

WLCT

heritage & arts

PAST FORWARD

Produced by Wigan Heritage Service

Issue No. 64

August-November 2013

£2

Picture the Past



Visit the Museum of WiganLife

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FRONT COVER

Illustration courtesy of Emma Brown for the "Picture the Past" children's competition.

Letter from the Editorial Team

Welcome to **PAST Forward** Issue 64. This issue brings readers the usual mix of family and local history articles, as ever written by local researchers with an interest in the Borough's history.

We are always keen to include articles by new writers and with this in mind are pleased to be able to promote the Wigan Borough Environment and Heritage Network 2013 Local History Essay Writing Competition – see page nine for more information. History is everywhere, no matter where you live or work around the Borough and articles in **PAST Forward** take many different forms. We all have a history, whether a first day at work, a famous relative or the old house you pass everyday on your way to the shops, so if you're passionate about local history and preserving it...Get Writing!

Our history is certainly not just for adults, so **PAST Forward** is running a competition for children and asking them to produce a work of art based on our local history – you can find more details on pages 18-19; or have a look at the front cover if you're in need of inspiration!

Readers may well have noticed that we have increased the cover price of **PAST Forward** to £2 per issue. We have made this change in order to maintain the high quality design and print of the publication at a time when our costs in producing the magazine are increasing. We very much hope that as readers you will continue to support **PAST Forward** and enjoy reading it as much as ever.

Excitingly, we are now able to offer a new digital subscription to the magazine, perfect for Wiganers scattered overseas. The cost of this new subscription is £6 per year with none of the postage costs of the paper version and will be emailed straight to your inbox three times a year.

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.

New Faces at the Museum of Wigan Life



*Pictured left to right:
Lynda Jackson, Rita Musa
and Joan Livesey.*

As we mentioned in the last issue, several familiar faces have now left the Museum and Archive, but we are delighted to welcome three new members to the team.

Lynda Jackson is our new Community History Manager and is responsible for the management of the Museum of Wigan Life. Lynda joins us from her post as Curatorial Manager at the Royal Armouries in Leeds, having previously worked at the Museum of Liverpool and the People's History Museum.

Rita Musa is joining us from the Library Service reference team as our Local Studies Officer for Wigan, returning to work on the very collection where she began her career in Wigan. Having worked on the new 'Made In Wigan' exhibition, Joan Livesey is moving over from the Archives to the Museum to work full time as Exhibitions Officer.

If you see them about at any of our venues, please feel free to say hello!

PAST FORWARD Subscription Form

Copy Deadline for Issue 65

Contributors please note the deadline for the receipt of material for publication is
Monday, 28th October 2013.

Past Forward Subscription

Magazine subscription is £9 for three issues (incl. UK delivery). Payment by cheque (payable to WLCT), postal order or credit/debit card (telephone 01942 828128).

For worldwide subscription prices and information, please contact us.

Digital subscription (delivered by email, worldwide) is £6 per year. Payment options as above.

Please state which issue you wish your membership to begin at:

Please tick here if you would like to receive information regarding Wigan Heritage Service (Museum, Archives) activities and events. We do not pass your details to other organisations.

Return to: The Museum of Wigan Life, Past Forward Subscription, Library Street, Wigan WN1 1NU



Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone No.

Email

Signed Date

The Duo-decimal Society: Leigh's First Creative Writing Group?

BY YVONNE ECKERSLEY

Putting the Duo-decimals in context

Leigh, around the turn of the twentieth century, had a thriving amateur dramatics and literary culture. For a considerable section of the population, various societies provided outlets for their intellectual and artistic talents.

In 1901, Dr Wynne gathered twelve friends and associates and forged them into the Duo-decimal Society. The Duo-decimals were a tight group drawn from Leigh's wealthy, high status and influential individuals. Within the group there were a number of councillors, aldermen and mayors; eminent medical men, some with leadership roles at Leigh Infirmary; Leigh's Director of Education; Leigh Grammar School's Head; local industrialists, solicitors and bankers. These men, socially as well as professionally, enjoyed overlapping spheres of interest and some, the 'Penningtonians', were close neighbours.

The Duo-decimals met monthly during the winter in each other's homes. Meetings were designed to indulge their thespian and literary interests whilst being an opportunity to enjoy good company. They performed readings from sixteenth and seventeenth century playwrights,

notably Shakespeare, Marlowe and Jonson, whilst relaxing in the convivial atmosphere facilitated by copious amounts of food and drink.

The Minutes

Each host was required to write minutes of 'his' meeting, and at the following meeting, read them aloud. This led to good natured competition as to who could write the most entertaining or humorous account. The Minutes, whilst idiosyncratic, had a distinct pattern. They began conventionally enough, noting date, venue, play read and cast list, after which much of the formality disappeared. In the second part of the minutes we find, among the humour, valuable insights into individual members, the group, its dynamics, attitudes and practices. Interestingly, they reveal that a unifying ethos of the group seemed to be a shared contempt for certain social expectations, expectations they were, paradoxically, obliged to conform to in their public lives.

Within their capabilities the co-duos rose to the challenge of entertaining. Some hijacked common fictional themes. Within their 'stories', members were the protagonists, 'characters' performing deeds of 'derring do'. Other members based their writing on 'reviews' of their peers'

dramatic (or not so) performances. Through the comment that Co-duo Wynne, 'went to sleep' during one reading, we get a hint of the pressures some of the men were under.

There was much light-hearted banter and duos were not afraid to mock themselves. Hence, Co-duo (Alderman) Smith stated he was due to, 'spout at the town pump'. Dr Jones was mocked frequently because of the 'impossibility of deciphering his hopelessly illegible hand-writing' and conversely happily played the stooge. He joined the badinage surrounding the necessity, and difficulty, of duo hosts in providing him with suitable breeches so he could attend their meetings!

There are ambiguous entries. The entry where Co-duo Unsworth 'regaled the assembly', with an account of his duties as a Poor Law Guardian is left to speak for itself. He reported how that night when he had attended 'for his annual visit to qualify him for the post... he had been entrapped by a deputation of the unemployed but with his usual idle urbanity he had succeeded in escaping'. Duo Ward used the minutes to criticise the group's other-worldness. He wrote, 'We live aloft, in realms of pure delight, calm, serene, contemplating, philosophising, discussing literary themes, wisdom seeking, studying'. They were 'so detached...from the common

happenings of our village life', that they failed to acknowledge the 'bloodshed at Hall House', during a coal strike.

It is clear the Minutes were written with care by educated men. Many literary devices used can be identified as component parts of a genre, collectively known as 'The Comedy of Manners', a style experiencing a renaissance at the time. As the ethos of the genre is to satirise the manners and affectations of actual and aspiring, middle and upper echelons of contemporary society, it suited their purpose admirably.

Duo-decimals used irony, satire and caricatures competently; but they used parody with aplomb. Periodically, one or other of the wealthier (or a new member), hosted a Dinner at home or footed the bill for a Dinner and a trip to the Theatre. These evenings often aped the rituals and customs of 'polite' society. Formal, ornate and printed invitations were issued, Co-duos stylised themselves as titled gentlemen, 'Lord Beechwood, of Beechwood' for example. 'Menus' offering gastronomic feasts were not always what they seemed. One, ostentatiously written in French, offers 'Jouer of Boules' and 'Billiards' as 'courses'. After these feasts, they indulged themselves in fanciful and verbose toasts to their Host, some given in Latin or

French. One has to imagine the Minute taker, relating these speeches back at the next meeting.

However, not everything was treated frivolously. Compassion was expressed when Co-duo Ward's infant son died, then later, when another son was 'Killed in Action' in France. Dr Ross and Dr Wynne's absence (serving with the Medical Corps' in Wartime France) was noted with praise and respect. At the same time some inferred criticism can be discerned concerning Co-duo Speakman's absences. Minutes record that he had no time for frivolity, he found his wartime duties too arduous, or 'the war being still in duration' he could not come.

The Duo-decimals were not totally insular. The Minutes record a number of Cycle Runs and picnics in Cheshire, where their close connection with Leigh Infirmary becomes obvious. They were joined by 17 'Medicos'. They also reached out into the community. They sponsored the Leigh school children on visits to the Anchor Cable Music Society's Gilbert and Sullivan Operetta productions, instigating and judging the children's resultant entries in Prize Essay Competitions.

On a more general note, they were men of their time. Formal replies to the votes of thanks

Duodecimals and 17 'Medicos' in Cheshire.



Woodlands Meeting, Menu Card



offered to wives (their Duennas), for providing the refreshments, were given by the husbands. The familiar rivalry between Wigan and Leigh was aired on more than one occasion and there was some banter centred round the merits of the Manchester Guardian against the Daily Mail and vice versa.

And finally on a lighter note... One particular minute, written in comic verse, gently mocked one member's lesson, that pride often goes before a fall. Co-duo Horrocks wrote:

*Twas our newly sworn in brother
Who maintained his Yankee Car
Better was than any other
Bus or thing vehicular.*

Setting up the inevitable, Horrocks presents the fatal boast,

*She was tame as any bunny
When he wanted her to start.*

Of course, after the meeting the car would not start, and Co-duos gathered and theorised that perhaps the car was 'short of juice'.

*Meanwhile John had pushed
the button
Pushed in long and pushed in well
Pushed again, but dead as mutton
Lay the liquid in its shell.*

And the writer maintained the theme and style for forty four verses!

Edward Hall:

The Hungry Thirties

by Bill Melling

We continue to tell the story of the life of Edward Hall, Wigan's famous diary collector with an account of the lives of Edward and his wife, Em, in the 1930s. Even after selling their house and moving into rented accommodation Edward and Em found they were still having difficulty making ends meet. Edward was not happy working at the family foundry and his socialist views put him at odds with his uncles who managed the business. He decided it was time to make a fresh start and in September 1926 he bought a booksellers business in Surbiton, Surrey, for £375.

Edward funded his purchase by cashing in his life insurance policies and selling his shares in the foundry – a move that damned him in the eyes of his father. The move proved to be a disaster. By the time he had settled all his debts he had no capital left to replenish and improve the book stock, which he found to be mainly cheap fiction and not the antiquarian books in which he was interested. The shop was in a side street away from any passing trade and the living

accommodation was a bug-ridden, dark and dingy basement. Instead of 'living over the shop', they had to rent a flat.

The next few years were a battle to keep the business going. Edward tried various schemes to boost turnover – a lending library, selling to the trade and setting up a typing and duplicating service. He had to swallow his pride and seek help from his father who's low opinion of Edward's abilities was not improved by his son's increasingly left wing views. This led to a total breakdown in their relations and the hope of any further financial help from that quarter. At around this time Edward joined the Communist Party but soon became disillusioned with the local party meetings and resigned. In 1928, Em had given birth to a son, christened George Harry after Edward's father, possibly in an effort to improve family relations, a ploy that does not seem to have worked since George was never addressed by his given name but always known as "Bunk" or "Bunkie".

In 1932, both Edward and Em suffered bouts of ill health and they were forced to dispose of the shop at a considerable loss. They had to vacate their living accommodation and would have been homeless but for the kindness of their neighbours who offered them rooms. As he



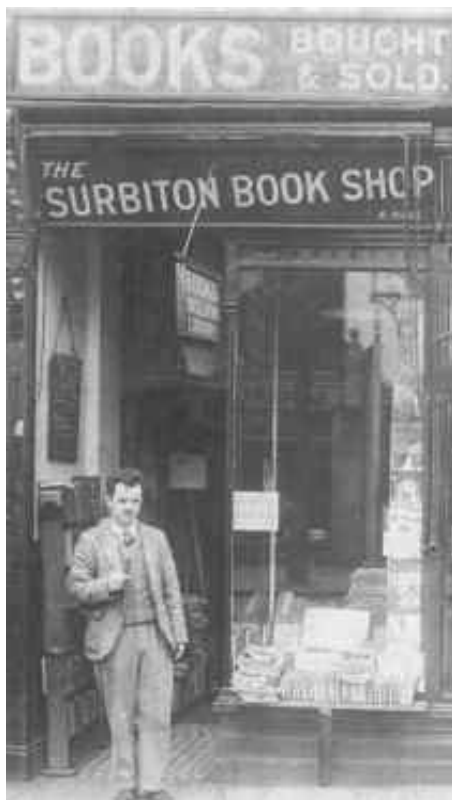
*'The Communist',
Edward Hall, c.1930*

had been self employed Edward was not eligible for the dole and they existed on his duplicating service and a door-to-door circulating library that he ran with some of his remaining books. The day was saved by Em who spotted an empty house nearby and which at her suggestion they rented to paying guests with Em doing the cooking. She also spotted an advert in the local paper for a motor-cycle courier which Edward successfully applied for. Although he was once again gainfully employed his wage was not enough to cover their expenses and they resorted to other means to make ends meet.

These are described in a daily diary that he started to keep in December 1934. As well as working as a courier for Poldens (optical frame makers) and the Walton Photographic Company, he operated a number of sidelines to boost his income, namely a typing and duplicating service and selling on second hand books in magazines and provincial papers. His motor cycle round covered a wide area of country and he used it to scour the second hand book shops for bargains.

Although Edward had abandoned conventional religion he still believed there was some kind of divine providence looking after him. He found that however dire his financial situation might get, something always seemed to turn up to save the situation. This led him to read extensively on a wide range of subjects, seeking a meaning to life. His other

*'The Bookseller',
Edward Hall, c.1930*



interests were natural history and classical music on the wireless. He was a keen walker and cyclist and his diary contains descriptions of expeditions ranging all over Surrey and Hampshire which were the main leisure activity for Edward and the children. Em's main relaxation was going to the cinema with her friends, sometimes accompanied by Edward when he could afford it. To their credit, Edward and his wife managed to give their children – Joan, John and Bunk – a good education and ensured that they all went to Grammar Schools.

By the end of March 1935 the courier work had dried up and in April, Edward signed on the dole. The family were now in severe financial straits. Added to the dole payment, the only other steady income was from Em's boarders. The family was constantly in debt as they tried to keep ahead of their creditors. At one stage Edward even tried his hand as a pavement artist, not with the object of making money but to try to get a job. With his war medals, including his Air Force Cross, prominently displayed on his chest, he set up his pitch outside the Royal Air Force Headquarters at Uxbridge in the hope that some high ranking officer would take pity on a comrade down on his luck and offer him a job. Although he did get sixpences rather than pennies, there were no job offers and he gave up in disgust.

Whilst on the dole in 1935, in reviewing his book collection for possible items to sell, he came across the Journal of Miss Weeton, a Regency-period Lancashire governess, which he

had discovered way back in 1925 in Wigan and had bought for 9d. He had started to edit the Journal in 1926, with a view to publication and had completed a considerable part of the task. During his time on the dole he completed the editing and approached the Oxford University Press who agreed to publish the journals in two volumes and gave him an advance of £20. Volume 1 of Miss Weeton's Journal was published by OUP in 1936 and he began receiving royalties, a welcome but small addition to his dole money. Volume 2 was published in 1939.

One of Edward's moonlighting jobs was at Books Unlimited, a local bookshop where the owner's father was librarian at the London School of Economics. He went so far as to recommend Edward for a job working on a British Academy bibliography of Economics. To his surprise Edward got the job, cataloguing books at the Goldsmiths' Hall Library in South Kensington. The expense of travelling into London every day left him little better off than before, but it meant that in his lunch hour he could explore the various museums in South Kensington, an activity that gave him a great deal of pleasure. Work on the bibliography continued throughout 1937 but by the summer of 1938 the work was completed and Edward once again had to sign on the dole.

For more on this period in Edward's life, look on the Wigan Archives webpages for Hall's, 'The Life & Times of a Superfluous Man'.

Your Archives

Look out for events on the Town Square as part of the Heritage Open Weekend on Saturday 14 September. The annual Leigh For All event will have a rugby theme, but will include all the usual Heritage tours of Leigh Town Hall (including the Archives) and Leigh Parish Church.

And goodbye from her...as regular visitors to the Archives will know, Joan Livesey has recently moved on to a new post within the Heritage Service, as Exhibitions Officer, working primarily at the Museum of Wigan Life. I would like to add my voice to all the messages of good luck that Joan has received and would like to thank her for all her hard work whilst with us at the Archives; Joan, you will be missed, but remember, 'Every day's a school day'!

Recent Acquisitions

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

- Image of Wigan General Post Office Staff, 1898 (Acc. 2013/14)
- Bill of quantities for the proposed cable works at Bedford, Leigh, 1901 (Acc. 2013/16)
- Records concerning Sutcliffe Speakman & Co. Ltd., 1950-1970 (Acc. 2013/21)
- Records of unions operating at the Heinz factory site, Kitt Green, Wigan, including the Unite Union NW299 (Heinz) Branch (Acc. 2013/22)
- Parkside Colliery Images, 1970s (Acc. 2013/28)
- Images of Wigan Town Centre redevelopment, including the Galleries Shopping Centre and New Market Hall, 1990s (Acc. 2013/37)
- Additional records of the Abram, St. John the Evangelist (Acc. 2013/38)
- Wigan Area Land Reclamation Photographs, 1950s-1980s (Acc. 2013/45)
- Records of Ince-in-Makerfield, Christ Church (DP/15)

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: First World War Records

Next year will mark the hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War. Many local individuals and organisations will be looking to mark the event in ways both private and public as we remember the sacrifices made by men and women who served during the conflict and the millions who lost their lives as a result of the war.

To mark the anniversary at the Archives, staff and volunteers are gathering together resources in the collections that relate to the war as it was fought both in the trenches of France and Belgium and on the home front. We plan to have hundreds of newly catalogued records and registers, thousands of digitised records and photographs and hundreds of thousands of transcribed entries from war related records. Some of these will be made available online, and all will be available to local groups, schools or individuals interested in learning more about their past.

These records include those of the Leigh Military Service Tribunals for Voluntarily Attested Men. The Tribunals, operating in the years after conscription began in 1916, heard the cases of men seeking exemption from compulsory military service. The records surviving for Leigh include both the files for each application and the summary register of decisions made. The reasons given in the applications are varied, including those made on family, medical or economic grounds, as well as those of men such as John Cook, who appealed for exemption on moral grounds as a conscientious objector.

The records that survive for Leigh are that much more interesting and nationally important as in the years after the war, the Government ordered that all such records be destroyed – save for sample series retained as a case study in the event of future use. These instructions were given as the documents were viewed as potentially divisive. Within communities the length and breadth of the



Application by John Cook

country men who often had no choice but to fight lost their lives in the cause of King and Country. Of those that remained and were granted exemption by the Tribunal, questions might be asked as a country struggled to overcome the grief and loss of the war years. Similar questions might be put to those sitting on the Tribunals who held the decision of life or death in their hands.

We do not know why or how the Leigh records survived, but whether clerical error or a clerk with an eye for the historical record, the insight they offer is clear. We are now working to transcribe each case file and register, and to digitise the record series in full to make these fascinating records as widely accessible as possible.

For more information about First World War records in the Archives and Local Studies, please get in touch.



Atherton Land Girls, c.1917

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 OR
Local History Writing Competition,
Past Forward, Museum of
Wigan Life, Library Street, Wigan
WN1 1NU

A German Pork Butcher in Wigan

BY GERALD MARSDEN

L. MYNEKYME, *
Pork Butcher,
47, STANDISHGATE,
WIGAN.

Our Speciality

Our Speciality

Faithfully yours,
L. MYNEKYME.

TRY OUR
LEAN PORK SAUSAGES!
Best in Town!

Our Mild Cured Bacon a Speciality.

Advertisement for L Mynekymes.

Recently looking through a file containing old newspaper cuttings I came across the following:

A Shevington reader has answered the question posed by John Street of Appley Bridge – ‘does anyone remember a pork butchers shop by the name of Mynekymes?’

Our helpful reader writes: “There was a shop by this unusual name in Wallgate during the 1920s and early 1930s. It was next door to the ‘sixpenny doctor’ and a pub called ‘The Machine House’ where B&Q were (now Go Outdoors). All Wallgate people will remember it. We’d buy pork pies, brawn (pig’s head) and a special treat for me – two pennyworth of dripping with plenty of brawn on top. We took our own basin for it and spread it on toast. Delicious!

Mr. Mynekymes was a German. At the start of the war a brick was thrown through his shop window and he had to close for a while. When it reopened it was called ‘Marsden’s Pork Shop’ – another well known name for Wiganers.

Mr. Mynekymes never appeared in the shop again. There also used to be a Marsdens in Standishgate which later became Mark Williams. Maybe Mr. Mynekymes had another shop there.”

The cutting appears to be taken from an undated Wigan Leader. As it was my name in the cutting I decided to research the ‘Mynekyme’ story further. The first reference found was in the 1881 census in Warrington and shows three brothers, John, Louis and Albert, all butchers and their mother Magdelina from Germany.

In the London Gazette there is a notice dated 14 January 1884. It seems that Albert and Louis were in partnership as butchers and makers of sausages at 76 Buttermarket Street, Warrington.

The notice was to state that the partnership had been dissolved by mutual consent.

Louis is recorded as being born in Inglefingen, Germany. Free BMD shows a Louie Mynekyme's marriage to Caroline Oberbach in 1884 in Nottingham. The following year their first child, Emma, was born in Wigan and later they had three more children, John, who died aged three months and was buried in a paupers grave at Wigan Cemetery, Albert and Nellie. All the children were shown to have a mother's maiden name of 'Oberbach'. Emma was baptised at All Saints, Wigan Parish Church, 22 March 1885 and lived at 21 Great George Street. Louis must have owned two businesses. Firstly, from the 1891 census and a vacancy notice, it appears he was living at 45 Standishgate, had two domestic servants and two boarders, their occupation being butchers. The vacancy notice published later in 1891 was from The Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser. It reads:

September 26, 1891

To Pork Butchers, -- WANTED, at once, a respectable Young Man as Pork Butcher, must be good at his trade; single preferred -
Apply to L.MYNEKYME,
45 Standishgate, Wigan

The second business appears in the court record in the Wigan Observer, 24 October 1914, where Louis is charged to have 'travelled beyond five mile radius without a permit', and gives his address as 93 Wallgate. He is mentioned in Sue Gibbons' book, 'German Pork Butchers in Britain' which records that on 29 October 1914 he was fined forty pound or three months imprisonment for travelling outside the five mile radius without a permit. The defendant, who had lived in Wigan for forty years without becoming naturalised, was seventeen years ago a member of a local Yeomanry Corps. On 5th November 1914 Louis Mynekyme is reported to have, 'not paid the fine, and is now serving the three months imprisonment in default'.

In the Wigan Directory (1909-1910), the occupier of 93 Wallgate is known as Arthur Lowe, pork butcher and Louis is living at 10 Douglas Street. In Kelly's Directory (1924) the business at 93 Wallgate is shown as being used by Louis's son Albert Marsden, pork butcher and still appears under this name in the 1971 Wigan Directory.

A notice in the London Gazette of February 1918 reads:

'Notice is hereby given that ALBERT MARSDEN, of 123 Victoria Street, Park View, Newtown, Pemberton, Wigan in the county of Lancaster, pork butcher, now serving in His Majesty's forces hereto known as Albert Mynekyme, being a - British subject, has by deedpoll dated 26 day of December 1917, duly enrolled in the Central Office of the Supreme Court of Juricature, on the 9 day of February 1918, renounced and abandoned his surname Mynekyme,



Marsden's shop on Wallgate.

and has assumed and adopted the surname Marsden, and intends upon all occasions hereafter, and in all deeds, documents, actions and proceedings, matters and things, to use and subscribe the name 'Marsden' in lieu of his former name 'Mynekyme.'

In 1917, Albert married Alice Kearsley at Christ Church, Millgate and Ellen (Nellie) married William Robert Baxter in 1922 at Queens Hall Mission.

However, in January 1912 the elder daughter Emma died and is buried in Wigan Cemetery. Louis, Leonard, Caroline and Nellie are also buried in the same grave with their religion shown as non-conformist. These members of the family didn't change their surname to Marsden as they are all buried with the name Mynekyme.

The picture above of the Marsden Shop is taken from the Wigan World website and was submitted by Derek Marsden. His note, included with the picture, is shown below.

PICTURE NOTE

It was taken in 1950 by my father. It was one of our three shops, it was situated on the corner of Caroline Street in Wallgate, we had a slaughter house at the back and a bakery upstairs. The local Bobbies used to sit upstairs and have a sly cup of tea and a pie whilst they watched the pedestrian crossing outside the shop. We were quite famous butchers in Wigan and used to supply all the local clubs and pubs as well as Wigan Casino. We also had another shop in Market Street in Wigan opposite Oliver Summers toy shop. When my father closed down the business in 1972 we sold our Market St shop to Shannons pet food. I used to be a good friend of Paul Shannon whose father owned the shop. Our third shop was in Westhoughton on the corner of Marsden Street.

LEIGH AND WIGAN LOCAL STUDIES

Leigh Local Studies Donations

Leigh Local Studies has received several donations in the past few months including several articles written by a former employee at Sutcliffe Speakman Carbons Ltd.

We have received a publication called 'American Civil War: Gravesites of Great Britain and Ireland', which will be of interest to those who have an interest in the conflict or who may have American Civil War veterans in their family tree. The Turnpike Community Theatre programme for the play Marsh Fever has also been donated. The play is about the Leigh philanthropist Mary Matilda Susan Marsh.

Excitingly, we have been offered and have accepted a bequest from the James Hilton Society who have agreed to donate their volumes of James's work and other Hiltoniana.

Wigan Local Studies Donations

To mark Wigan Athletic Football Club's victory Wigan Local Studies now has in the collection the FA Cup Final 2013 match-day programme and tickets. A beautiful publication, 'Men of Milk', by Zuzka Repakova has been donated and accepted. The publication contains some wonderful images of Kay's Dairy in Pemberton. Neina Woodward has collated First and Second World War experiences of servicemen from Ashton. Both Wigan and Leigh Local Studies have received the Lancashire Parish Register Society Volume 177 of the Registers of the Parish of Dalton, 1692-1812.

Local Studies News

As mentioned in the last issue of Past Forward, 2014 marks the centenary of the First World War and many people will be looking to research their ancestor's military past. To mark

the centenary two volunteers at the Museum of Wigan Life, Les Norburn and Kate Irvine, have searched and indexed the Wigan Observer and the Leigh Journal for articles about local men who fought during the First World War. The indexes are now also available online on the Local and Family History page of the WLCT website.

The oral history project Telling Tales has been successful in persuading local people to record the stories of their working lives. We have recorded and are in the process of transcribing interviews from former employees of PTH Brooks Printers, Parsonage Colliery and Sutcliffe Speakman Carbons Ltd. If you would like to have one of the local studies team record your working story please contact us on 01942 404559.

Munitions workers from Coops clothing factory during the First World War. Taken in Mesnes Park, c. 1917.





Haigh Hall

*Come join the fun at
Wigan's most historic venue*

**Are you interested in history?
Are you interested in promoting
the history of Haigh Hall?**

Haigh Hall has a wonderful and colourful history covering Anglo-Saxon times through to the 21st Century. A history that we promote as part of our very popular walking history tours of the Hall and the Estate.

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Volunteers will receive training as well as expenses and subsistence.

For an information pack email Keith:
k.bergman@wlct.org

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Rugby League World Cup

The Museum is gearing up to celebrate the Rugby League World Cup. Events in July included a rugby fun day, a public talk by Professor Tony Collins and the display of the Rugby League World Cup trophy at the Museum. Visitors to these events explored the history of the great split and Wigan and Leigh's role in the founding of the Northern Union.

So what's next? In October we launch a special Rugby League exhibition. Come along to the Museum to discover more about the history of the game, the truths behind the myths and the giants of the sport. Discover how things have changed over the years for players, managers and fans alike. Bring the whole family to see original memorabilia and rugby-themed activities!

Do you have match tickets, scarves, caps, medals, rosettes or other Rugby League memorabilia for display? Get in touch with the Museum by calling 01942 828128.

We are also working with Wigan Libraries on the TRY Reading Campaign. Keep an eye out for upcoming events including:

- Tom Palmer family fun events (August)
- An evening with Ray French (September)
- Rugby-themed Poetry Competition (September)
- Rugby League Panel (October)

For up-to-date event information on Try Reading events please see: www.TryReading.org or call in to your local library.

For up-to-date event information on the Rugby League exhibition, please contact 01942 828128 or email heritage@wlct.org

‘Coccium’

By
Brian
Parr



and its Origins

These pieces of red-orange pottery have been recovered from various digs of Roman Roads in the Wigan area and are of a typical fabric and colour perhaps indicative of a potential ‘Douglas Valley’ ware, now being progressed for microscopic examination to detect their location of origin.

The root ‘Coccio’ (derivative Coccium) translates from Italian to English as ‘Earthenware’. Given this association through the Italian language to Latin, the inference is that a pottery making industry could possibly have been expedited by the Romans in Wigan during their occupation period in the north of Britain?

This premise is significantly bolstered when considering local history and geological circumstances in the early 1600s, when the King appointed three Law Lords to resolve a dispute between the burgesses of Wigan Borough – those granted rights by way of Royal Charter – and the Rector, who was then Lord of the Manor of Wigan.

The Rector had acted to oppose the burgesses extracting potter’s clay from the parish waste lands and for many of them it had undoubtedly been their main income for many generations, as indicated by the old tradition to adopt surnames according to family trade, which reveals the presence of pottery artisans in Wigan during the 1300s. The

judiciary, in due course, found mostly in the burgesses’ favour and clay extraction was allowed to continue indefinitely.

This historical evidence strongly suggests there was an history of sustainable pottery skills and manufacture in Wigan surviving from well into the medieval period. There remains a reasonable probability this had earlier persisted with the Romano-British, long after the Romans left in the early fifth century, as other elements of the Roman trade culture were often also retained for many generations. Perhaps the practice was carried out on a somewhat smaller scale, with the local British tribal elite availing themselves of the trade benefits of the earthenware industry?

The pottery output may thus have endured into the mid-sixteenth century, then partly re-aligned to meet the huge demand of clay tobacco pipe usage and by 1850 local good quality clay deposits were possibly depleted. Or other factors such as cotton processing

and coal extraction intervened and this important feature of Wigan’s ancient history may have finally been obscured?

Consequently, there may be archaeological evidence of a particular type of earthenware made, perhaps recycled and distributed in the Douglas Valley region (ref: Severn Valley ware, a well-known Roman pottery type) that has yet to be identified and classified through a formal archeological publication?

There is only one known site of a Roman pottery kiln west of the Roman Road between the Manchester and Ribchester Forts to the Irish Sea coast. This was found at Walton-Le-Dale, but at similar latitudes east there is a proliferation of over twenty known kilns and it is therefore plausible that given the scarcity of known kilns near Coccium, this settlement could have served the needs of the population north of the nearest other kilns at Wilderspool and west of Manchester and Ribchester pottery kilns and south of Walton-Le-Dale.

Ivan D. Margary suggested the Roman Road from Wigan to Walton-Le-Dale was aligned with Bridgeman Terrace and constructed across the Mesnes, then over to Brimlow Farm, in Gidlow, where it was eventually found during the 1980s. The Mesnes area is close to the town centre and practical for mineral extraction purposes. Records show that sand, gravel and coal have been removed from this location during the last 200 years and potter's clay was located nearby in the centuries before that.

There are similar indications in nearby small settlements with clay deposits, so extraction during the medieval period, or earlier, for pottery use would not be entirely unprecedented close to Wigan in the North West. In this scenario, there was perhaps an appreciable dispersion of pottery kilns centred around the main urban area of Coccium, advantageously sited on several Roman thoroughfares and served by a River heading north towards the Ribble estuary.

I therefore raise the hypothesis that the Roman name Coccium is

derived from and signifies a settlement of local earthenware production, of a once notable scale, located on the primary west coast Roman Road from Wilderspool to Lancaster. This pottery, to date, is of an archaeologically unclassified type and variation. This is plausible since the pottery finds in Wigan from the Roman-occupation era have mostly been unearthed during the last 40 years and much remains to be learned about Coccium, given the limited quantity of archaeological investigations in and around the town centre over the last century.

By greater measure, more archaeological evidence has been inadvertently lost due to mining and industrial events since the industrial revolution and the growth of town centre buildings with deep cellars thereafter. These are compelling reasons why Wigan pottery making locations possibly originating in the first to third centuries A.D. may have been destroyed and remained unnoticed, such that only small sherds of this local earthenware may still exist underground.

However, absence of current and known archaeological evidence does not necessarily mean evidence of the absence of some sizeable pottery facilities in ancient Coccium. It is therefore perhaps only by detailed investigation of local pottery finds that these can be shown to have originated from Wigan district.

In conclusion, this name association is perhaps the first ever of a firmly evidenced nature, with respect to known local history, geology and events dating back at least to the medieval period, that endeavours to approach a definite etymological link between Roman Wigan and pottery manufacture. Consequently, it is currently the only credible and fact-based derivation to clearly explain the potential origins of the settlement name given in Route 10 of the Antonine Itinerary as 'Coccium'. Thus, it should tentatively suffice until such time that future excavations can confirm this, or conclusively prove otherwise, by way of a thorough and professional archaeological publication.

Recent appraisal by a renowned pottery expert has identified these clay shapes as 'bobs' used to support pots being fired in kilns. Dating is provisionally late fifteenth century. Further analysis is in progress and may date them closer. They were unearthed in close proximity to both a known Roman Road and suspected location of a Roman Fort near Wigan (ref. Rev. Edmund Sibson). They are considered as direct archaeological evidence of potter's implements found in an area of clay pit abundance that possibly substantiates the theory of pottery production workshops in the immediate area of Coccium.



BY BOB EVANS

Health, Sanitation and the Government Loan 1891

In 1891 the Atherton Local Board received letters from the Local Government Board, expressing concern about reports of Scarlet Fever in the district and recommending that the provision of an isolation hospital was the most effective means of preventing serious epidemics. As well as accepting this advice the Local Board was equally concerned to replace the traditional method of waste and sewage disposal which was a significant reason for the spread of this and other diseases.

A report on conditions in the township noted that most of the houses had a privy and cesspit in which 'dry town refuse was mixed with human excreta'. Traditionally

'night soil workers' had collected this and taken it for use by farmers but with an increasing population the amount was becoming more than they could use. Based on advice gathered from neighbouring authorities, the Board made several recommendations. Sufficient horses and carts were to be employed to collect waste from both the streets and house premises and any that was unacceptable to farmers for manure should be burnt in what was termed a 'refuse destructor'. All new houses and eventually existing ones were to be provided with slop-water closets, locally known as tippers where a container on a pivot collected used domestic water to flush deposits

into sewers connected to treatment works.

Sites for both a destructor and an isolation hospital were identified either side of Railway Street at the far end of Bag Lane on land which local businessmen had obtained on relatively short-term leases from Lord Lilford for industrial development. The Albion Spinning Company purchased these leases in 1873 but their mill was burnt down in 1889 and financial problems prevented the company renegotiating a longer lease and erecting a replacement. As the Atherton Board initially understood that Lord Lilford's agent would accept a request for a 999 year lease at a rent of no more than £120 per year, the

opportunity was taken to buy the existing leases and the derelict mill buildings from the Albion liquidators for £600.

With this assurance the Board produced plans and applied to the Local Government Board for two loans of £2,500 to build the hospital and refuse destructor. A petition against these uses was signed by several prominent local businessmen. Their objections were supported by Lord Lilford's land agent who argued that a restriction in the existing leases included: 'not to carry on any noxious trades or permit to be done anything which might be injurious to the neighbourhood.' Other conditions required that any property on the land which had suffered damage should be repaired. The Local Board was ordered 'to rebuild the said cotton Mill and buildings forthwith and to pay him One thousand pounds as compensation for such breach of Covenant'. The Local Board refused to accept conditions in a lease which would restrict their future use of the land. After four years of negotiation, accompanied by additional legal expenses and under the threat of compulsory purchase, the land was eventually bought in August 1895 for £6685 by what by then had become the Urban District Council.

Four years had passed since the submission of the original plans during which time agreement with Leigh had resulted in the provision of an isolation hospital at Astley. As a result an alternative plan was produced showing a recreation area on the land north of Railway Street originally intended for the hospital. One Board member suggested the inclusion of a swimming pool. The Local Government Board, after first perhaps reluctantly sanctioning the land purchase, questioned if this justified the loan of public money and recommended that the Urban

District Council should sell the land. In reply it was argued that land was difficult to obtain for public purposes as nearly the whole of Atherton was in the hands of one landowner. There would be no cost to the ratepayers as income from sub-letting would repay the loan charges.

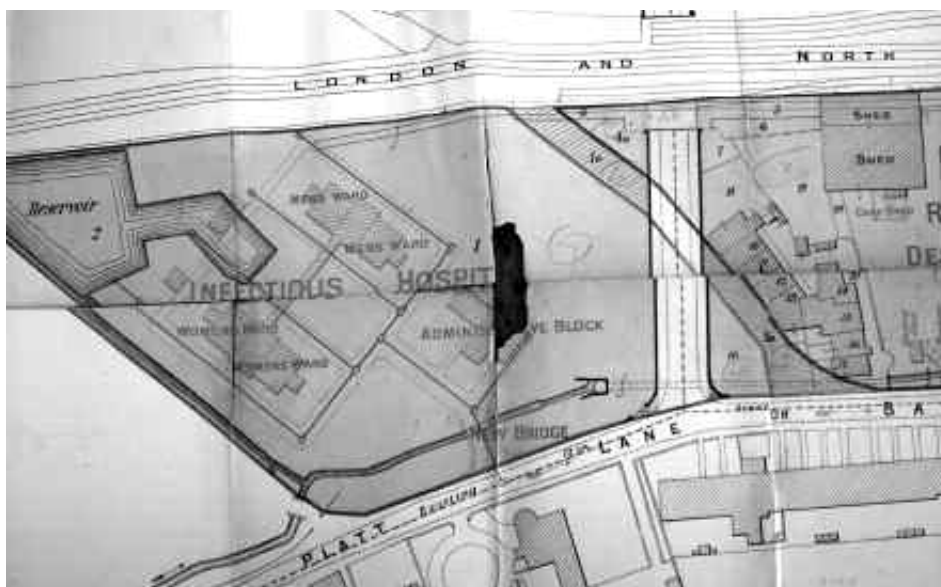
Initially the council appears to have attempted to justify retaining ownership. An additional file of documents includes the contract which satisfied the original desire for an incinerator. Land adjacent to the railway was ideal for the storage of road building materials. Two agreements exist for rental payments to tenants renting land, buildings and sidings for the manufacture and repair of railway wagons. Council minutes show that there was some investment in the area set aside for recreation. Other records however suggest that the council was prepared to sell land. After first being given an opportunity to rent a site the Zebril Food Company made an offer to buy the whole area south of Railway Street. This was unsuccessful as the company went bankrupt. In contrast with the number of records explaining the purchase of the land, there are only the legal documents recording its

eventual sale. In 1912 Alfred St Clair Jackson paid £600 for the land he had previously leased for a laundry. Finally four agreements in the 1930s completed the sale of the remainder of the land south of Railway Street together with the area to the north to the Staveley Engineering Company.

Engineering businesses still occupy the land south of Railway Street in contrast to the residential property which has been built to the north and along the line of the railway.

Sources and Acknowledgements

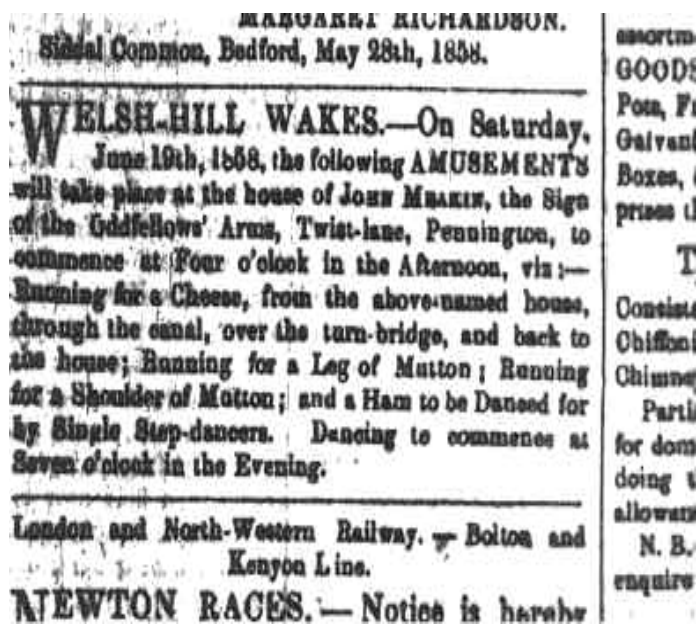
This account is based on Wigan Archive records, indexed as UD/Ath/A5/3/1-31 (1834-1939) and A5/4/1-18 (other papers concerning Albion 1870 -1939). These include the original legal documents which proved the Local Board's ownership of the land and then the succeeding Urban District Council's right to sell it. There are detailed reports on the township's health and sewage problems and letters and summaries relating to the negotiations between the local authority and the land owners for the lease or sale of the land and with the Government Board for funding loans. Documents in box UD/Ath/C3/1 together with council minutes provided additional information about the destructor.



Plan of land for the proposed isolation hospital.

Competition FOR KIDS!

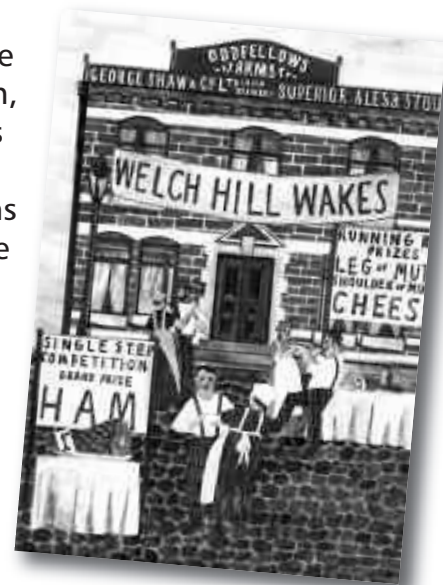
Calling all children! Past Forward is holding a 'Picture the Past' competition and we need you to get involved. The competition is for those of you aged between 7 and 14. We would like you to produce a work of art based on a piece of local history.



The newspaper article about the 'Welch-Hill Wakes' which Emma based her work of art on

To show you what we mean, Emma Brown, illustrator and art director, has made an exciting mural based on an old newspaper advert – have a look at the front cover to see it in colour! The mural shows local people enjoying the 'Welch Hill Wakes' at the Oddfellows' Arms in 1858. Emma has put a lot of research and detail into this artwork and has included some lovely links to the local area

such as the 'George Shaw Brewery' sign, the cobbled streets and old-fashioned streetlights. She has even pictured some of the prizes to be won for the running and dancing competitions.



Emma has also agreed to be our guest judge. There are two categories, one for ages 7-10, and one for ages 11–14. Prizes from the Museum of Wigan Life shop will be given to the winner and runner-up from each category.

Entry Criteria

- Hand your artwork into either Wigan or Leigh Local Studies by Friday 18 October 2013
- Entrants must be aged between 7 and 14
- One artwork per entrant
- Artwork must be based on a local history topic within the borough
- By entering you agree to your work being published in Past Forward and the winning artwork will be published in Past Forward Issue 65
- State clearly that your entry is for the 'Picture the Past' competition and Include your name, address and age
- Submit to either Leigh Local Studies, Leigh Library, Turnpike Centre, Civic Square, Leigh, 01942 404559 or Wigan Local Studies, Museum of Wigan Life, Library Street, Wigan, 01942 828020.

For more information about Emma Brown and her work please see: <http://www.emmabrownowl.com/index.php?/about-me/>

We have provided some facts and images to get you started. If you would like to research your own local history fact Leigh and Wigan Local Studies can offer helpful tips and advice!

- **Did you know** that Leigh had a theatre called the Theatre Royal? Many people performed at the theatre and performers would appear in adverts in the local newspaper. One artist was Chung Ling Soo, a famous Chinese magician (who was really from New York!). He was famous for his amazing bullet trick, catching bullets with his hands or even his mouth and dropping them onto a plate.
- **Did you know** that Leigh had a German Prisoner of War Camp during the First World War? Some of the men formed a theatre group inside the camp. But there were no women, so some of the men had to play the parts of the girls!

The German Prisoners of War, theatre group.



Annie Bates, a scavenger employed at the Howe Bridge Spinning Company in Atherton.

- **Did you know** that children used to work in mills and often did some of the most dangerous jobs? The little girl in this picture is Annie Bates, a scavenger from Atherton. Scavengers had to pick up scraps of cotton from under the machinery while the machines were working. Scavengers were in danger of getting their arms, legs or hair caught in the machines.
- **Did you know** that during the English Civil War a Royalist called Sir Thomas Tyldesley was killed during the Battle of Wigan Lane? The Tyldesley Monument on Wigan Lane is supposed to mark where Sir Thomas was killed in Wigan but no one knows where he is buried...
- **Did you know** a local colliery owner called James Diggle once lowered a whole herd of cattle into a coal mine in 1866? James wanted to protect the cattle from a terrible disease called foot and mouth.

Signs of a Vanished Past

by Bob Blakeman

If someone who hadn't visited Wigan for decades came back today he would hardly recognise the town. Many buildings have been demolished and new ones built, narrow roads have been widened, and open spaces built on. But amongst all this change street names have usually remained the same – often for centuries. They can act as a window on the past, showing us what our district was like in former times.

Researching the origin of street names can be an interesting pastime, and research tools are readily available in the Museum of Wigan Life, Leigh Library and Wigan Archives.

The most obvious changes have occurred where a street is named after a building which no longer exists, or whose function has changed. School Lane, Haigh, a quiet country lane near Haigh Hall, was named after a little school, situated next to the present disused quarry, which was founded in the seventeenth century. Chapel Lane, now part of the dual carriageway below the Grand Arcade complex in Wigan, was named after a Presbyterian chapel built there in 1769.

Sometimes a building is only hinted at in a street name. An 'avenue' was formerly a private road lined with trees leading to a



The statue of Wigan's former MP, Sir Francis Sharp Powell in Mesnes Park.

mansion. The Avenue, Leigh, follows the route of a private drive that connected Leigh town centre with the long-lost Atherton Hall, once described as, 'A noble mansion, erected at great expense, and which took a long time in finishing'.

In former centuries the clergy occupied houses on a par with the manorial lords. In the twelfth century a parson of Leigh Parish had a hall assigned to him which

became known as the kirk hall (i.e. the church hall), and the lane in which it was situated became known as Kirkhall Lane. The Church was a major landowner for centuries and land belonging to it was known as 'glebe'. Glebe Street, Leigh, and Glebe End Street, Wigan, indicate its location.

The Church also received goods in the form of a tax called the 'tithe', which consisted of a tenth

of the annual produce of a landholding. Grain received as tithe was stored in huge barns such as those at Rivington. Most of these have been demolished and only names such as Tithebarn Road, Garswood, indicate their former existence.

Lanes and other byways were sometimes named after families that held land there.

Bradshawgate, Leigh ('gate' here means 'road'), is named after the Bradshaw family who acquired land here in 1293.

Gidlow Lane, Wigan is named after the Gidlow family who had held land in the district since the reign of Henry VII.

Small-scale industries were important in the past, and street names can sometimes indicate what they were. The usual dialect word for a quarry was 'delph', as in Dawber Delph, Appley Bridge; but there was probably a quarry in Nel Pan Lane, Leigh. 'Nel' was a type of high quality sandstone used for building, and a 'pan' was a hollow in the ground. In Tan House Lane, Winstanley, was the site of a tannery,

where animal skins were converted into leather.

During the nineteenth century the population expanded rapidly, and names had to be found for the many new streets that were being laid out. The family names of important persons in the community were a favourite source. Powell Street, Wigan, on which the Mercure Hotel now stands, was named after Sir Francis Sharp Powell, who was the Conservative M.P. for Wigan from 1885 to 1910. Tipping Street, Poolstock, was named after William Tipping, the cotton magnate who owned the nearby Poolstock Cotton Mill. The Stanley family, Earls of Derby, whose seat is Knowsley Hall, gave their names to the many Stanley Streets and Derby Streets in South Lancashire.

The origins of street names are not always what they appear, however. It is true that there once was a barracks in Barracks Road, Bickershaw. This was during the 1840s when most of the population was suffering from extreme poverty and troops were used to quell social unrest.

However, there never was a barracks in Barracks Yard, Wigan (lately the site of the Officers' Club). There was however the Old Cloth Hall. This long, low building was a place of business for people in the textile trade. It was replaced by the Commercial Hall, on the site of the present Marketgate, and converted into rudimentary living quarters described in the local press as 'miserable hovels'. 'Barracks' was almost certainly a nickname for these.

The latter part of the twentieth century saw a fashion for pseudo-historical street names that have no connection with their location. An extreme example is Falconwood Chase in Worsley, where a chase was an extensive estate reserved for hunting by the medieval nobility among whom falconry was a favourite sport.

And very recently, by popular demand, the new by-pass at the Saddle Junction in Wigan has been named Southgate, using a form of street name that has its origins in the Viking era.

Chapel Lane, Wigan, was named after this modest building, erected in 1769



If you are interested in finding out more a few basic tools for researching your street name might include:

- Old estate and Ordnance Survey maps
- Indexed back runs of local newspapers
- Old local directories
- Dialect dictionaries
- Photographic archives such as Wigan Images Online
- Victoria County History of Lancashire

By Tom Walsh



My First Day at Work

I leave home in a very nervous state. I've been awake half the night wondering what the day would bring? Would the men be nice? Would I be able to come home at dinner (lunch for southern cousins)? My Mother made the morning more anxious, 'Have you got a clean handkerchief?'; 'Have you cleaned your shoes?'; 'Have you got your dinner money? (...interpretation time again...).

'Mam', I yell back, 'Stop fussing I'll be alright if you'll just stop fussing, please. I'm not bothered at all about going to work. It's just you keep going on,' which of course is a complete lie. I don't think I have ever felt so scared in my life.

I start my journey into the world. I had secured a job at Lowe's – a very posh department store – a week before. I would be an apprentice carpet fitter, considered a very good trade in those days. I felt very fortunate to have landed a position in such a prestigious establishment.

I think this sentiment was shared by most of my family and all of my teachers. I hadn't performed well at school – spelling being my biggest drawback – so thank goodness for modern spell-check. In those unenlightened times poor spelling consigned you to the scrap heap.

As I near the emporium I start to wish I hadn't been so fortunate. I think a less posh place of work would have suited me better. I'm from a mining family but from my earliest days it had been drilled into me, 'You're not going down the pit'. My Dad had been hurt in a pit fall and my Grandfather had lost a leg in similar circumstances. But if not there, where? The world certainly wasn't my oyster. In the mile or so walk from home to shop I convince myself once again that I am indeed fortuitous.

On reaching the Market Square, I look up at the imposing edifice that was Lowe's Victoria House, a cathedral to poshness. Even though I caught the bus to school outside it every day

for four years I never dared enter; until I went for an interview. Mr Lowe said my well written letter had impressed him. I had enough nous not say my sister helped me. In truth she had written it and I merely copied the missive. My Mother likewise had never entered the hallowed halls, nor I expect the vast majority of my extended family; far too grand for the likes of us! As I gaze up, summoning courage to enter, I start to worry again. But here goes.

At the interview I was told my start time would be eight in the morning but on the first day I would be met by Mr Marshall, Furnishing Workroom Manager, and he would introduce me to the staff. I enter the building just as the Parish Church clock chimes. A tall distinguished looking man approaches me, 'Are you our new recruit', he asks in a decidedly officer-type accent. 'Yes, Sir', I mumble, trying to keep my voice as low as possible. It rises three octaves in a stressful situation. 'No need for sir, you're not at school now. Mr Marshall will do nicely', he says in a firm way. We take the lift to the top floor, I relived that we don't use the stairs as I imagine everybody is looking at me and wondering how I'll fit in. Worse still, if I'll fit in.

We reach the workroom and it's all very formal, as was everything at Lowe's. I shake hands with all the seven carpet fitters and the four lady seamstresses. The ladies are all lovely and do everything to make me feel at ease. One in particular seems to take a shine to me, Betty, who I discover lives near to me. We walk home together every day and she becomes a confidant and trusted adviser on workroom politics. We are great friends to this day; a few years latter we are to share the same surname when she marries my cousin Jim. What a small world Wigan is! All the men seem very friendly and welcoming apart from one who seemed less than pleased to see me. I shan't name him in case he still roams the planet. I learn later that it was nothing personal; he drinks heavily every weekend and is in a foul mood on Monday mornings.

That first day seemed everlasting. My first duty was to go for toast at The UCP (United Cattle Products); they had a cafeteria at the

back of the shop, a strange combination with tripe at the front and tea and toast at the rear. But that's how it was and I was to become a frequent customer, going for morning snacks for colleagues. On this first visit I got flummoxed and the biggest mix-up was with the fitter with the hangover who seemed in an even more aggressive mood as the day went on. He threatens to thump me if I ever get his order wrong again. 'He's only joking – he's as soft as my pocket underneath', says Betty trying to reassure me. I am not so certain. He has a mean look and I imagine that a smile has never visited his thin angry lips. I remember thinking I hope he doesn't frequent his local this week and that his disposition changes with sobriety. Whilst he appeared slightly more approachable later he was always disagreeable and once carried out his threat to punch me when I got his order wrong from the Millgate Chippy. I've never seen him since leaving Lowe's and I feel I would prefer a meeting with Lucifer than an encounter with him. Please forgive the hyperbole.

Mr Marshall greets me as I enter the shop bang on one o'clock. On my first day I had decided to go home for lunch – the poshness is rubbing off already. Mr Marshall tells me in no uncertain terms that a one o'clock start means just that, 'Sorry sir, I mean Mr Marshall', I utter in a pitch as high as a violin, nerves doing their best to make me look and sound ridiculous. 'Don't let it happen again or you'll be looking for another job', he says in the brusque manner that was his way. I half expected him to follow it up with, 'And you'll leave without references', so Victorian did he and the whole store seem on that first day.

So much for the formality of the first day, and my time at The Cathedral has stayed with me for the rest of my life, even down to the handshakes – nothing like a modern high-five by way of greeting! But it was that very attitude that later I came to accept and I actually came to like – and traces of this old fashioned way of doing things are with me to this day!

Captain Edwin Kerfoot (1868-1920)

By Tony Ashcroft

Edwin Kerfoot was the third son of Abraham Kerfoot, grocer, and younger brother to Councillor A. A. Kerfoot (died 1904). Born in Bradshawgate, next to the First World War recruiting office, he was educated at the Leigh Parish Church School and Leigh Grammar School under Ralph Pass. He became a pupil teacher and then served an apprenticeship as a grocer with Mr T. Darwell. During this time he took an active part in the formation of the Leigh Shop Assistants Union. He also helped to establish the first Ambulance Class in Leigh which was held in the Leigh Church Schools.

In 1891 he married Sarah Helena (Lena) Calland, daughter of Samuel Calland and opened a grocer's shop on his own account at the corner of Market Street and Sugar Street. To make way for road widening, shops on the west side of Market Street were pulled down so Kerfoot, like many shopkeepers, received compensation for loss of their business premises. With this money he was able to emigrate to British Columbia where he commenced business.

Whilst there he helped to form an organisation called 'The Sons of St. George' as well as joining 'The Sons of the British Empire'. Both were patriotic associations for the banding together of emigrants from the old country in the cause of Imperialism.

By 1898 he had returned to Leigh. However, this was the year that the gold rush began in the Klondyke, so he decided to travel there. He left Liverpool in June of that year and travelled via New York, Niagara Falls, Chicago, Detroit and over the Rocky Mountains to Vancouver where he opened a store not far from the Klondyke.

When the second Boer War broke out in 1899 he volunteered his services and went over to South Africa with the Second Canadian Mounted Rifles. After the war he returned home but soon tired of inaction and consequently accepted an appointment as resident superintendent of the catering department for the Cape Government Railways and was stationed at various towns in the Cape Colony. He was also accepted by the St. John Ambulance Brigade in Cape Colony for service in the Bombata Rebellion in Natal.

Once again he returned to Leigh but he was soon abroad again, this time in India where he was a caterer for the East India Railways. Here he was stationed at Allahabad and Mokaimah. Later he was transferred to Calcutta where he joined the East India Railway Volunteer Rifles. After remaining in India for about two and a half years, he once again returned to England. Initially he was appointed manager of the Swan Hotel, York, before becoming licensee of the

Castle Hotel, Bangor. Later he returned to his home town of Leigh where he organised the Boy Scouts, becoming District Scoutmaster.

At the outbreak of the First World War, his former experiences enabled him to become recruiting agent at Leigh and Atherton. Although aged 46, Edwin enlisted in the Colonial and Overseas Infantry, which was later merged into the 22nd Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, City of London Regiment. He was rapidly promoted to corporal and then to sergeant before returning to Leigh in 1915 on a recruiting campaign. On 17 August 1915 his services were recognised and his commission granted in the 3/5th Manchester Regiment. After his catering experiences became known he was made a captain and was appointed Inspector of Catering under the Northern Command based at York. Later he was drafted to Aldershot where he was put in charge of the School of Cookery.

Edwin Kerfoot died on 8 March 1920, aged 52 years, in the Cambridge Hospital, Aldershot after catching a chill following his attendance at an officer's funeral the previous week. His body was brought back to Leigh. The funeral cortege started from his brother, Frank's house in Twist Lane for a service at Leigh Parish Church before interment at Leigh Cemetery. Leading the cortege was the Bedford Church Brass Band.

Unfortunately, at his time of death his widow was in Canada.

During his life, Edwin Kerfoot was involved with freemasonry. He had been a member of the Lodge of Lights (Warrington), and the Aldershot Camp Lodge, 1331. Whilst in British Columbia he was a member of the Greenwood Lodge and in India, the Prinsep Lodge, Calcutta. He also belonged to the Shaw Lodge (Leigh) of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.

In June 1902 the Leigh Chronicle printed his series of long letters reporting his experiences as a trooper with the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles in South Africa.

During his travels in South Africa, India and Canada Kerfoot collected a wide range of curios including natural history specimens, relics and mementos including horns, stuffed crocodiles, coral, pebbles, axes, clogs. In total there were at least 124 artefacts which were given to the Leigh Technical School and Free Library to form the nucleus of a Leigh Museum.



Edwin Kerfoot

Your Museum Needs You!

Do you want to try something different? Always been interested in the Borough's heritage? What about volunteering with the Museum Collection?

The Museum of Wigan Life is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help work on our museum collection and exhibitions. The museum collections have recently been re-housed at a new store and we are in the process of improving the care and documentation of all objects. We are also increasing the number of special exhibitions for our visitors and are looking for help to research and install our exhibitions.

This represents an opportunity to help behind the scenes at the museum and to work in our new heritage store. Volunteers will receive appropriate training in: Documentation and Data Input; Research Skills; Object Cleaning Techniques; Basic Conservation and Environmental Monitoring; Object Handling and Photographing; Object Labelling, Packing and Storage.

The long term aim is to make the museum's collections more accessible to the public through exhibitions and to improve their care and documentation in the new storage facility. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills and develop confidence.

If you are interested in getting involved, please contact the Museum of Wigan Life on **01942 828128** or **heritage@wlct.org**



Pennington Flash

A Floral History By Tony Bond

Pennington Flash formed around 100 years ago, caused by mining subsidence from the workings underground. Before that time it was agricultural land. The value of the Flash to wildlife, particularly birds, was recognised before the Second World War thanks to two local naturalists, Tom Edmondson and Frank Horrocks (see *Past Forward*, Edition 59). This was a time when there were few people interested in recording wildlife and both pioneers are recognised with hides named after them at the present day Flash. Now the Flash is known to birders all over the country and home to many species of birds and other wildlife.



A Bee Orchid at Pennington Flash.

For many years the Plank Lane end was dominated by Bickershaw Colliery. Now all that remains are the rucks which are being reclaimed by nature. In the 1970s and 1980s the Wigan and District Field Club, which sadly no longer exists, did a lot of research into the wild orchids often found on industrial sites so it is no surprise to find them at the Flash. They are easy to find at the Wigan Flashes and although people think of orchids as rare they are among the most abundant flowers on Earth. One characteristic of orchids is that they do not like competition from rank vegetation so the sparse cover of the rucks suits them – although they can also be found at the Lowton end.

The commonest orchids of the rucks are the so-called marsh orchids, the common spotted, northern marsh, southern marsh and early marsh. These hybridise very readily and many of the Bickershaw orchids show hybrid vigour. If the leaves are spotted you can be certain that the common spotted orchid is one parent. It takes an experienced botanist to determine the full parentage.

A few years ago I was intrigued to find the dune form of the early marsh orchid, var. *coccinea*, near the canal. This is an uncommon variety which is a distinctive bright red colour and easily found in June on the Sefton coast. Nearby it is also possible to find the harebell, another flower of that area. The question was how they came to be in Leigh? The answer is contained in *Past Forward*, Edition 63 which describes the concern expressed in 1941 that the blazing rucks could act as a marker for German bombers attacking Manchester and



Boys fishing at Pennington Flash, Leigh c. 1930.

Liverpool. We know that the flames were extinguished by the fire brigade but Southport sand was brought in by canal, probably to exclude air from the source of the fire and so quench the flames. This must have contained the seeds of these specialised plants which in subsequent years took root.

The other end of the Flash was the local landfill site for many years. Most winters would see the water spill over the roads at both ends causing major inconvenience, not least to myself, as Atherleigh Way did not exist. The decision taken in 1985 to close the landfill site and create the Country Park we know now is commemorated by a stone at the pedestrian entrance at the junction of St. Helens Road and Atherleigh Way. Topsoil was brought in to cover the former landfill. Many trees were planted and wildflower meadows created. Several of these now support the delightful cowslip which is under pressure nationally due to the disappearance of traditional meadows and grassy places. I associate this flower with the limestone

areas of Cumbria and Derbyshire but do not know where the topsoil originated.

Later in the year the spectacular oxeye daisy makes a great display. A more elusive speciality is the bee orchid for which you need to get your eye in before you can see it. Although it is found near Appley Bridge at the other end of the Borough, I never thought that I would see it in Leigh.

As with cowslips I associate the other two specialities with calcareous soils. It is tempting to assume that the topsoil was from somewhere such as Derbyshire or southern Cumbria and contained the seeds of these three specialities. I believed this until someone who was a volunteer and later an employee at the Flash told me that when the landscaping was complete she was given a large bag of wildflower seeds and told to scatter them in the newly created meadows. No matter how they got here they are most welcome and contribute to the visual attraction of the Flash and its biodiversity.

The Glow Upon the Heavens

by Neil Cain

A bitter north wind moaned its way through the streets of Ince, twisted down the entry and wound around the yard seeking any ill fitting window or door through which to poke its icy fingers – and there were plenty to find.

A small boy lay awake, unable to sleep with all the excitement a Christmas not far off. A book clutched in his arms showed a picture of a uniformed horseman charging the German lines during the Great War which was only a few years distant and the scars of that horror were still raw in virtually every family. Perhaps tomorrow he would lead his pals across the setts and into the field at the top of the street to rescue the coalman's horse from the evil Hun, but then again the lure of the signal box by the Oak Tree crossing might be too strong to resist if the kindly signalman would let him into the snug warmth of the box.

The mood of the small boy was not matched by his father, a furnace keeper at the nearby ironworks, who sat by the dying embers of a small fire gazing at a sepia photograph of a brother he would never see again. Local men returning from the fields of Flanders had been tight lipped about a place called Passchendaele but they gave

clues to the dreadful carnage that had claimed so many. He prayed that his brother's end had been quick.

Back upstairs the gloom of the tiny bedroom was suddenly transformed as the walls lit up with a red and orange haze that washed across the bed. 'The Glow Upon the Heavens', as folk called it, told that the bell to one of the huge furnaces had been opened to allow a further stoking of the voracious tower by the canal. The clanging and banging of wagons on the high level line that forked off at Roundhouse Junction to bring the raw materials over the bridge beyond the ancient Kirkless Hall gave further evidence of what was happening.

The little boy imagined himself driving one of the locomotives that he saw scuttling about each day. Juno, Mars and Lindsay, Hector and his favourite... the one the boys called 'Atch-ill-ease' (Achilles). Oh, how exciting that would be to be shunting around the huge site to the flag works, or best of all to haul the ladles of molten slag high up onto the great tip that overlooked Hemfield Road.

As the bell closed the room returned to darkness. A way off a trombone played a carol, the sound floating away gradually on the crisp air. The prospect of Christmas filled the boy's head with dreams of a football he hoped might come on the big day; then he would be the star man for Bolton Wanderers.

Kirkless Hall, Wigan, 1905.



Uncle Albert might yet take him to see Ince All Blacks play too. One day he might run out proudly at Central Park and his name be added to those heroes his father spoke of – Leytham, Jenkins, Todd and Miller. Slowly sleep crept across the small child's eyes and he became unaware of the glow that again lit the room.

In the room downstairs, father shivered, not from the cold but of fearful thoughts of his brother's end; in a little house in Standish a widow wept and in the fields of Flanders a body sank further into the mud. He would never more see the Glow upon the Heavens.

Written in memory of Hance Cain 2/5th btn., Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, killed at Paschendaele, October 1917.



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**

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



YOUR LETTERS - CAN YOU HELP

Dear Editor

Here at Lowton St. Luke's Church we are working hard on a project to commemorate the start of the First World War. We are gathering information on local men listed on the war memorial and would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in helping out or who has further details on the lives of the men recorded.

By way of an example, I enclose a short write-up on Second Lieutenant Alec F. E. Prescott, who died in 1916.

With thanks,
Ann Glacki



Second
Lieutenant
Alec F. E.
Prescott

Born in May 1894, Lieutenant Prescott was the eldest son of James Prescott, who was the manager of Bibby's Printing Works in Liverpool, and was the organist at St. Luke's. He lived at Brook Cottage in Lowton. He was educated at Leigh Grammar School, and began his career as a mechanical engineer with the Lintotype and Machinery Company in Broadheath, but was working for the Liverpool Corporation at the time he joined up. He joined the Liverpool 'Pals' First Battalion, and was granted a commission six months later, serving as second in command of a Machine Gun Corps.

On 7 October 1916, Lieutenant Prescott was hit by enemy fire and died some ten minutes after being shot. His commanding officer described him as: 'the most beloved officer in my company'. Lieutenant Prescott is buried at the Thiepval Memorial Cemetery. There is a memorial to him in St. Luke's Church.

Dear Editor

Can you help?

I have been researching my family for more than fifty years and have made several trips to Wigan Local Studies where everyone is always so helpful.

Hettie Ascroft, daughter of William Ascroft and Alice Brindle, was born at the Step or Stone Houses at 147 Park Lane, Ashton-in-Makerfield in 1879. They were situated on the Wigan side of Park Lane Chapel and the Cranberry Hotel. I can remember seeing the row of cottages with several steps going up to each front door, when I was a little girl at Park Lane School. They were pulled down many years ago. Now I would dearly like a photo of the Step Houses, as would another person whose grandmother was born there. Can anyone help?

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Margaret Humphreys
(Australia)



Dear Editor

Following your request in the latest 'Past Forward' magazine, I thought you would be interested in the attached. It is of my grandparents' newsagents shop in Pool Street, Poolstock, believed to be from the early twentieth century. Their name was Mackenzie and the business later traded under the name of Bradley when my grandmother inherited the business and had married Herbert Bradley.

My great-grandparents (John and Elizabeth Ann Mackenzie) had the original business described in an early census as general dealer. They are the ones in the photo at the back with my grandmother as a young girl (Jane Ellen Mackenzie) on the right. We are not totally sure who the two youngsters are. As you can see John was of unusual height and when he married Elizabeth Ann at Hindley in 1891. It was reported in the Wigan Observer.

If any readers want any further information please get in touch with Past Forward magazine.

Marlene Bradley

A spotlight on...

Leigh & District Family History Society

The Leigh & District Family History Society was founded in 1981 as one of the six groups within the Liverpool & SW Lancs FHS. The Society meets each month (except June, July and December) in the Derby Room of Leigh Library on the third Tuesday at 7.30pm.

Members are also available from 1.30-3.30pm at the Local Studies Service in Leigh Library to offer free help to anyone interested in doing their own family history research. There is no need to book – we just ask you to bring along as much information as you already have.

The Society's evening meeting usually takes the form of a speaker on various aspects of family and local history research. There is usually time to ask a few queries and browse the Society's library. The August meeting is always devoted to helping newcomers to get started with their

research or hear how members have found some clues during the summer break. Not all members have ancestors living in the area but all have gained many new ideas through attending the meetings.

Over the years the Society have carried out numerous projects including transcribing the gravestones of Leigh Cemetery and various churchyards in the surrounding district.

The Society has a webpage on the Liverpool & SW Lancs FHS website at www.liverpool-genealogy.org.uk. Membership is £10 per annum and includes four journals a year which are circulated worldwide. Members can also use the Society's forum to post any queries relating to their research.

Hear the past come to life in Ashton and Bryn

The history of Ashton and Bryn has been given the twenty-first century treatment by a group of local people.

A £10,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund has meant that the local people who know about the history and culture of the area have been able to record their stories professionally and make them available to everyone – for free. There's even a plan to post QR codes in historic parts of the town so you can learn about the background of the place you're in while you're actually there.

Lynn Hankey of Wigan Council said: 'Everybody's taken something from the project that they didn't previously know, from a snippet of information about the street in which they live to a historical revelation that they didn't know about a local building they pass every day. To date the project has been a resounding success.'

Ken Barston, Secretary of Stubshaw Cross Residents Group, and a strong supporter of the project said: 'Local people rarely get an opportunity to take a look back in time at what life was like all those years ago in our town. We are confident that the project will appeal to all age groups in our community.'

Ashton and Bryn Community Network will be launching their audio stories at the Ashton Festival on 23 September 2013. The event will start at 1pm at Ashton Library.

For more information, please contact Anthony Smith on **0777 937 4921** or at **mobilemediapartnership@gmail.com**



Music from the past, The Band of the Lord Gerrard's Lancashire Hussars, 'The Ashton Regiment', 1898

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

Monthly meetings held second Tuesday of each month in St. Richards Parish Centre, Mayfield St. Atherton at 7.30pm
Admission - Members - £1.00
Non Members - £2.00, including refreshments.

13 August:
'The Boys who Smashed the Van'.
Speaker - Mr. Alan Hayhurst

10 September:
'King Canute, Cranford and Cousin Jean'.
Speaker - Margaret Curry

8 October:
AGM (7. pm start)
followed by,
'Haunted Highways and Fairy Roads'.
Speaker - Mr. P Watson

12 November:
'The Chorley Pals'.
Speaker - S Williams

Contact No. 01942 884893,
Margaret Hodge

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.

Leigh & District Antiques and Collectables Society

The new session of the society starts on Monday 16 September 2013 at 7.30pm in our new location at Leigh RUFC, Beech Walk, Leigh. New members are always welcome and further details available from Mr C Gaskell on 01942 673521.

Local History Federation Lancashire

The Federation holds several meetings each year, with a varied and interesting programme. For details visit 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 or visit www.liverpoolgenealogy.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.

9 September:
Visit to St. Catherine's Church, Wigan, 7.00pm at the Church on Lorne Street, Scholes

14 October:
The Wigan Pewterers and their Wares, 7.30pm at St. George's

12 November:
Annual Dinner

9 December:
The Town Centre Unit, Mike Matthews (Wigan Council) and AGM

Wigan Family & Local History Society

Meetings are held at St. Andrews Parish Centre, 120 Woodhouse Lane, Wigan WN6 7LZ. We meet on the second Wednesday of each month except July, August and December, 7.15-9.00pm. For more information see our website www.wiganworld.co.uk/familyhistory or telephone the Secretary on 01942 713146. Everyone welcome.

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). 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



WLCT
heritage & arts

Museum
of
WiganLife

Kids Summer Club

Join us at the Museum of Wigan Life for a summer of fun activities. For children aged 4-11, take place every week until 22nd August.



- **Junk Modelling – Every Tuesday**
Transform old junk into amazing art! Get creative with cardboard boxes and old cans. Different themes each week to get your imagination working.
- **Fairground Fun – Every Thursday**
Enjoy all the fun of the fair with our Victorian games. Try your hand at hoopla and tin can alley.

SESSIONS 1.00pm-2.30pm
£2.50 PER CHILD

Museum of Wigan Life, Library Street, Wigan WN1 1NU.
Book early to avoid disappointment – call 01942 828128.

WLCT

In partnership with
Wigan
Council

 / WLCTrust  / WLCT

wlct.org/heritage



Any Old Iron?

Tony Ashcroft, former Leigh Local Studies Officer, is working with the Archives and Local Studies collections on a book on the early history of Harrison, McGregor and the Albion Ironworks. Tony is looking for any information readers have on the works and advice on identifying the hundreds of machinery photographs in the archives. Please let us know if you can help.

HERITAGE & ARTS EVENTS CALENDAR

SUMMER FUN – FROM JUNK MODELLING TO ‘THE HOME FRONT’

Stuck for places to take the kids or grandkids this summer? Why not try the museum?

There are fun family activities on every Tuesday and Thursday over the holidays. Look out for our Autumn programme too with specialist speakers on women's history, from mill workers to Pit Brow Lasses.

Book your place soon by calling 01942 828128 or email heritage@wlct.org.

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR THURSDAY 1ST AUGUST; 8TH AUGUST; 15TH AUGUST; 22ND AUGUST 1.00-2.30pm

Museum of Wigan Life
£2.50 per child

Have all the fun at the fair with our special Victorian fairground games. Try your hand at hoopla, tin can alley and Hook-a-Duck. All activities suitable for children aged 4-11 years. Please book early to save disappointment.

01942 828128

FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP FROM 1ST AUGUST, THURSDAYS IN AUGUST, SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

10.30am-12.00pm

Leigh Local Studies, Turnpike Centre
£5.00

Start your family tree and discover the resources available in Leigh Local Studies. Use online sources including ancestry.com and meet the volunteers.

Booking essential.

01942 404559

FAMILY HISTORY DROP-IN SATURDAY 3RD AUGUST

11.00am-3.00pm

Museum of Wigan Life

FREE

Join volunteer Andrew Meadows for drop-in advice on starting your family tree or furthering your research. Subject to availability.

01942 828128

PALAEOGRAPHY PRACTICE MONDAY 5TH AUGUST AND FIRST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH 2.00-3.30pm

Museum of Wigan Life

FREE

Medieval to Modern Handwriting for Experts
Informal drop-in sessions for those with a basic understanding of palaeography styles over the ages, transcribing original documents from the archives in a group. 01942 828128

JUNK MODELLING! TUESDAY 6TH AUGUST; 13TH AUGUST; 20TH AUGUST 1.00-2.30pm

Museum of Wigan Life

£2.50 per child

Transform old cans and cardboard boxes into your own amazing junk sculpture. Be inspired and get creative! Remember to come back for more, there's a different theme each week from Toys to Aliens! All activities suitable for children aged 4-11 years.

Please book early to save disappointment.

01942 828128

STEAMING SUNDAY SUNDAY 11TH AUGUST; 25TH AUGUST; 8TH SEPTEMBER; 29TH SEPTEMBER; 13TH OCTOBER; 27TH OCTOBER 1.00pm-2.00pm

Trencherfield Mill, Heritage Way, Wigan Pier Quarter
The Trencherfield Mill Steam Engine is one of the largest and finest working examples of its type. Visit Trencherfield Mill on a 'Steaming Sunday' to awe at this giant's immense size and power, but more importantly, experience it working as it did all those years ago - full steam ahead! Small charge for admission. 01942 828128

CARRY ON CLEANING @ WIGAN ARCHIVES WEDNESDAY 28TH AUGUST; 25TH SEPTEMBER; 30TH OCTOBER 10.00am-3.00pm

Wigan Archives Service, Leigh Town Hall

FREE

If you've ever wondered how we preserve historic records, come along to Wigan Archives to join in with our ongoing project to clean and document the records of Wigan's Victorian courts. Join our

team of volunteers in revealing the stories of crime and punishment in Wigan and learn how to help preserve the Borough's history.

01942 404430

COFFEE CAKE & CULTURE

**TUESDAY 3RD & 10TH SEPTEMBER;
15TH & 22ND OCTOBER 10.30am - 12 noon**

Museum Of Wigan Life

£3

Come and join us at the Museum of Wigan Life for our interactive heritage workshop. Learn, discuss, reminiscence and enjoy a slice of cake with tea or coffee.

Booking essential, places limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

01942 828128

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

THURSDAY 12TH-SATURDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

Museum of Wigan Life

FREE

Visit the museum for tours of this Grade II listed building designed by Alfred Waterhouse and opened in 1878. This beautiful building was the former library in which George Orwell researched his famous book 'The Road to Wigan Pier'. Please call 01942 828128 for tour times and further information.

LEIGH FOR ALL: HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

SATURDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 11.00am-3.00pm

Civic Square, Leigh

Family activities on the Civic Square in Leigh, including a vintage car rally, heritage tours and stalls and a taste of real Lancashire. Tours & entry free, small charge for some activities.

THE PENNINGTON FAMILY OF MILL OWNERS

TUESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2013 12 noon-1.15pm

Museum of Wigan Life

£2.50 including tea/coffee

Discover more about the Pennington family of industrialists in local historian Norma Branagan's

illustrated talk. Find out how the Penningtons built their industrial empire around Hindley in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

01942 828128

RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP EXHIBITION OPENS SATURDAY 5TH OCTOBER

11.00am-3.00pm

Be the first to see our new interactive Rugby League exhibition in celebration of the World Cup! Bring the whole family to see original memorabilia and experience Rugby-themed activities. Discover the history of this amazing sport and see how it has changed over the years for players, managers and fans alike. Watch out for our special exhibition events programme as part of the Rugby League exhibition. To find out more visit

www.wlct.org/heritage-services or call

01942 828128.

A WOMAN'S PLACE: WORKING WIVES AND MOTHERS IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

TUESDAY 8TH OCTOBER 12.00 noon - 1.15pm

Museum of Wigan Life

£2.50 including tea/coffee

Join author and historian Elizabeth Roberts for an illustrated talk about women's experiences in the Lancashire textile industry. Did your grandmother or great-grandmother work in the cotton mills? What were their working lives like? How did they manage work and family life? Find out more about their experiences, based on oral history interviews from the early twentieth century.

01942 828128

READY FOR RUGBY

TUESDAY 29TH OCTOBER 1.00-2.30pm

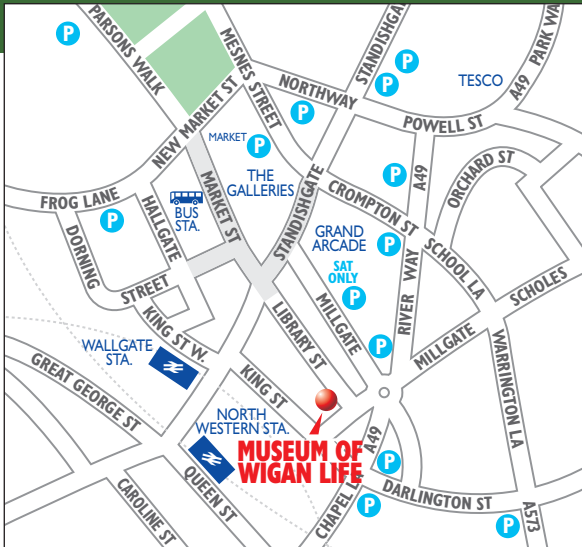
Museum of Wigan Life

£2.50 per child

Celebrate the Rugby League World Cup with our new interactive exhibition. Explore the world cup nations, create and display your own Rugby masterpiece and watch out for some unique memorabilia on display.

01942 828128

How to Find Us



Museum of Wigan Life

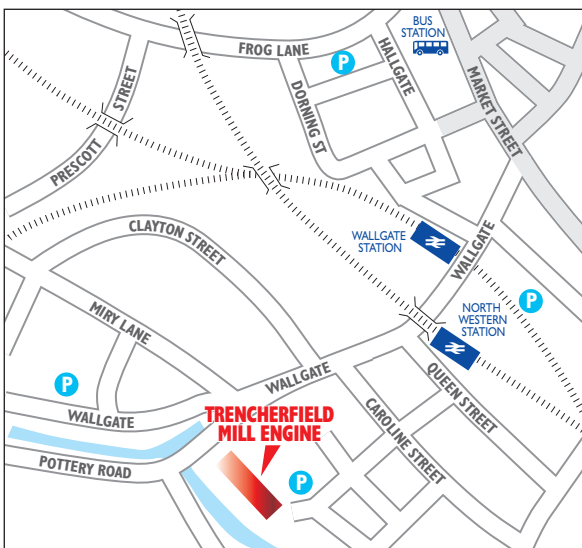
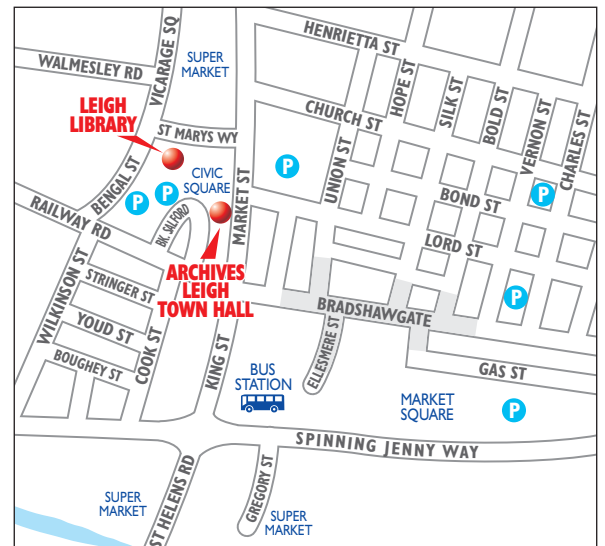
Library Street,
Wigan WN1 1NU
Telephone 01942 828128
heritage@wlct.org

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