

Newsletter October 2016



Branch News

Last Meeting **Holy & Unholy Matrimony** **By Rita Greenwood** **10th September**

Rita gave us an entertaining and interesting talk about marriage in general and facts of interest to family historians.

Until the Married Womens Property Act of 1889 a woman's property automatically belonged to her husband on marriage. In some circles, mainly aristocracy, children were engaged as young as 2 years old but did not live together until of marriageable age. Until 1929 girls could be married at 12 and boys at 14 years old, with parents consent. Marriage bonds and allegations can be helpful, if you can find them, as it could cost about £200 if marriage did not subsequently take place.

Ecclesiastical law marriage set down in 1215. In 1604 the law was strengthened to state marriage should take place in the parish of one or other party, usually the bride. 8am - 12noon were the original times that marriage could take place and this was the origin of the term "wedding breakfast". If this was not adhered to it was an "irregular marriage", if secret it was a "clandestine marriage". Fleet prison marriages were "irregular marriages". Marriage registers between 1538 and 1754 generally only contain names of the bride and groom and the date. Marriages could also take place at the lych gate or by stepping over a brush at this time. Banns were supposed to be read 3 times from 1215 in both the bride and groom's parish and, if different, both parishes had to be paid; this is why some marriage certificates show both parties living at the same address. Marriage could also take place by licence or special licence but copies of these would only be kept as part of family papers. Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1754 stated parties had to be married in the parish church, apart from Jews and Quakers, and a special marriage register was printed and sent to all churches. There are some instances of duplicate marriage, particularly if married away from home. Register Office marriages only became possible in 1837, when civil registration also became law and the marriage registers started to show the fathers' names.

In 1826 there was a scandal when the 15 year old daughter of a wealthy mill

owner was bundled off to Gretna Green in a carriage by an Edward Gibbon-Wakefield and married him. They were pursued by her father and uncles and the marriage was subsequently annulled and Edward was charged with felonious abduction; he was a serial eloper who had married originally in 1816. He was sentenced to 3 years in Newgate and subsequently transported to New South Wales.

At one time a husband could sell his wife for 6 old pence or 1 shilling and state he would not be responsible for his wife's debts. Until 1858 divorce required a private Act of Parliament but was still very expensive.

Gill Melton
Secretary Oldham Branch

Next Meeting

Saturday 8th October
George Street Chapel
By Maggie Hurley

GEORGE STREET CHAPEL is a Grade II* listed former Independent Methodist Chapel built in 1815 on Oldham's George Street. Although located in central Oldham, this unique building has remained a buried treasure until it was bought, rescued and renovated by Age UK Oldham using funding sourced primarily from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Andrew Lloyd Webber's Architectural Heritage Fund. The renovation work has unearthed an awe-inspiring yet unassumingly beautiful space which, having been built 200 years ago for community use, can now again play a role in our community life. During the renovation period, staff and volunteers have researched the chapel building, those who worshipped and preached there, and those who lived in its cramped cellar dwellings. This has uncovered real life stories of hardship, conviction and strength - stories which Oldham has built on and deserve to be shared with you.

**This meeting will be held at 2pm in the Education Suite, Gallery Oldham.
(nearest tram stop - Oldham Central).**

Talks are free to Members but there is a charge of £2.50 to non members

New Email address

There is a new email address for the newsletter if you wish to send any comments or contributions:

oldham_newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk

To contact Rod it is still the same email as before:

oldham@mlfhs.org.uk

Our Web site

Do you know we have a website?

<http://www.oldham.mlfhs.org.uk/>

There are details of future meetings as well as information about the history of Oldham, famous Oldhamers, IGI coverage of Oldham and other useful information.

Family History Talks

Rod and Gill Melton will be giving a series of talks on Family History every Friday at 10.30 am at Oldham Local Studies and Archives.

Friday 7th October: Census

Friday 14th October: Before Civil Registration

Friday 21st October: Maps for Family Historians

Contact Oldham Local Studies and Archives, 84 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DN.
Tel: 0161 770 4654, archives@oldham.gov.uk to book your place.

Society News

HelpDesk

The Society Help Desk is open every weekday, Monday to Friday, from 10.30 am to 3.30pm. Volunteers will be pleased to show you the range of resources available to further your research and to assist you in getting the most out of them.

It is located on the ground floor of Central Library.

Beginners' Talks

This series of instructional talks by experienced family historians is designed to guide beginners in family history step-by-step through the various elements of research.

1st October: Irish and Scottish (**The Help Desk will be open from 12.30pm to 3.30pm.**)

5th November: Wills and Probate

The talks are free to Society members but non-members are most welcome to attend for a small charge of £3.00 (refundable for anyone who joins on the day).

Booking is recommended and helps in the planning. An online booking facility is available on our website at www.mlfhs.org.uk (Click on the 'Eventbrite' link)

Talks will normally be held in the Performance Space on the ground floor of Manchester Central Library

Ango-Scots Meeting

The speaker at the Anglo-Scots meeting on **15th October** at 2.00pm will be the **Lord Lyon, Scottish King of Arms**.

There will also be a help desk for members at the bank of computers on the 3rd floor of the Library from 10.30 until 1.30 on the morning of the meeting.

Please book via Eventbrite on the Society's home page.

Manchester Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday 19th October

The Performance Space, Manchester Central Library

Programme

10.30 am **Unpopular Resistance**

Speaker: **Alison Ronan**

The rebel networks of men and women in opposition to the First World War in Manchester and Salford 1914 – 1918.

12.00 Lunch

1.00 pm **Surname Distribution Surveys**

Speaker: **Peter Park**

Find out where certain surnames are most common.

Registration is essential.

To register, visit the [Eventbrite](#) booking page. The meeting is FREE to paid up MLFHS members, but there is a charge of £3 (payable at the time of booking) for non-members. If, however, you decide to join MLFHS on the day this fee will be refunded.

Local News

Oldham Local Studies and Archives

84 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DN.

Phone: 0161 770 4654

Email: archives@oldham.gov.uk

Oldham Local Studies and Archives is run by Oldham Council and is not part of our society. The archives date from 1597 and cover an enormous range of subjects and activities. However it is advisable to check on the archives website for coverage. http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200539/archive_collections

Monday 10.00am-7.00pm

Tuesday 10.00am-2.00pm

Wednesday 10.00am-5.00pm

Thursday 10.00am-7.00pm

Friday 10.00am-5.00pm

Saturday 10.00am-4.00pm

Staff will assist with family history enquiries at any time during the week but if you need extended one-to-one advice a family history expert is available between 2pm and 4pm every Monday and Wednesday. There is no need to book, just drop in.

Talks by Other Groups (which are not part of our society)

Chadderton Historical Society

The History of Thornham

A talk at Chadderton Football Club, Andrew Street at 7.30 pm on **Thursday 1st October**.

Royton Historical Society

Where is Okeden?

A talk by Michael Higgins at Downey House, Church Street, Royton at 7.30pm on **Monday 10th October**.

Saddleworth Historical Society

AGM

The Lost Servicemen of World War 1

A talk by Ivan Foster at Saddleworth Museum at 7.30pm on **Wednesday 12th October**.

Oldham Historical Research Group

The Remarkable Kenney Family of Springhead

A talk by Jack Schofield at 7pm on **Wednesday 19th October**.

Research News

Findmypast has released **WW1 and WW2 enemy alien files** which detail thousands of "enemy aliens" who were interned by the British authorities during the First and Second World Wars.

Also released recently are **Victoria Coastal Passenger Lists** which provide details of people who travelled to the Australia state between 1852 and 1924. More than three million Irish genealogical records have also been released in partnership with the National Archives of Ireland and FamilySearch. The material is from four historic record sets: **[Original Will Register entries\(1858-1920\)](#)**,

Qualification and Convert Roll records (1701-1845), Valuation Office books (1824-1856), Crew Lists, 1857-1922

Irish civil registration records released free online

Available via IrishGenealogy.ie, the records provide an array of details about births, marriages and deaths registered in the country dating back to the mid-19th century.

While basic indexes to the records have been available through the state-run genealogy site since 2014 (with some entries already on FamilySearch), users can view scans of the full register entries online for the first time.

Researchers could previously only access the information by ordering an official certificate, photocopy or by visiting the public search facility that the General Register Office of Ireland maintains in Dublin.

Update from Lancashire Online Parish Clerk

<http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/>

Recently added from our area:

[Banns 1827 to 1833 and 1910 to 1921](#) from the Church of St Mary, Oldham

[Baptisms 1804 to 1836](#) from Dob Lane Unitarian, Failsworth

[Burials 1729 to 1771](#) from the Church of St Leonard in the Parish of Middleton

[Marriages 1907 to 1921](#) from the Church of St Andrew, Oldham

That's all for this month. We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter.

Thank you to those of you who have been in contact with us. We value your comments and contributions.

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Assisted by Irene Whitby & Jane Murphy

