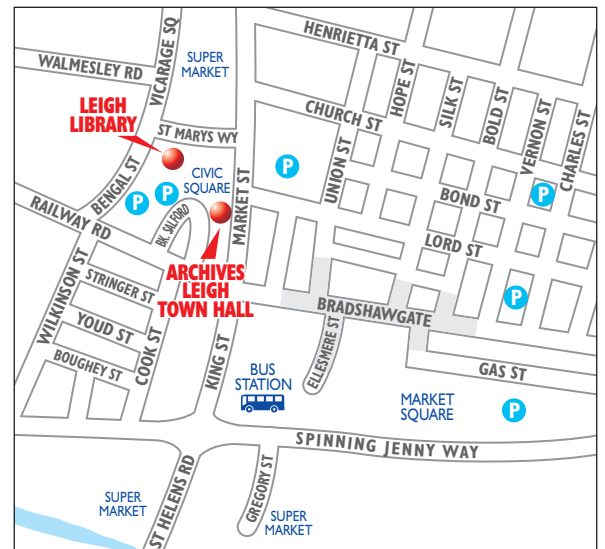
Library Street,  
Wigan WN1 1NU  
Telephone 01942 828128  
heritage@wlct.org

## Leigh Local History

Leigh Library, Turnpike Centre,  
Civic Square, Leigh WN7 1EB  
Telephone 01942 404559  
h.turner@wlct.org

## Archives

Leigh Town Hall, Leigh WN7 1DY  
Telephone 01942 404430  
a.miller@wlct.org



## Trencherfield Mill Engine

Wigan Pier Quarter, Heritage Way,  
Wigan WN3 4EF  
Telephone 01942 828128  
b.rowley@wlct.org