

Issue 92
November 2023

The Ormskirk and District Family Historian

*The Magazine of the
Ormskirk and District
Family History Society*

The ODFHS Useful Information Page

Ormskirk and District Family History Society was inaugurated in 1980.

Registered Charity (No. 1004895). Member of the Family History Federation.

ADDRESS FOR ALL CORRESPONDENCE

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Facebook page: www.facebook.com/OrmskirkDistrictFamilyHistorySociety/

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Could You Contribute To Our Magazine?

Articles for the Ormskirk and District Family Historian are always welcome.

If you'd like to send something for publication, please contact the Editor using the e-mail or postal address above. We will do our best to look after all items (and will return them on request) but we suggest that you retain any original documents.

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"Not to know what happened before we were born is to remain perpetually a child. For what is the worth of a human life unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the recording of history." - Cicero (106-143BC) sent in by Jean Haikalis (1946-2017)

View From The Chair

Beginning this column at my kitchen table on the last Saturday in September, I had a strange feeling that I wrote the equivalent welcome for our Autumn 2022 edition in the same spot. Then, as now, the day was grey and rainy, and the trees in my back garden were beginning their autumn display of reds, oranges, golds and greens, and - just like last year - I've already begun my favourite seasonal pastime. (You're never too old to collect conkers!)

A weekend at leisure was a novelty this September; ODFHS have organised or attended events on four out of five Saturdays, and if you've been checking our Facebook page, YouTube channel or the monthly e-newsletters from Keith Broadbent (our new Membership Secretary), you'll know that we've had a fantastic reason to keep ourselves busy.

Since Kathryn MacDonald became our Librarian in 2018, her Library Notes column has opened my eyes to the treasures in our archives, and now your Society is on the brink of an opportunity to make them more accessible!

July saw us launch our new publication, *A Slice Of Ormskirk Gingerbread*, at the Ormskirk Gingerbread Festival; an incredible forty copies were sold in the first nine days, and it's now available via our Parish Chest shop. (Please see page 13.) Even before it was printed, *A Slice Of Ormskirk Gingerbread* had inspired something more ambitious. For the first time in the history of ODFHS, we embarked on a crowdfunding project, supported by Lancashire County Council.

If you have ever donated money to a charity through an internet platform such as JustGiving or GoFundMe, you may be familiar with the crowdfunding process. A small team of ODFHS members (Pam Richardson, Kathryn MacDonald, Emma Davison, Julie Broadbent, Keith Broadbent and I) worked together to write a bid, estimate likely costs for the history booklets we plan to produce (they'll be available free of charge), propose the idea, and create an online fundraising page. The project was promoted through Facebook, local media, updates in Keith's new

monthly e-newsletter, a YouTube video and even a one-day Fun Fundraiser at Ormskirk Civic Hall. (A full report can be found on pages 10 and 11.) I'm delighted to say that we exceeded our fundraising target, and at the time of writing, we're waiting to receive £2900, which will enable us to cover all related costs, including the purchase of a portable screen, display boards, and a new A3 printer/scanner. We'll publish further updates in the magazine, our newsletter, on Facebook and (hopefully) our YouTube channel.

Looking ahead, in May 2024, Pam Richardson intends to resign as our Honorary Secretary; as you'll be aware, a Secretary is one of the three critical roles that must be filled in order for ODFHS to function as a charity. We hope the notice on page 12 will assist anyone who is interested in taking on the role.

I'd like to end by welcoming our new and returning members; it's so encouraging to see new faces at our meetings, and new names on our Members' Database. Whether you're new to ODFHS or you've been with us for years, I hope you enjoy Issue 92 - and, if you follow our YouTube channel - please look out for our latest video, *Our Lady's RC Church, Lydiate | Views Of The Churchyard*.

Kate Hurst
September 2023



(clockwise from top left) Colin MacDonald, Keith Broadbent, Julie Broadbent, Pam Richardson, Emma Davison and Kathryn MacDonald celebrate receiving a grant of £1542 from Lancashire County Council to support our crowdfunding project, on 2 August 2023.

Members' Interests Directory

The Members' Interests Directory has been reviewed and updated. The latest version is now available in the members' area of www.odfhs.website. A printed copy of the Directory is enclosed with printed copies of this magazine for members who cannot or prefer not to access the online version.

The following members' interests have been added to the Directory since the last update, with authority to include the member's name and interests in this issue:

- Sue Almond - CROFT, FORSHAW.
- Eric Ashcroft - ASHCROFT
- Nigel Bedford - BLUNDELL, HAYES, HULME, LINDSAY, LOWE, OWEN.
- Derek Berkley - BERKLEY, JENNINGS.
- Brian Brighthouse - BRIGHOUSE, CROSBIE, FARRAR, HAYDOCK, MOROWNY, WEBSTER.
- Barbara Caffell - HORNBY, MELLING, PENNINGTON, WATSON.
- Mary Cliffe - CLIFFE, DISLEY, TASKER.
- Jane Crompton - HEATON.
- Aileen Draper - DRAPER.
- Caroline Fyles - APPLETON, CULSHAW, FYLES, PEET.
- Paul Gibson - HILL, SCARISBRICK,
- Paul Grayston - BRATHERTON, GERRARD, GRAYSTON, HUNTER.
- Rob Green - GREEN, HALL, PROFETT/PROFFETT.
- Stephen Greenwood - ASPINALL, BAMBER, BANKS, BOLTON, BROWNBILL, GREENWOOD
- Lindsey Hanford - ANDERTON, BATTEN, BLACK, COWARD.
- Ian Hankin - GASKELL.
- Elaine Howarth - ANDERTON, BURKE, DANDY.
- Keith Jenkins - HARRISON, PRESCOTT.
- Colin and Barbara Redwood - BICKERSTAFF, FERGUSON, GORE, GRUNDY, MATHER, REDWOOD, SINGLETON, WATERHOUSE.

- Susan Taylor - DISLEY, GILL.
- Joan Woodland - ASPINWALL, DEAKIN, FARRINGTON.

In accordance with ODFHS policy, the published Directory contains only the membership number(s) of members interested in a particular surname interest, not full contact details. Anyone wishing to contact other members about a particular surname should contact Keith Broadbent at membership@odfhs.email or Pam Richardson at secretary@odfhs.email via e-mail or our postal address on page 2; we will provide the appropriate details. Only details specifically authorised by members for release to other members will be passed on.

Keith Broadbent
Membership Secretary

New Electronic Communications

In June 2023, the Society introduced a new monthly e-Newsletter, which is distributed by e-mail to all members who have provided us with their e-mail address. Initial feedback has been very positive. The e-Newsletters have been supplemented by a limited number of Special Announcements containing information that cannot or should not wait until the next e-Newsletter. For members who have not supplied an e-mail address, printed copies of e-Newsletters and Special Announcements will be included with your next copy of our magazine, the Ormskirk and District Family Historian.

When necessary for specific reasons, we will contact "local" members about short notice local events which cannot wait for the next e-Newsletter, but do not warrant a Special Announcement issued to all members worldwide. Initially, members with

a UK postcode beginning with L, PR, WA or WN have been included in this distribution list. Anyone included in this list who does not want to receive these local communications should let me know using the e-mail address below, and their details will be removed. Similarly, anyone not currently on the list who wishes to be included should contact me.

If anyone has any suggestions for alterations or improvements regarding any of these new forms of communication, please let me know using the e-mail address below. Unfortunately, the costs of postage means that it is not possible to extend these communications to members without an e-mail address, but we will always ensure that those members are kept in touch by including printed copies with their next magazine.

Keith Broadbent
Membership Secretary

membership@odfhs.email

Distribution of Electronic ODFHS Magazines

Following consultation with members who have opted to receive their magazine electronically, it has been decided that we will no longer e-mail individual copies to members. Instead, you will be notified when the latest magazine has been added to the Members' Area of the ODFHS website. You can then decide whether to simply read it online, or download it to a computer or other device to read, store or even print it. If you have chosen to receive a printed magazine, this will not affect you; you will continue to receive a paper copy by post, as at present.

Keith Broadbent
Membership Secretary

membership@odfhs.email

William Draper, the Bickerstaffe Postmaster

submitted by Robin Moore

In June 2023, Robin Moore contacted us to share this photograph of his great-grandfather William DRAPER, taken outside the Bickerstaffe post office (opposite the Stanley Gate), probably around 1930. William was a wheelwright and sub-postmaster for around sixty years; Robin found the picture especially interesting, because he'd never seen an image of the post office before.



William DRAPER was born on 24 November 1857 at Bickerstaffe. He married Deborah BIRCHALL (b.1858 Bickerstaffe) in 1881. By 1911, they lived at "Post Office, Bickerstaffe", which was said to have seven rooms. Eight of the couple's ten children were living; five were still at home. William (b.1887) was a wheelwright, Jane (b.1889) and Annie (b.1895) had no occupation, Deborah (b.1893) was a student teacher, and Doris (b.1900) was at school.

The 1939 Register names William as the sub-postmaster at Bickerstaffe Post Office, St. Helens Road, and his married daughter Doris BALL was an "Officer in Charge Sub Post

Office." If you can tell us any more about Bickerstaffe Post Office, or its employees, please contact the Magazine Editor.

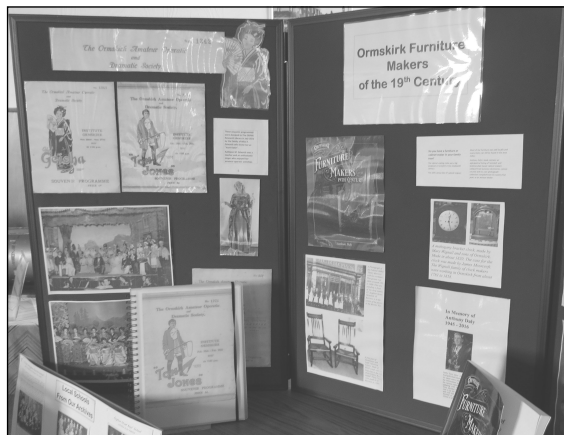
Spacehive Crowdfunding Project

July to September 2023

As our last magazine went to print, the ODFHS team was busy writing an application to enter a project into Round Two of Crowdfund Lancashire. Backed by Lancashire County Council, the scheme aims to help community groups like ODFHS to raise enough money to bring specific plans to life. Taking inspiration from our new booklet, *A Slice Of Gingerbread*, we proposed to produce a series of two similar publications on various aspects of West Lancashire life over the past three centuries, with estimated costings to support our bid.

Luckily, our application was successful, and our Spacehive fundraising webpage was launched on 17 July 2023. For the next eight weeks, we did all we could to promote the project known as Sharing People's History Of West Lancashire.

Over the next few months, our committee members will choose a theme for each new booklet, carry out research, edit our findings (and - most importantly - make sure that they are historically accurate), before turning the material into two short attractive, interesting and free publications.



(above) Displays featuring Ormskirk Amateur Dramatic Society and local furniture makers

With a print run of five hundred copies per booklet (and costs of £3,040), we knew the project needed all the publicity it could get. In addition to the Spacehive fundraising webpage, donation boxes at meetings and events, e-newsletters, regular Facebook posts, and a YouTube video (prompting one kind ODFHS

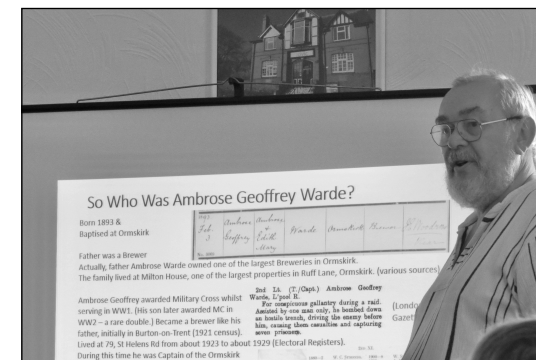
member to take our total from 91% of the target all the way to 100% within a few hours), we had one more idea to try out.

On Saturday 2 September 2023, we held a Family History Fun Fundraiser at Ormskirk Civic Hall. A selection of material from our Research Library, including posters for the Ormskirk Amateur Dramatic Society's 1927 production of *Tom Jones*, the late Tony Daly's book *Ormskirk Furniture Makers of the 19th Century* and class photos from local schools (extracted from our magazine archive) were displayed for visitors to enjoy, proving that the Society's archive has great potential to inspire those new booklets.

Short talks on *Ormskirk Famous and Infamous* (by Dot Broady-Hawkes), *Mediaeval Westhead* and *Animal Adventures In Old Newspapers* (both by Kate Hurst), *The Other Miss Ormesher* (by Kathryn MacDonald), *From Here To There And Back Again (again)* and *117 Years Of A House* (both by Keith Broadbent) were all enjoyed by an appreciative audience.

Colin MacDonald (Treasurer) reported that sales of refreshments, and donations from visitors raised £46.23. Another £15.00 from the "Guess The Population of Burscough in 1851" competition, £90.59 from the tombola, and a chance to welcome three new members left everyone happy to declare the day a success!

A video of moments from the day is available on our YouTube channel, entitled *ODFHS Family History Fun Fundraiser | 2 September 2023*.



(above) Keith's 117 Years Of A House talk;
(below) Kathryn's The Other Miss Ormesher talk



Wanted - ODFHS Secretary

In May 2024, Pam Richardson will stand down as our Secretary after twenty years in the role - a major achievement that we think deserves everyone's praise! As you may know, the Honorary Secretary is one of three essential positions that has to be filled in order for ODFHS to function, so we're looking for someone to help!

The Secretary acts as the main point of contact for ODFHS enquiries (by post and e-mail); a Society e-mail address that can be accessed through any internet browser has already been set up, and you will be provided with full log-in details. The Secretary also gathers reports and items for the agenda in advance of our Executive Committee meetings (held four times a year via Zoom) and our AGM in May, writes up minutes of the meetings and circulates these via e-mail as appropriate.

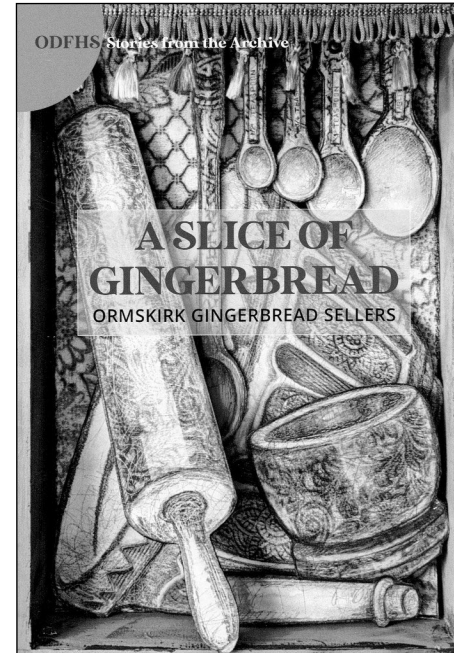
At present, any post for ODFHS is sent to Pam's address; this arrangement may be subject to change in 2024, depending on the preferences of the new Secretary. Enquiries from interested volunteers living outside the West Lancashire area are very welcome. For more information, please contact secretary@odfhs.email or speak to Pam Richardson (Secretary) or Kate Hurst (Chair) at one of our meetings.

Haskayne and Downholland Local History Group

Haskayne and Downholland Local History Group has recently been set up to share knowledge and memories of the history of Haskayne and Downholland area, research the history of the buildings and the development of the village. The group meets on the first Monday of each month (except Bank Holidays) at Haskayne Village Hall, 109 School Lane, Haskayne, L39 7JE. They also have a Facebook group, named Haskayne Local History.

A Slice Of Gingerbread

A New ODFHS Publication



On 10 July 2023, the ODFHS stand at the Ormskirk Gingerbread Festival was the perfect venue to launch our latest publication, *A Slice Of Gingerbread*.

Beautifully illustrated by local artist Angie Thompson, the 20-page booklet offers a taster of the adverts, arguments, places and famous characters (both locally and nationally) that are bound together with the story of Ormskirk gingerbread. Facts, newspaper extracts, historic images and advertisements are blended with the text to provide a potted history of a sweet treat from West Lancashire that we hope will leave you eager to learn more.

Priced at £4.00 (plus postage), *A Slice Of Gingerbread* can be purchased via our online shop at www.parishchest.com/ormskirk-district-fhs-3508.php at our meetings and events.

Assisted by committee members and other contributors, Kathryn MacDonald (ODFHS Librarian) has added a new section to the Society's website, which will serve as a repository for all things to do with local gingerbread. Historical resources, recipes, transcribed newspaper extracts, photos of the Ormskirk Gingerbread Festival, family trees for the gingerbread sellers, and more, can be found in the Gallery of <http://odfhs.website> under the Ormskirk Gingerbread subheading.

Out and About With ODFHS

September 2023 was a busy month for ODFHS - after successfully organising our Family History Fun Fundraiser, we took full advantage of the national Heritage Open Days Scheme by attending not just one but two outside events!

Thinking practically, our volunteers divided themselves into two groups, and on Saturday 9 September (in spite of extra traffic due to the Southport Air Show, and humid weather from the Saharan dust) Dot Broady-Hawkes, Emma Davison and Kate Hurst met at St. Cuthbert's Church, Churchtown to support North Meols FHS at their Open Day and Heritage Event.

Exhibitions from our hosts featured local maps, the extensive series of North Meols FHS publications, and the Sea Rescue Service. Peter Dyer's 2020 book *D.U.K.W.s to Water* (on WW2 amphibious vehicles) was on display, and space was also made for information about RAF Woodvale and WW1 soldiers from the local area.



Our own stand had enough visitors that we ran out of upcoming events leaflets - a supply of Keith Broadbent's e-newsletters (in printed form) came to the rescue! Visitors talked to us about everything from boat families to Welsh ancestors (prompting us to develop a new leaflet about helpful resources for Welsh family history, for future events). An interesting day!

(top) Our display at Churchtown;
(bottom) a model of an amphibious vehicle



On Saturday 17 September 2023, we had another good day when we joined Lathom Park Trust at their Heritage Open Days Event, with a lot of interest in the Ormskirk Gingerbread Sellers featured on our display boards. Amongst the talks given at the event, references to Percy BILTON and Vigzol caught the audience's attention during our Librarian Kathryn MacDonald's presentation, "Around Ormskirk in Six Objects", whilst Jean Gidman's talk on Sir Thomas STANLEY prompted the sale of ten copies of her book, *The Man Who Wasn't There*. A great day all round!



Two visitors browsing
our Ormskirk
Gingerbread display at
the Lathom Park
Heritage Open Day.
(Photos on this page by
Kathryn MacDonald.)



We hope that our members will enjoy these modern aerial photographs of St. Cuthbert's Church, Halsall, which were sent to ODFHS by Nathan Fairbrother (the photographer) in July 2023.



This perspective of St. Cuthbert's Church includes Halsall Road (left), the path leading from the gate towards the church door (centre), and Summerwood Lane (right). Photograph by Nathan Fairbrother.

The Will of Richard Cocker

Lancashire Archives reference C759/39
transcribed by Kate Hurst (H101)

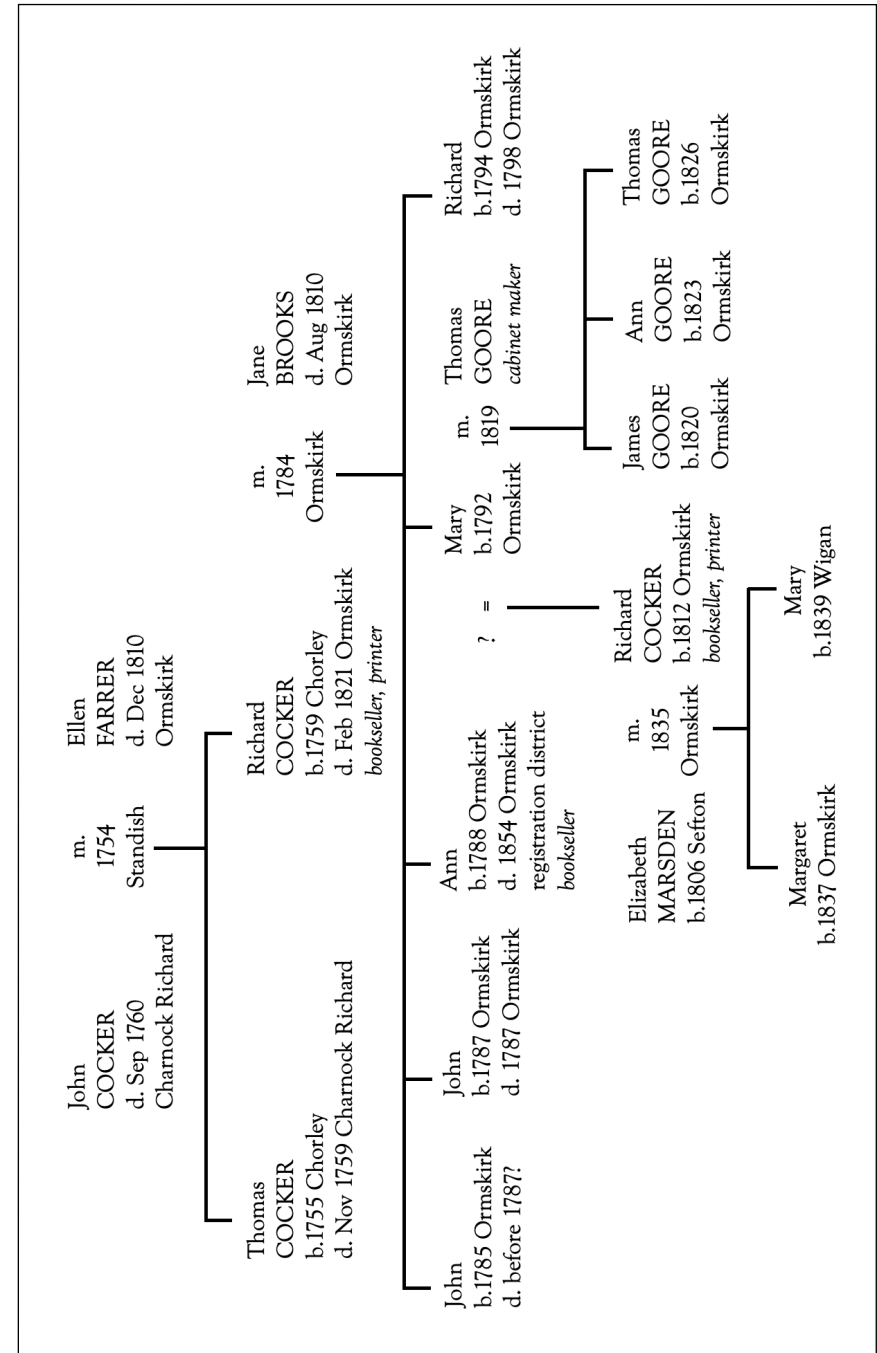
This will was made by Richard COCKER, the Ormskirk bookseller who was the subject of my article, published in Issue 91 of the ODFHS magazine.

I Richard COCKER of Ormskirk in the County of Lancaster do make this my last will and testament the twenty first day of September in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and twenty

I do authorize and empower my Daughter Ann to continue and carry on the several businesses which I now follow or any of them if she thinks it will be conducive to the interest of my family until my grandson Richard COCKER attains the age of twenty one years or to discontinue and dispose of my several stocks in trade or any of them for the payment of my debts funeral Expences and the charges of the probate and Execution of this my will in which latter case the surplus monies are to be put and placed out at Interest upon Mortgage Bond or such Personal Security as my Executors shall think sufficient but they are not to be answerable or accountable for the sufficiency or for any loss or damage that may arise to my Estate and effects thereby or in any other manner howsoever

And I will and direct that the proceeds and profits of my said trades and the Interest accruing from my effects and also the use and enjoyment of my household goods and furniture shall be held and enjoyed by my said Daughter Ann until the said Richard COCKER (her nephew) shall attain the age of twenty one years the better to enable her to support and educate him and for her own maintenance

After which period the whole of my property to be converted into money And I give one third part to my said Daughter Ann One third part to my daughter Mary and one third part to her son the said Richard COCKER And I do appoint her



my said Daughter Ann together with Thomas ASHTON of Ormskirk Grocer
Executrix and Executor

In witness whereof I have set my hand and seal the day and year first before written
Richard COCKER

Signed sealed published and declared by the testator as and for his last will and
testament in the presence of us who have hereunto subscribed our names as
witnesses in his presence and in the presence of each other

William TWIST Wm SHERLOCK

The third of August 1821

Ann COCKER the Executrix & Thos ASHTON the Executor in this Will named,
were sworn in common form, and they farther made oath that the personal Estate
and Effects of the Testator within the Diocese of Chester were under the value of
£450

before me Rich LOXHAM Surrogate

The Testator died the fifteenth day of February 1821

Probate issued Dated 3rd August 1821

Talk Reports

28 June 2023 - Westhead In The Past by Kate Hurst and Kathryn MacDonald

The scheduled talk by Jean Dutton on 'Westhead through Time' unfortunately
could not take place, due to her sudden illness and hospital admission. Members
sent good wishes to Jean for a speedy recovery. As a replacement, committee
members Kate Hurst and Kathryn MacDonald put together an evocative and
interesting meeting at short notice, using ODFHS resources relating to Westhead,
to follow Jean's intention.

Kate began with a 1366 list of surnames of Westhead contributors to the salary of
the priest at Ormskirk Parish Church, taken from an early ODFHS publication.
Familial, occupational and geographical names featured - some easily recognisable
today while others were less clear; some obviously local, others seemingly with a
more distant origin, even from abroad.

Next, Kate showed 'Faces of Westhead', an ODFHS YouTube video based on old
photographs of Westhead. It was an unplanned bonus that Keith Howard, who
had originally donated the photographs, was in the audience and volunteered to
provide an impromptu commentary. The images varied from family, friends and
workplace groups to village occasions and activities, giving a rich and lively picture
of Westhead life over several decades in the early and mid twentieth century
including school, church, sport, pantomime, carnival, shows, and haymaking.

In conclusion Kathryn showed a series of photographs of Westhead taken just that
same day, as a backdrop to her reading of a 2004 article in the ODFHS magazine
by Jean Dutton, drawing on the recollections of Margaret Dutton and Annie
Ormesher on Westhead in the 1930s. The descriptions of everyday life were
detailed and colourful, the general needs of the community being supplied by a
host of local shops, deliveries and tradesmen, plus direct sales from farms and
growers. Buses, trains and taxis provided good connections for journeys further
afield, but closer to home, Westhead life was full, busy and fun.

After the talk, reactions and comments from the audience discussed how much has changed or been lost over the years. Jean's comment, *'Time has given a rosy gleam to those years'*, struck a resonant chord with those attending this varied and illuminating meeting.

26 July 2023 - An Introduction to Edge Hill University and its Archive by Dan Copley

This was an evening full of interest and discoveries, combining broad sweeps of history and social change, moving stories of individual lives and glimpses of the earlier days of the major university we have on our doorstep.

Dan Copley is the first Archivist of the university, and only recently have storage facilities become available with the right environment for preservation and study. His talk gave insights into the archive process and the excitement of the developing opportunities now available.

Outlining the contents of the Edge Hill archives, Dan told of early student records, minutes and correspondence, publications and prospectuses, illuminated by photographs of the lively students. Teaching materials have become subjects of academic research, for example, the collection of late 19th century children's books. Everyday memorabilia, e.g. uniforms, badges, photos and correspondence, often contributed by families of early students, are being formed into useable collections by cataloguing, digitising and increasing accessibility.

The history of Edge Hill, founded as a nondenominational teacher training college in inner-city Liverpool in 1885, was set in the context of key national developments like the extension of the vote, the raising of the school-leaving age and increased opportunities for professional women, as careers for women became possible not only before marriage, but instead of it.

The college's new site in Ormskirk was built in 1931, as the need for teachers grew in northern towns and cities; students enjoyed impressive new buildings, extensive grounds and gardens. With the site requisitioned as a military hospital during the

Second World War, the college moved to a temporary home in Bingley, Yorkshire. Dan explained that the Edge Hill archive had no material from the wartime Bingley days, as the Ministry of Defence retained the records. Later in the century, the challenged of societal and educational change brought increasing prominence to the college, as it extended beyond its original focus on teacher training to a range of new subject qualifications, including degree awards. Male as well as female student numbers continued to grow as Edge Hill moved towards its current position as a leading national university.

The 'Women in the Archive' project, opened to the public earlier this year, brought a fascinating focus on specific figures, as Dan brought out not only their relevance to the challenges of their times, but also their personalities, interests and experiences. Specific accounts of three students, brought to life through photos, letters and family recollections, gave an impressive insight into the calibre of those early students. International travel, historical landmarks, dramatic experiences, earthquakes and epidemics were balanced by the quiet story of a woman devoted to the service of her community in and out of school, rewarded with an MBE, and the inspired recollections of former pupils.



Items relating to Edge Hill University, from the ODFHS Research Library, selected by Kathryn MacDonald (Librarian).

Current developments and future plans for the archives are enabling the records of students and staff over the years to be opened up as a valuable subject for study and research at Edge Hill. Plans for the future include oral history recordings,

incorporating external collections to support teaching and research, more exhibitions and public events, greater user accessibility and links with similar archives for mutual benefit and development.

It's an exciting time for the Edge Hill archive, as it uncovers stories of the past, places them in the context of great social and historical developments and makes them freshly relevant and accessible for contemporary study.

After the talk, audience discussion included suggestions on how the gaps in the wartime records might be filled, the early history of the Edge Hill gardens, and the experiences of previous Edge Hill students. ODFHS Librarian Kathryn MacDonald said, "*The Edge Hill University archives are a great resource for family history researchers. We visited the archives earlier in the year (please see issue 90 for a report) and were amazed by the wealth of information they contained. Thank you, Dan, for coming along tonight and spreading the word*".

Members might like to know that the ODFHS library contains two books about Edge Hill:

- *Edge Hill University College: A History*, by Fiona A. Montgomery, 1997
- *A Vision of Learning: Edge Hill University 1885-2010*, by Fiona Montgomery and Mark Finn, 2010

Talk report by Julie Broadbent.

23 August 2023 - Is It Art? The Creative Branch of My Family Tree by Kate Hurst

Two questions formed the starting point for Kate's talk - as an artist herself, was she the first in her family to have this interest? Could she use her family history research skills to find out? The answer to both was a resounding yes.

Kate explored the Smith branch of her family, from Worcester, and reflected ruefully on the well-known difficulty for family history researchers of trying to sort out their own particular Smith from many others living in the same place and time.

Encountering a marriage between two Smiths presented an extra challenge, but pursuing this line of butchers and a builder revealed that her 6xgreat-uncle Samuel was a professor of drawing.

Working in the early 1800s, Samuel was a gifted painter; several of his paintings are still extant, one selling for over £6000 in 2005. Newspaper advertisements and notices in the British Newspaper Archive, plus others in art and museum websites and local trade directories, detailed his activities. The artistic influences was clear, but was it restricted to Samuel alone? Kate traced his descendants to find out.

Samuel's will and an 1851 Worcester trade directory led to a new generation of artistic Smiths; his daughter Eliza was also a professor of drawing, and his nephew John Homes Smith, a drawing master and animal portrait painter. Museum and auctioneers' websites showed several pieces by him, including landscape paintings, studies of country churches, castles and gardens, and detailed work on fine Coalport china. One example (a very small mug) sold for 2023 for £790 - clearly a sought-after piece.

John Homes Smith's son John Halphead married yet another Smith - Ann, of Caradoc Lodge, All Stretton. Caradoc Lodge proved to be an extensive country property which featured in newspaper notices and adverts, both as a boarding school and a home to let. It was clearly named on the 1882 Ordnance Survey map of All Stretton, and Google Street View proved that it had survived to the present day. Kate was pleased to find a good photograph of a substantial three-storey house that would certainly have had scope for use as a boarding school.

John Halphead Smith moved to Shrewsbury, and was recorded in newspapers and census records as a professor of painting and drawing. By 1876 the family name had changed to Stretton - making them much easier to trace. Two of his children had significant artistic careers. Philip Eustace Stretton painted in oils; Kate found a lovely 1889 example on the Glasgow Museums website. However, the *St. James's Gazette* also reported a libel case he brought, requiring statements about his financial affairs. He earned £50-£100 (£2000 today) for his pictures, but could not

always settle his expenses immediately - an evocative insight into his life. His animal paintings continue to fetch considerable sums today; auction records show recent sales for £2-3000.

It was Philip's sister Hesba who took the family's artistic heritage in an exciting new direction. She and her husband Harry George Webb were part of an influential group of artists, writers, political thinkers and social reformers in the early twentieth century. The Webbs established a small printing press in London - the Caradoc Press - which produced striking editions of out-of-copyright classic novels, using skilful design and decorative artwork which not only illustrated but also framed and enhanced the text. Kate showed an example of *The Compleat Angler* by Izaak Walton, with the text set in the shape of a three-dimensional fish, echoing the book's theme of rod and line fishing. Auction websites confirmed that such editions still sell for good prices today, especially in the USA.

The Caradoc Press also produced *The Acom*, a modernist artistic and literary magazine. This enterprise was supported by leading influential figures of the day, such as W.B. Yeats, A.C. Benson, G.K. Chesterton and H.G. Wells. It was fascinating to see how the family had moved from the quiet low-key rural setting in the Midlands to the midst of a circle of well-known political and artistic leaders in the cosmopolitan capital city.

The next generation continued to innovate. British Army records and the Internet Movie Database showed that Hesba's son Ronald was a cartographer with the Royal Field Auxiliary, while her nephew George became a cinematographer. The talk concluded with a collage of the family's artwork, and Kate reflected that the challenge of researching several generations of Smiths had led to a very satisfying conclusion. The discussion focussed on the striking images that illustrated her talk, and on the usefulness of a wide range of online resources when researching, with one source leading to another as she researched her material. Kate's presentation made clear to her attentive audience that she had found the journey enjoyable and intriguing.

Talk report by Julie Broadbent.

Elizabeth Martland's Gingerbread by Carolyn Bond (B122)

My grandmother was born in 1902, as Elizabeth STOPFORTH, the youngest of four children born to Thomas STOPFORTH (b.1866 Burscough) and Mary (nee RIGBY, b.1867 Ormskirk). I have a photograph of the family outside their house at Lowry Hill when my grandmother was about three years old. Many of Elizabeth's family worked at Lathom House. Her grandad Tom RIGBY is included on photographs of the servants.

By 1911, Elizabeth was attending school; her older siblings had already completed their education. Annie (aged eighteen) provided "*daily domestic help*", Thomas (sixteen) was a gardener's carter, and William (thirteen) worked as a labourer on a farm. When Annie's father Thomas completed the census schedule, he stated that he and Mary had been married for nineteen years, and that all four of their children were living.

On 25 March 1918, Elizabeth's elder brother William STOPFORTH (stated by the Lives of the First World War website to have been a gunner in the Royal Field Artillery, and a private in the 2/5th Battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment) was killed in action in France on 25 March 1918, aged twenty. He is listed on different war memorials in Lathom and Ormskirk.

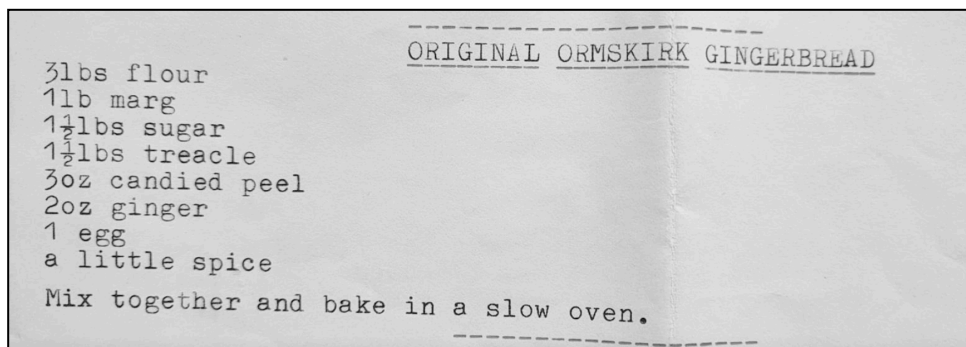
Elizabeth married Arthur James MARTLAND, and they had three children, including my dad. Sadly, my grandfather died in 1946, and my grandmother then married Wilf BUTLER, a widower, in 1953. They sold fruit, veg and plants from their house in Lowry Hill Lane, and also had a stall on Ormskirk Market for many years.

In the 1960s, my grandfather let me use his typewriter to keep me out of mischief, and I've still got a recipe for "original" Ormskirk gingerbread that I copied out of my grandmother's recipe book. My grandmother had very few recipes that were

actually written down, because she never weighed anything, and she cooked using the oven heated by her open coal fire. She had a modern electric oven in what she called the scullery, but rarely used it!

All of the recipes were handwritten and probably came from family or friends. The recipe for gingerbread uses margarine but I don't remember my grandmother ever using it. She always bought loose local butter and I'm sure this is what she would have used instead of margarine.

The recipe may not be the same as the one used to make Ormskirk gingerbread commercially, but my grandmother lived locally in Lathom all her life and this was her version.



ORIGINAL ORMSKIRK GINGERBREAD

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 3lbs flour | 3oz candied peel |
| 1lb marg | 2oz ginger |
| 1 1/2 lbs sugar | 1 egg |
| 1 1/2 lbs treacle | a little spice |

Mix together and bake in a slow oven.

What's Coming Up?

Winter 2023/24

In-Person Meetings and Events

- 6 November 2023 **Family History Help Desk** at Ormskirk Library, Burscough Street, Ormskirk. 10.30a.m. to 11.30a.m.
- 22 November 2023 **Quiz and Social Evening** with a Raffle
- 4 December 2023 **Family History Help Desk** at Ormskirk Library, Burscough Street, Ormskirk. 10.30a.m. to 11.30a.m.
- 24 January 2024 **The History of the Masonic Hall and Lodges of West Lancashire** by Fred Rawsthorne
- 5 February 2024 **Family History Help Desk** at Ormskirk Library, Burscough Street, Ormskirk. 10.30a.m. to 11.30a.m.
- 28 February 2024 **The Civil War In Lancashire** by Phillipe Le Pinnet

Our in-person talks are held at the Guide HQ, Moorgate, Ormskirk, L39 4RT, and begin at 7.30p.m. All welcome; non-members are requested to make a £2 donation. Refreshments available.

Zoom Meetings

- 6 December 2023 **Is It Art? The Creative Branch of My Family Tree** by Kate Hurst. 2p.m. (GMT) and 7p.m. (GMT)
- 11 January 2024 **ZOOM Family History Chat** 12p.m. (GMT)

If you have not yet received access details for our Zoom meetings but would like to attend, please contact Kate Hurst (ODFHS Chair) at chairman@odfhs.email

ODFHS Digital Library - The Gallery

The Digital Library on the ODFHS website contains a growing archive of photos, documents and other local material, divided between the Gallery section (accessible to all) and the Members' Area (only accessible with a password and username) at www.odfhs.website

Over the past two years, generous contributions from members and supporters, have allowed Kathryn MacDonald (Librarian) and Alan Cooper (Website Manager) to collate and organise hundreds of digital images. The following summary is just a taster of what you can find there!

Gallery

Ormskirk Gingerbread

Photos of the Ormskirk Gingerbread Festivals, references in historical sources, gingerbread sellers in local census records, family trees, index to gingerbread articles from Dot Broady Hawkes' Nostalgia column, useful websites; newspaper extracts; recipes, baking utensils and more.

A Postcard From Ormskirk

Local views from vintage postcards (featuring Ormskirk, Aughton and Bickerstaffe) with transcriptions of messages and the recipient's address.

Autograph Books

Ninety-eight messages, poems, jokes and drawings from autograph books owned by Margaret Mary CAMMACK (b.1898), Eric Stanley CROPPER (b.1920) and Ada May ROTHWELL (b.1915).

Local People

Staff at Ormskirk railway station (with historical details), Celebrity Corner (famous

military, political and musical connections), a tribute to Bill Huyton (our longest serving Chairman), nurses and medical staff of Ormskirk Hospital in the 1940s and 1950s, interior and exterior views of Ormskirk Old People's Club on Moorgate c.1950s/1960s (including some unidentified people).

Local Places

Modern photos of Ormskirk town centre, and surrounding villages (including Aughton, Bickerstaffe, Burscough, Halsall, Heaton's Bridge, Lathom, Lydiate, Melling, Rufford, Scarisbrick and Tarleton). Historic and modern views of the Magistrates' Court, Police Station, local parks, Ormskirk Comrades Roll of Honour, war memorials, the 1st Ormskirk Scouts Headquarters on Wigan Road, and Ruff Lane.

Parades, Events and Celebrations

Lydiate Rose Queen ceremony c.1948/49, Sunday School walks, St. George's Day parades, 1953 Coronation memorabilia (with adverts, programmes of events in Ormskirk and District, and portraits of the Royal Family).

Local Churches

Currently comprising images of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church, Ormskirk.

Miscellaneous

World War II ID cards and ration books (including clothing coupons), local businesses and royal visits.

Mystery Photos

A Christmas party, Upholland Grammar School, a ROTHWELL family group (c.1898), Ormskirk Grammar School Girls' Hockey Team for 1932-1933, a group of ladies including Ruby RIGBY (c.1960s), Ormskirk Grammar School dance (1958), 53 Halsall Lane, Ormskirk (c.1900), holiday pictures from the 1930s (featuring Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Scotland and Denmark), a parade in Ormskirk, and fifteen pictures of unknown people and places (c.1850 to c.1920).

Interesting News

CATHOLIC FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY TO BE WOUND DOWN

ODFHS are sorry to report that the Catholic Family History Society will be wound down. The decision was made at their AGM and Conference on 16 September 2023. Representatives of the Catholic FHS joined us at our 2019 event, Dig Up Your Roots In West Lancashire, and we wish all those involved the best for the future.

LETTERS OF RICHARD COBDEN PUBLISHED ONLINE

In September 2023, the Letters Of Richard Cobden website was launched, to make the correspondence of one of the most influential British politicians of the nineteenth century more accessible. The site includes a database of over 5,000 transcribed letters (searchable by recipient, date and address), a virtual exhibition of digitised manuscript material from more than 75 archives and private collections that hold Cobden letters, and resources for teachers (created to suit Key Stage 3 History and Citizenship curricula in England and Wales).

www.cobdenletters.org/

[Thanks to Manchester and Lancashire FHS and the Family History Society of Cheshire for publicising this information.]

NEW WEBSITE FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND HUNTINGDONSHIRE FHS

In August 2023, Cambridge and Huntingdonshire FHS launched their new website. Details of their projects, newsletter archive, and online shop, and section on useful resources (including relevant local archives and CAMDEX, the Index of Births, Marriages, Civil Partnerships and Deaths in Cambridgeshire) are just some of the features available at <https://www.chfhs.org.uk/>

NEW MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS FROM POWYS FHS

In February 2023, Powys Family History Society published a CD-ROM of monumental inscriptions for St. Anno's Church and the Maersyrhelem Chapel,

Llananno, Radnorshire. Priced at £7.00 plus postage, it can be purchased via the Powys FHS online shop at www.powysfhs.org and is listed in the Radnorshire Publications section, under the Memorial Inscriptions sub-section.

NORTH WEST KENT FHS AND WOOLWICH ROYAL ARSENAL RECORDS

When the Royal Arsenal Woolwich Historic Society was disbanded in 2016, Phillip Clarke and Ray Fordham salvaged tons of historical records, and kindly passed the data to North West Kent FHS, who are hosting a digitised version of the database on their website (access for NWKFHS members only). Data on inspectors, disabled workers (1939-1945), medical inspections (1815) and operations (1906-1919) can be found at www.nwkfhs.org.uk/resources/data-sets/royal-arsenal-woolwich

NEW RECORDS FROM ABERDEEN AND NORTH-EAST SCOTLAND FHS

This summer, Aberdeen and North-East Scotland Family History Society released a new edition of their memorial inscriptions for the Burial Grounds of Keithhall and Kinkell. First published in 1984, the collection has been updated to include Old Keithhall (Monkeggy), the Quaker Cemetery at Kinmuck and the "funeral grove" near the Keith Hall Estate. The Burial Grounds of Keithhall and Kinkell (item code AA069), priced at £3.60 (plus p&p), can be ordered via:

www.anesfhs.org.uk/publications/featured-item/26-publications/78-postage

THREE MILLION IRISH RECORDS ADDED TO ANCESTRY.CO.UK

3.2 million names from Northern Ireland's Valuation Records (covering 1864 to 1933) have been added to ancestry.co.uk to mark the centenary of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). The majority of Irish census records for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 were destroyed in the June 1922 fire at the Four Courts in Dublin. It is hoped that the new index will make it easier for researchers to trace land transfer records; the collection includes digitised images of the original records. An ancestry.co.uk log-in is required but the records are free to view. *[Thanks to the Irish Times website for this information.]*

Help Wanted

Yvonne Fitch

Can any ODFHS members tell me anything about Arthur and Margaret FITCH, who were employed as attendants at the Poverty Assistance Institution (formerly the workhouse, I believe) in 1939? Arthur was born in 1887, and Margaret was born in 1892, and lived at 45 (or 48?) Ryburn Road, Ormskirk. I would also be interested in finding out more about the purpose of the Poverty Assistance Institution.

Rosie Ng

I am seeking information about the PEARSON family from Clieves Hill, particularly a Leonard PEARSON. Leonard ran a meat haulage company with his brother Arthur (and possibly their father Joseph) in the late 1940s, until Leonard's death in 1959. It is thought that they were connected to two local addresses - 99 Cottage Lane, Ormskirk and Schoolgirls Farm at Clieves Hill, Aughton. I have found evidence that the company originally operated as "J. & A. PEARSON", but was trading as "A. & L. Pearson" by 1964. I would like to know whether anyone has any more information about the family or their business.

If you can assist with either query, please contact the Magazine Editor at editor@odfhs.email or via our postal address on page 2.

Next Generation – Call For Young Speakers

The Society of Genealogists and the Family History Federation are arranging an online conference, aimed at the next generation of genealogists, on Saturday 5 October 2024. Anyone aged 16 to 35 on that date is invited to submit proposals

for presentations (10 to 30 minutes) on the theme of "Discoveries"; a focus on topics of interest to younger genealogists is preferred. Presentations should be in English, can be given live or pre-recorded, and may be individual or given by two or more presenters. Talks, workshops, interviews, chaired discussions and other formats are welcome.

Proposals including the presenter's name/s, e-mail address(es) and age(s), a brief biography (approx. 50 words), a draft title and short summary of the presentation should be e-mailed to events@sog.org.uk

- Deadline for submission of proposals - **Monday 15 November 2024**
- Notification of acceptance - **Friday 8 March 2024**
- Conference - **Saturday 5 October 2024**

National Events

West Surrey FHS Open Day and Family History Fair

DATE: 4 November 2023, 10a.m. to 4.30p.m.

VENUE: Main Hall, Woking Leisure Centre, Kingfield Road, Woking, GU22 9BA

OTHER DETAILS: Displays from the WSFHS Reference Library. Records on WW1, items relating to London and Middlesex, parish registers, specialist help desks (including Canadian and Irish research). More than 25 societies and groups will attend. For full details please see <https://wsfhs.co.uk/pages/openday.php>

Family History Federation Really Useful Show (ONLINE EVENT)

DATE: 17 and 18 November 2023 (10a.m. to 10p.m. Friday; 10a.m. to 6p.m., Saturday)

OTHER DETAILS: For a full list of exhibitors, programme of online talks, links to purchase tickets and more please see www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/

East Surrey Family History Show (ONLINE EVENT)

DATE: 27 January 2024

OTHER DETAILS: Please see www.eastsurreyfh.org.uk for updates.

The Family History Show Live Event

MIDLANDS: 16 February 2024, 10a.m. to 4p.m., Severn Hall, Three Counties Showground Malvern, Worcestershire WR13 6NW

YORK: 22 June 2024, 10a.m. to 4p.m., The Knavesmire Exhibition Centre, The Racecourse, York, YO23 1EX

LONDON: 5 October 2024, 10a.m. to 4p.m., Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Road East, Sunbury-on-Thames TW16 5AQ

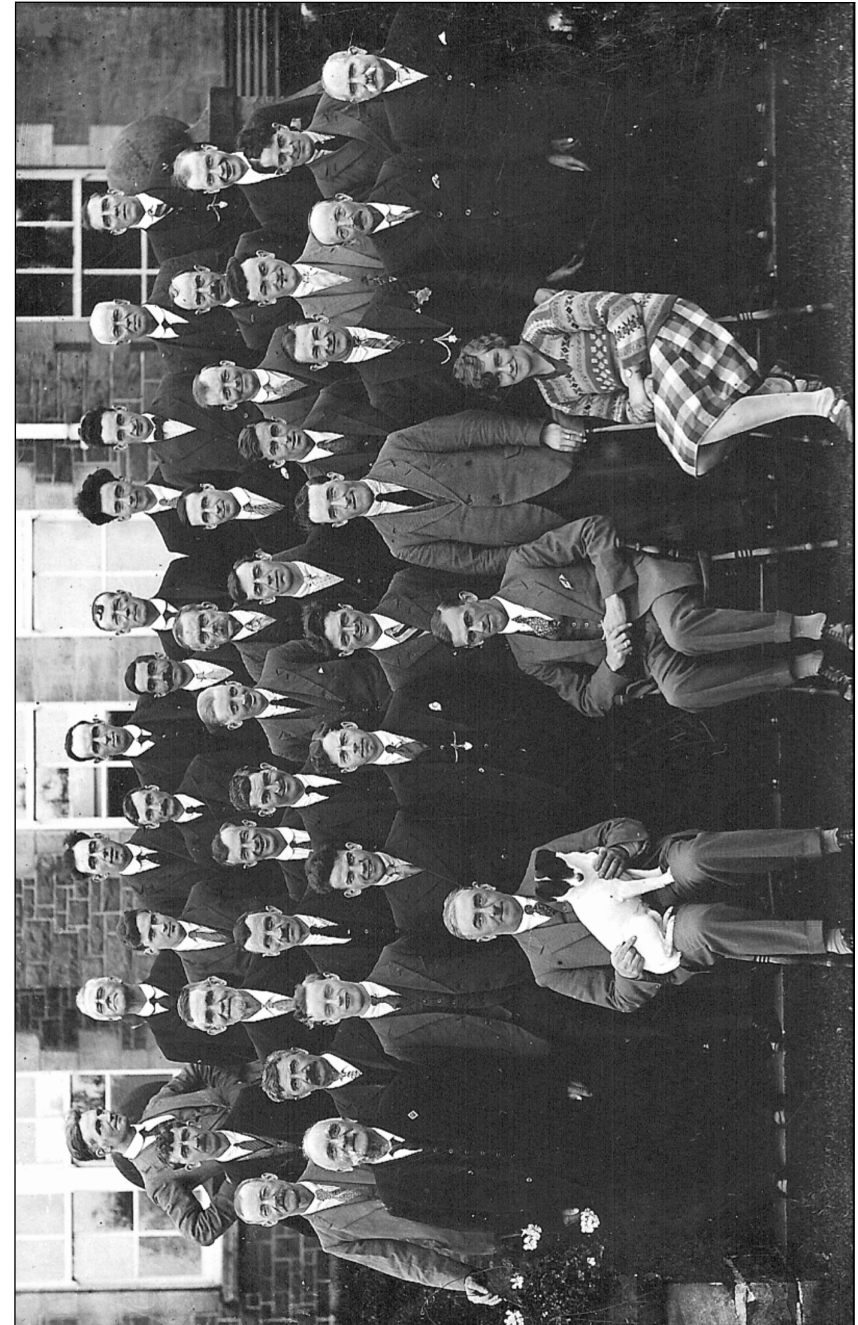
PRICE: £8.00 per ticket (advance sales); £10.00 per ticket (on the day). At the time of going to press, an “early bird” discount of two tickets for £12.00 was available via <https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/tickets/>

The Catholic History of Liverpool (1910)

contributed by Trevor Jones

Trevor Jones, one of our Facebook followers, has kindly made us aware of a freely-available digitised edition of *The Catholic History of Liverpool* (1910), written by Thomas Burke. Besides frequent references to Liverpool’s various streets, you can find mentions of Ormskirk (pgs. 8 and 9) and Lydiate (pgs. 9 and 11), Irish migration in eighteenth century Liverpool and statistics on vessels arriving from Ireland (pgs.28-29), Father DENNET of Aughton (pg.38), barrister John ROSSON, who had links to St. Anne’s RC Church, Ormskirk (pgs.47-48), and Charles SCARISBRICK of Scarisbrick Hall (pg.55).

<https://archive.org/details/catholichistoryo00burkuoft/mode/2up>



Can you identify this mystery group? Carolyn Bond contacted us via Facebook with this photo, which includes her great-grandfather James WHITE (d.1937). James (second from the left, second row from the back) lived on Dyers Lane, Ormskirk, and the 1921 Census shows that he was a labourer at the Gas Works on Aughton Street, Ormskirk. Could these people be his work colleagues?

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Society Facilities

Research Library

Located in the Scout Hall, Wigan Road, Ormskirk, a short walk from the bus and railway stations, and local car parks. The Research Library is open by appointment; please contact Kathryn MacDonald at macdonald6465@gmail.com if you would like to arrange a visit.

Ormskirk Library Help Desk

Our Help Desk at Ormskirk Library, Burscough Street, Ormskirk runs from 10.30am to around 11.30a.m. on the first Monday of each month (except UK Bank Holidays).

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