



The Gazette

Pendle & Burnley
Branch

www.lfhhs-pendleandburnley.org.uk

Issue 35 - July 2009

PENDLE WALKING FESTIVAL

Saturday 5th September to Sunday 13th September

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A booklet with details of all the guided walks is available at the local libraries. The walks take place in all parts of the Borough – Barley, Barnoldswick, Wycoller and Weets and all places in between. Many of the walks have a strong historical element and pre-booking is essential.

Example. – Wednesday. 9th September at 2pm.

Murders in Colne - Under two miles, Easy walking

A look at some of the history of Colne centre –
Leader Christine Bradley.

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LANCASHIRE RECORD OFFICE will be out and about in our area in the coming months. Record office staff will be attending -

Padiham Town Council Archives Group Open Weekend

Saturday and Sunday 19th and 20th September.

T'Brig Expo 2009 at Laneshawbridge (Date to be confirmed)

WATERLINK – The Lancaster Canal, Past, Present & Future.

Exhibitions at The Museum of Lancashire, Stanley Street, Preston, PR1 4YP

30th May – 12th September 2009

Lancaster Maritime Museum, St George's Quay, Lancaster, LA1 1RB

26th September – 25 January 2010.

HISTORIC MEDICAL REGISTER goes online on Ancestry.co.uk.

The Medical Act of 1858 made registration with the Medical Council compulsory for anyone wishing to practise medicine and surgery in the U.K. One hundred and fifty years later, the register is now open to all.

BRITISH NEWSPAPERS 1800-1900 Online

Lancashire County Library – Online resources provides access to The Times Digital Archive (1785–1985) and the 17th and 18th Century Burney Collection.

CAPTURED: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF PRISONERS OF WAR

The Imperial War Museum North, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester M17 1TZ.

Special Exhibitions Gallery from 23rd May 2009 until 3rd of January 2010.

DIARY DATES – (WHAT'S ON)

LFHHS IRISH ANCESTRY GROUP

All meetings held at The LFHHS Resource Centre, 2 Straits, Oswaldtwistle.

♣ **Advice & Research Workshop**

Saturday 8th August 2009, 1 pm to 4.30 pm.

♣ **Locating Irish Surnames** Speaker – Sharron Owen

Saturday 10th October 2009, 1pm to 4.30pm

♣ **Advice & Research Workshop**

Saturday 5th December 2009, 1 pm to 4.30 pm.

Enquiries - Miss Margaret Purcell, 128 Red Bank Rd, Bispham, FY2 9DZ

e-mail: mpurcell@redbankmp.fsnet.co.uk

MORLEY & DISTRICT FHG OPEN DAY

Baker Room, Morley Library, Commercial Street, Morley, Leeds, LS27 8HZ.

Saturday 8th August, 10.30am to 3.30pm

<http://wakefieldfhs.org.uk/morleyfhg/Speakers%202008.html>

WEST MIDLANDS AREA GROUP FAMILY & LOCAL HISTORY FAIR

Worcester Racecourse, Worcester. Saturday 15th. August.

Admission £2 – Free Parking

HALSTED TRUST National Family & Local History Conference

'Open the Door & Here are the People' East Midlands Conference Centre,

University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RJ. 28 August to 31 August

<http://www.openthedoor.org.uk/>

NATIONAL FAMILY HISTORY FAIR 2009

Gateshead International Stadium.

Saturday 12th September 2009, 10am to 4.30pm.

Admission £4. Accompanied Children under 15 Free.

NORTH MEOLS (SOUTHPORT) FHS OPEN DAY

Parochial Hall next to St Cuthbert's Church in Chuchtown.

Saturday 26th September. 11am to 4pm. Free Admission

SCARBOROUGH FAMILY AND LOCAL HISTORY FAIR

Pindar Leisure Centre, Moor Lane, Eastfield, Scarborough YO11 3LW.

Saturday 10th October 2009, 10am to 4pm.

NORTH WEST GROUP OF FHS FAMILY HISTORY DAY

St George's Hall, Liverpool Saturday 24th October 2009 10am to 4pm.

Admission £3 (Children under 16 free)

DONCASTER & DISTRICT FHS FAMILY HISTORY DAY

Danum School, Doncaster. Saturday 24 October 2009. Talks by:

- Richard Thornton – “Prince Albert’s sister and other shady Coburgs”
- Paul Jennings on the History of the English Pub
- Susan Deal – How Victorians Invented Christmas

HULL FAMILY & LOCAL HISTORY FAIR

Staff House, University of Hull, Inglemire Lane, Hull, HU6 7TS

Saturday 7th November 2009, 10am to 4pm.

PROGRAMME

The programme of events for the coming meetings is shown below and can also be viewed on the branch website at <http://www.lfhhs-pendleandburnley.org.uk>

29.Jul	Quakers - Julia Robinson	16.Sep	Shaw's Edwardian Journeys: Ribble Valley - Jim Halsall & Alan Parkin
19.Aug	Open Night & Practical Evening	30.Sep	Practical Evening
		21.Oct.	My Immigrant Family -Raymond Haffner

There is still no definite news regarding the temporary location of Colne library. However, the Birtwistle Centre has been booked for our meetings from September to December inclusive. The programme for 2010 is being prepared. Suggestions for speakers are required.

Jean Ingham, Acting Programme Secretary.

LIBRARY

New acquisitions received for the library.

NEW BOOKS

Lancashire Parish Register Society Vol 170 ORMSKIRK, 1715-1770
Burials and Monumental Inscriptions Holy Trinity, Habergham Eaves, Burnley
Treales Windmill – A Short History

NEW CDs

LFHHS CD06 Whalley St Mary and All Saints Parish Memorial Inscriptions
LFHHS CD07 Great Harwood Cemetery Burial Registers 1887 to 1999
LFHHS CD08 Peter Walkden's Diary
LFHHS CD09 "Nelson Leader" Local War Record 1914 to 1915
LFHHS CD10 LFHHS Pedigree Population Data Base
LFHHS CD11 The Shuttleworths of Gawthorp

Vol NC3 Lancashire Parish Register Society, Parish of LEYLAND 1653 to 1710
(Transcriptions 1622 to 1641)

FINLAND CONNECTION: Thomas EMMOTT (born c1769, Colne) married
(25 December 1794) Nancy HARTLEY (born 31 May 1772, Trawden)

Margaret Heap, Branch Librarian

LANCASHIREBMD PROJECT

All the non-conformist marriages are now online and the Preston team are completing the final checks on the register office marriages. We hope the latter will be complete by Christmas this year. Transcription of the birth indexes is now up to 1923 so there is still a lot to do to get to 1974 (or thereabouts). Many thanks to all the dedicated members working on this project whether it is at home or Preston.

Christine Windle, Lancashire BMD Project Coordinator

LANCASHIRE RECORD OFFICE

Saturday opening dates - second Saturday in each month from 10 am to 4 pm

Please note that no documents will be produced between 12.30 and 1.30pm

8 August 12 September 10 October 14 November 12 December

LANCAT – Lancashire R.O. online catalogue is available at -

www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/record_office/services/catalogue.asp

CATALOGUE UPDATE

DP519/2/1 Wages books for Giron Frères' (Bess Velvets Ltd), Spring Gardens Mill, Colne, July 1942-October 1943.

Giron Frères (Great Britain) Ltd operated from the Royal Factory and Lodge Mill in Accrington. It appears they also owned Bess Velvets Ltd, and presumably also Bess Silk Fabrics Ltd, silk and rayon manufacturers, who both occupied Spring Gardens Mill on Green Road, Colne in the 1940s.

Editor's note: The wages book gives details of the rate of pay, hours worked, Workers Contributions to Health and Pension, Unemployment and Hospital, Income Tax, Employers Contributions to Health and Pensions and Unemployment. The names listed in this wages book are H. Clough, E. Mason, D. Cox, T Hodson, A. (Alec) Macro, R. Plumber, M. Walker, M. Bailey, M.A. Bradbury, A. Taylor, C. Dalby, L. Boocock, D. Cook, M. Pollard. M. Mellor, Mrs. Wuffinden, J. Lloyd. Several of them only worked for a few weeks, and the work-force seems to have been around about six or seven people at any one time.

A New Volunteer Project: - Whittingham Hospital Reception Orders:

A new volunteer project at Lancs. R.O. will improve access to the patient records of Whittingham Asylum, near Preston. Work started last month on listing the 33,000 reception and transfer orders (HRW 12) which exist for almost every patient who went there, whether for a few days or for a lifetime. Further details of this report can be found in "News from the Archives", the L.R.O. newsletter.

GETTING TO KNOW LANCASHIRE RECORD OFFICE

Have you ever wondered how to use the search-room in the Record Office? How to find your great-great-grandfather's will? How to order a photocopy: How to ask to see a document or map? If so, these sessions are designed for you.

An archivist will describe some of the resources they hold and how the Lancashire Record Office (L.R.O.) works. They will explain the basic procedures for using the L.R.O. and give guidance on how to use the finding aids, to help you make the best use of your time when you visit the office. Each session is FREE and will last 1½ - 2 hours. Places are limited so advance booking is essential

Sessions will be held at 3.pm. on the first Thursday of every month during 2009

6th August (Fully booked up) 3rd September (5 places left)

1st October 5th November 3rd December

To book a place please telephone on 01772 533039 or email the record office at record.office@lancashire.gov.uk

THE HISTORY OF THE TOWLER FAMILY AND ITS INVOLVEMENT WITH METHODISM IN THE PENDLE AREA

Submitted by Colin Beech

In 2005, Colin Beech sent an account about the involvement of the TOWLER and DYSON families, his ancestors, and the history of METHODISM in Pendle area. Other family names associated with his research are HAWORTH and BEECH. The account is ten A4 pages long and so was considered to be too long to be included in the branch newsletter. I have now decided to publish this account in instalments in this and subsequent newsletters. It will be printed in such a way that it can be easily taken out of the newsletter, if required, until the next instalment is published. *Editor.*

The Towler Family

In September 1996 I began a search to establish what happened to Edwin Towler, my wife Barbara's grandfather, of whom nothing had been heard since the early 1900s. After eight years of searching I have still not found out what happened to him but have been on a fascinating journey into the family history. What I discovered was that all five families I investigated, Towler, Haworth, Beech, Dyson and Yates, were connected in some way to the Methodist Church.

What began as a search for a missing relative revealed a social history of the Methodist Church. It had always been my belief that the Methodist Church was as much a vehicle for social change as for Christian salvation and that, perhaps, it was the opportunity for social leadership which led to the growth of Methodism and, ultimately, to the growth of what we used to call the middle classes.

Before the Methodist Revival, society was divided into the aristocracy, gentry and professional and semi-professional classes, the middle class, as it came to be known in the 19th century did not exist. Methodism provided the means of social mobility to its new converts. It freed them from the domination of a disinterested Anglican Church and the 'establishment' and opening the road, alongside the new industries for a new class. A class which became the hardworking and industrious basis for the new dynamic of Victorian society.

According to Eli Halevy, a French historian, it was the Methodist Revival which was the single major reason which averted a revolution similar to the French revolution in this country. It is not often recognised that while the French were executing their aristocracy in 1789 the English were changing their society by peaceful but equally revolutionary means. They were taking over the wealth producing activity which had hitherto been the province of the aristocracy and the gentry.

Sadly in the mid-19th century the impetus for upward mobility was blunted by a sudden fear among Methodists that they may be restricted by the government as they had been in the 18th century and the nonconformists began to conform. They lost their revolutionary enthusiasm and began to form themselves into the basis of what became the middle classes. Conforming, respectable and addicted to hierarchies of class distinction which were more debilitating than the previous regime. Nevertheless some escaped that suffocating influence and provided a new radicalism. I like to think that the family to which I belong continued that radicalism. The nine generations from 1748 have provided, nine Local Preachers and Lay readers, one Methodist Minister, a

magistrate, parliamentary candidate, one doctorate, three masters degrees and at least eight degrees (and still counting), several successful businessmen and women and a wide range of people all working in what can be called the social service sector. After two hundred and fifty years the various families are still involved in the quest for social justice which began with the first Methodist so long ago.

I am indebted to many people but especially, in no particular order, Ken Bowden, Anna Watson, Amanda Westwell, Brian Stott, Norman Cunliffe who have all given me valuable support and information at various times in the last eight or nine years. Without their help, guidance and patience I would never have found out so much about my own past and indirectly some of the past of the Methodist Connexion. I am grateful for that help and hope they enjoy this short history.

C.J.Beech January 2005

Methodism in the Pendle Area.

William Towler was probably born in 1746. He died on 31 March 1804 and was buried at Colne on 3 April 1804. The register states that he was 'insane'. Whether this may have been Alzheimer's is not known. In the same grave are buried two of his daughters Ann died 22nd December 1798 aged 16 and Sally died 15th January 1799 aged 18. They were both stated to be from Cockpits a hamlet close to Blacko.

On 29th August 1813 Jabez Stuttard, a Methodist minister, records in his diary:

"In the morning walked with John Foulds to Trawden. I heard Mr Midgely preach from Col. 2: 'As ye have therefore received.' My wife gone to Blacko. Sally gone to Haggate in the afternoon. I went to Blacko preached at Robert Impsons from 2 Kings 20:1. Drunk tea at Hagar Towler's. A very fine evening. My wife and me had a pleasant walk home."

What is interesting about this is that Jabez Stuttard was married to a Betty Dyson on 21st February 1782 in St Bartholomew's Church, Colne. Hagar Towler's maiden name was Dyson and she married William Towler in 1772 at St Bartholomew's Church, Colne. Agar or Hagar Towler was baptised at St Mary's Church, Newchurch in Pendle, on 25th July 1752 and was the daughter of James Dyson.

The earliest mention of Hagar Towler and Methodism is in "History of Methodism in Burnley and East Lancashire" by B. Moore, 1889. He writes (p213)

"Little is known of Methodism at Roughlees from the time of Wesley's last visit until about the year 1807, when Abraham was the third preacher in the circuit. Through his faithful ministry many young people began to seek to Lord, among whom were the brothers Towler - John, William and Thomas. William was unwearied in his exertions to help forward the interests of Methodism at Roughlee and for many years he went thither from Blacko through weather that would deter many a modern professor."

In the same text (p51) he also writes about Barrowford,

"This little chapel was at the time the only place of worship in the neighbourhood. Through the instrumentality of the Rev. A. Haig, a considerable number of people from Blacko and the surrounding district began to attend it regularly. Two or three society classes were formed there, and Blacko-Hill became one of the regular preaching-places in the Colne circuit".

In the Circuit Book, Blacko stands third, though it never had that position on the plan. This Blacko society was finally merged into the one at Barrowford. Among the members at Barrowford at this time should be mentioned Hagar Towler, who, having a large heart and a fairly large house was ever ready to find a home for Methodists. Several of her sons, and a daughter became members. William was a leader at Roughlee, Blacko and Barrowford, till increasing deafness compelled him to resign. Thomas another son, was a local preacher for many years.

In the same book B. Moore discusses the Burnley Town Mission (pp166-167) he says: "The first year (1857) two missionaries were employed, Thomas Towler and James Crossley." This was the selfsame Thomas Towler who was mentioned in 1807 as being one of the brothers Towler who were first attracted to Methodism by Abraham.

It may be that Hagar's family connection with Methodism dates back to at least 1748. In a note from Norman Cunliffe regarding the Towlers is the following:

"In 1748 the first Quarterly Meeting held in Methodism was arranged by John Bennet one of Wesley's preachers who was in charge of the large Cheshire Circuit, which then included Lancashire and part of the West Riding of Yorkshire. This took place at Todmorden Edge when about 28 class leaders from five societies met. At the meeting four stewards were appointed to conduct temporal affairs, amongst whom was James Dyson of the Roughlee Society." If this James Dyson was indeed the father of Hagar it is no surprise that sixty years later her presence at a meeting at Roughlee as reported above.

There is a record of a marriage on 10th November 1772, in the Colne Parish Church register between William Tower and Hagar Dyson. It seems likely that this couple are indeed William Towler and Hagar Dyson the g.g.g.grandparents of Barbara Beech, my wife of 52 years. Their first child, Mally, was baptised on 5th September 1773 and the family grew; Alice - April 1779, Sally - May 1781, Ann - Sep 1782, John - May 1784, William - Feb 1786, James - Feb 1788 and Thomas- Feb 1791. There is an unusually large gap between the birth of Mally in 1773 and Alice in 1779, particularly in view of the fact that after 1779 the family grew steadily, seven children between 1779 and 1791; one wonders what had happened to other children. The mystery becomes even deeper when it is seen that in 1861 on the death of Thomas it was recorded that there were five Towler brothers who were preachers. The total age was over 380, another brother, born between Mally 1773 and Alice 1779 would have filled the bill.

Thomas Towler, the youngest son, is the one for whom there is the most complete record. He married Mary Walton probably on 24th July 1813. Their first child, David, was born in Nov 1814 and there followed: Henry - Oct 1816, Hagar and Isabella before Robert - Apr 1823, Joseph - Oct 1824 and William - 1827. The latter is shown on the census of 1861 as a druggist. Thomas was variously a weaver, a commission agent and latterly the Town Missionary of Burnley (1857). His second son, Henry, was also to become a local preacher.

The first appearance of Thomas on a plan was in the Middleham and Tanfield Circuit where he appears in 1815 at the age of 24. He continued as an active preacher until his death after attending a Love Feast on Sunday 23rd December 1860. His obituary

in the Burnley Advertiser of 29th December 1860 reads: "SUDDEN DEATH" On Sunday afternoon, Mr. Thomas Towler, formerly Wesleyan Home Missionary in this town, died very suddenly. He attended the love-feast in Wesley Chapel, Hargreave-street, on Sunday afternoon. He left the chapel about half-past three o'clock, and went to a house at the corner of Hargreaves Street, Hammerton Street, occupied by Mr J. Sanderson, where he occasionally called. While there he said he felt sickly, and asked for a pipe of tobacco, for having felt in the same way the previous Thursday, he had found relief by smoking. A pipe was given to him and he smoked it, and afterwards got a drink of tea. He then walked across the floor and said he felt better. In the moment after he made some remark about persons leaving the chapel, and immediately fell dead. He was 70 years of age.

In the Burnley Advertiser of Saturday 5th January 1861 the following comment appeared:

"The Late Mr Towler. A correspondent writing from Bedford Leigh, Lancashire, a brother of the deceased we conclude, says that Thomas Towler, whose age was 70, had been for 44 years a local preacher, and when living the youngest of five whose united ages amounted to 389 years."

It is certain that Thomas Towler had three brothers, William 74, James 72, and John 76, he was 70 when he died, a total of 292. To fit with 389 years the fifth brother would have had to be 97, which seems unlikely. It seems more likely that an older brother aged about 85 would have yielded a total number of 377. With the gap in child bearing which occurred in the Towler family between Mally in 1773 and Sally in 1779 this is entirely possible.

At the time of Thomas Towler's death, his son William was living in Bedford Leigh and it seems more likely that he wrote to the Burnley Advertiser than Thomas's elder brother.

Thomas was an assiduous local preacher. Apart from the Middleham and Tanfield circuit in 1822 he was preaching in the Colne Circuit including appointments at Colne, Barrowford and Roughlee until at least 1844. In December 1857 he was appointed with James Crossley as Town Missionary, a position he held until his resignation on April 15th 1859.

Henry, Thomas's second son, married Maria Dugdale on 16th January 1837 at St Bartholomew's Church, Colne, the same church in which his father and grandfather had married. He was a Toll Gate keeper at Gisburn and had several children. David born 1837, Mary - 1839, John - 1841, Thomas - 1843, Sarah - 1845, Margaret - 1848, Martha - 1849 and, Maria - 1853. Henry was widowed by the time he was 74 and his daughter Maria was his housekeeper in 1891.

Henry was also a local preacher for at least fifty years. His obituary printed in the "Burnley Gazette" of 16th September 1891 reads:-

"We regret to record the death of Mr Henry Towler, who expired on Saturday morning, at his residence, 7, Dane Street. Mr Towler was 75 years of age, and the cause of his death is said to be spasmodic bronchitis, though for a considerable number of years he had suffered from partial paralysis of the arms and legs. For fifty years of his life he had been engaged as a local preacher in the Wesleyan

denomination, first in Clitheroe and subsequently in Halifax, Cullingford, Bradford and other places and again in Clitheroe. Close upon twelve months ago he was placed upon the Burnley plan, and was connected with the Colne Road chapel up to the time of his death. In the course of his life's work his kindly and gentle disposition won for him numerous friends wherever he has gone. His special delight seemed to be in visiting the homes of the people and doing the work of a missionary, although he was never placed upon the list of such workers. He was a life long abstainer and during his association with the Burnley circuit he displayed a great interest in the work of the Blue Ribbon Union. In consequence of the affliction which he suffered under, he had totally lost the use of his arms and walked with difficulty, but through all his sufferings, he was ever known for the sweetness of his disposition. In spite of his painful infirmity, he led a singularly happy life and retained in their full strength his powers of memory, intellect and sight. It may be added that he was the son of Mr David Towler who was the first town missionary in the Burnley circuit. (This is a mistake, Thomas was Henry's father, David was Henry's son). The funeral will take place tomorrow, when the remains will be interred at Clitheroe where the deceased spent a greater part of his life."

There is an interesting footnote to the career of Henry Towler as a Local Preacher. In the census of 1881 his wife Maria and four of his children are shown residing at 12 Leda Street, West Derby, Lancs with no mention of Henry. It was only after further research that his name was found as a visitor at the home of Thomas Morrison, Rhodes St., Chapel House, Halifax, York. The implication is that Henry was a visitor at the said Chapel House and it is reasonable to infer that this was a preaching appointment. Halifax is a considerable distance from West Derby and clearly required overnight accommodation provided by the Chapel Keeper.

David Towler, Henry's eldest son was given a note to preach on September 29th 1859 at the Local Preacher's meeting in Clitheroe. By happy chance one of the ministers was Rev S Haig. It is not known if he was a relative of the Rev Abraham Haig, the minister who first impressed Hagar Towler in 1807 at Blacko but it seems very likely. David Towler was to become a leading local preacher in the Lancashire and Yorkshire circuits. He died prematurely in 1897 but not before he had become one of the best known preachers in that part of the country. The following is his obituary from the Local Preacher's Magazine 1898.

"Bro. David Towler died at Stockport on December 25th, 1897. Born at Blacko in 1837, then a small hamlet, near to Barrowford in Lancashire, he removed with his parents when quite young to Gisburn in the Clitheroe Circuit. It is noteworthy that when ten years of age he walked to Sabden a distance of about six miles, to beg a number of bibles, and when he had collected a sufficient quantity, he walked back to Gisburn the same night, with the bundle of bibles on his back, for the purpose of commencing a Sunday school in the village. Soon afterwards the family removed to Clitheroe, and here Mr Towler was brought to a saving knowledge of salvation. His father, Henry Towler, was then a local preacher in the Clitheroe Circuit, and his grandfather, Thomas Towler, was also a local preacher in the Burnley Circuit and the first town missionary. Mr Towler was accepted as a local preacher in December 1859,

at Clitheroe, which was then a very wide circuit, his work often causing him to walk twenty miles on a Sunday and preach at three services. But he loved his work and entered into it with a zeal that characterised his after life. Frequent removals caused him to be engaged in many circuits, (and perhaps few men have had their names on more circuit plans than he), and among the number are Clitheroe, Accrington, Manchester (Grosvenor Street and Gravel Lane), Leeds (Brunswick), Birkenhead, Liverpool (Brunswick, Bootle and Great Homer Street), Warrington, Sheffield, Bradford Yorks, Keighley, Halifax (St John's) and Stockport (Tiviot Dale). A man of indomitable spirit he brought a strong earnestness to bear in his religious life, and entered into the work of the Wesleyan Church with his whole heart. Whilst in Liverpool he was one of the chief organisers of the Liverpool branch of the Local Preacher's Mutual Aid Association, throwing all his energy into the effort to bring it to a successful issue. In this he was rewarded. For many years he was an honorary member, and for some time chairman of the Liverpool Branch; he continued a member of the Association to his death, but through an unfortunate reversal of circumstances he had become a benefit member. Nothing seemed too hard or onerous for him to undertake, so that he could further the interests of the church to which he belonged. His grandfather died very suddenly about thirty-seven years of age, (sic, he was seventy), being seized with apoplexy whilst attending a love feast in Wesley Chapel, Burnley. This death prevented an arrangement from being carried out whereby Mr Towler, his father and grandfather were all appointed to preach in Wheatley Lane Chapel in the Burnley Circuit on the same Sunday. For some three or four months Mr Towler had been suffering from pernicious anaemia, but his faith in the verities of the gospel remained unshaken. He died in the sixtieth year of his age, in the full assurance of the gospel of peace. His remains were interred in the family vault at Accrington on December 29th, the Rev. W. A. Browne, M.A., conducting the burial service."

David Towler appears on the census of 1841 as a four year-old living with his father Henry, who was then a tollgate keeper living at Toll Bar, his mother Maria and brothers and sisters Mary aged 2, John, 3 months. However, he does not appear on the 1851 or 1861 censuses and the next firm piece of information about him is when he marries Elizabeth Harwood, a cotton power loom weaver living in Union Street, Accrington. David is shown as being "clerk in charge" of a Railway Station at Padfield in Derbyshire. It is my belief that David probably left home at 14, in 1851, to work on the then burgeoning railway network, and as a result met and married his wife Elizabeth at the local Methodist Church. He had been put on note as a Methodist Local Preacher in 1859. Also worshipping as a Methodist in Accrington at that time was John Haworth. John was a leader of his local Methodist community, of which more later, and his family was to become closely associated with that of David Towler. They were both married by Henry Smallwood the then minister of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Accrington. David in September 1861 and John in November 1862. That was not the only connection for, thirty years later, in March 1891, Edwin, David's son, married Jane Haworth, one of John's daughters and in February of 1892 Walter, John's youngest son, was to marry Beatrice Towler, David's surviving daughter. David had five children, Edwin born in July 1862, George - 1864,

Mary - 1863, Beatrice - 1867 and Minnie - 1862, of whom three died in early life and Edwin was not heard of after 1901. Only Beatrice survived and she had no children.

Edwin Towler and Jane had two children, Elsie and Muriel. Elsie, the elder child distinguished herself by securing a scholarship to Manchester University to read English in 1914, she was ninth in the country in a competitive examination and went on to complete both a B.A. and M.A. Degree in English at Manchester. She too was to continue the tradition of public service established by her grandparents on both sides. In 1929 she was an assistant Liberal Party agent for Mr R. J. Russell who went on to win the election. On Saturday March 16th she was called upon to speak in support of Mr. Russell to a large meeting at Tarvin where, according to the Chester Chronicle, "At Tarvin Public Hall the body of the room and gallery were filled to overflowing. The meeting had been addressed by Mr E. Wynne Jones, Mr Gratton Ward, Mrs Rothwell, and others with Mr Wynne Jackson in the chair." Mrs Rothwell was Elsie Towler, the elder daughter of David; later she was to divorce Bernard Rothwell before her marriage to Alexander Grant and giving birth to two daughters Helen and Barbara. Barbara was to become my wife Barbara Beech.

As the result of an extraordinary contingent event it transpired that while at Manchester University, Elsie Towler had formed a close friendship with Nell Provost who was to marry Rev W. Russell, a Methodist minister. In 1948 in West Germany, while in the army, I met Peter Russell, the son of Nell and I met Barbara at a Methodist Youth week-end at High Leigh, near Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire. Considering that I had been born in Yorkshire and Barbara in Hertfordshire, although her mother's family hailed from Lancashire, it was extraordinary that we should meet and eventually marry.

Although Hagar Towler's children became leading figures in the Methodist movement of the day, little is known of her. That she was important and influential is beyond doubt. The writers of the History of Methodism in Burnley would not have mentioned her had she not been seen as a significant figure, and the fact that Jabez Stuttard took tea with her in 1813 is an indication that she had influence.

If it is the case that her husband was William Towler who was buried in 1804, insane, then she had her burdens to bear. Two of her daughters died from fever and were buried with him. Tragedy was no stranger to either the Towler or Haworth families. John Haworth's first wife, also called Alice died not long after their first son Joseph was born. David's second son George, born in September 1864 died on January 17th 1865. Two of his daughters Mary Maria, the oldest and Minnie Towler, the youngest, both died within months of each other, Mary on 21st May 1889 and Minnie 27th January 1890.

David, besides being a successful Local Preacher was also a successful business man. Having been a Clerk in charge of a railway station in 1861 he was in 1881 a manager of a publishing company. He is mentioned in the Liverpool Gazette of 1871-2 and in 1887 was considered important enough to take part in the foundation stone laying of Tuebrook Methodist Chapel for which he was presented with a silver trowel, suitably inscribed and still in the possession of the family. A kind act of David Towler's came to light after visiting Accrington Cemetery to view David's family grave we were sent

a detail of a second grave provided by David for his first son George. Also interred in the same grave were Orpah Maria Harwood, David's sister-in-law aged 26 and her child Herbert Harwood aged 6 weeks, both dated 1869. Alongside them was Annie Harwood aged 2 years who died in 1872. It seemed to be an example of the kindness for which both David and Henry his father had been noted.

Unfortunately some business circumstance brought his financial prosperity to an end. It is believed that a business venture failed and he was placed in need of help from the very Local Preachers' Mutual Aid Association he had been so diligent in helping to form. His father, also Henry, who was a much loved local preacher, was also a recipient of a small pension from the same organisation. On a personal note I can report that my own father, Joseph Beech and brother Cecil Beech, both local preachers were also to receive benefit from that association.

Subsequent to David's death in 1897 Edwin, David's eldest son and the father of my mother in law, Elsie Grant, formerly Rothwell, nee Towler, disappeared for a time. He reappeared for a short time in the late 19th century and became the father of Muriel, Elsie's younger sister, only subsequently to disappear again until a story came from a soldier, of whom nothing is known, that Edwin had died. He had benefited from his father's success but, for some reason, had been unable to capitalise on his early training. It is believed that by a similar coincidence Walter Haworth, the youngest son of John Haworth and the husband of Beatrice Towler, David's youngest daughter was also unable to establish a successful career. Nevertheless the granddaughters of David both established themselves as wives, mothers and successful women in the sense that both secured careers at a time when careers for women were uncommon. Elsie became a teacher, then an agent for the Liberal Party. Subsequently she became influential in the foundation of Hoddesdon Town public library and remained the advisor on poetry until she died. She also led a local drama group and was a staunch supporter of such activities as "Meals on Wheels", the W.E.A. (Worker's Educational Association) and other similar acts of public service. A bench was placed on the outskirts of Hoddesdon in her memory by the Townswomen's Guild after she died in 1952. That she was able to do so was in no small measure due to the success of her husband Alexander Grant who rose from being a building site plumber to President of the Institute of Sanitary Engineers and a Governor of the London Hospital.

Within the Towler family the transition from weavers and Toll Gate keepers to university graduates and Parliamentary agents is a clear example of the social change which occurred alongside the Methodist revival beginning with Wesley in the mid 18th century but only reaching its maximum influence in the early to mid 19th century when it became a force to be reckoned with in the political life of the nation. This history does not only concern the Towler family. Several other families are involved with the process of social change which, in my view, had its genesis in the effect of the Methodist revival of the 18th and 19th centuries and was to transform the nature of British Society more than any other event in recent years.

To be continued in the next edition of "The Gazette"

FEDERATION NEWS

Calderdale Central Library and Archives

Calderdale Council is proposing to demolish Calderdale Central Library to make way for retail development. The building houses the lending library, reference library, local history, community meeting rooms and state of the art Archive facilities. A website has been set up to support a campaign to save the library from the bulldozers. It states *"The Council's plan is to move the library and the adjacent council offices to another location. However, it is likely that the alternative accommodation will not be sufficient to house all of the functions that are currently in the Central Library. The current Library and Archives are purpose-built, well-used and centrally accessible. We oppose the unnecessary move and fragmentation of such a valuable resource."* The website can be accessed at <http://www.dbol.org.uk/> where you will find more information and a link to a couple of petitions.

1911 Census is now complete

The entire census is now available for you to search. Records for Wales are now available on the [1911 Census](#) website together with those for the Channel Islands of Alderney, Guernsey, Jersey and Sark, and the Isle of Man. The records for around 135,000 soldiers based at 288 military establishments overseas, and around 36,000 naval personnel on 147 Royal Navy ships and Merchant vessels overseas, at sea and in foreign ports have also been added. In line with data protection legislation, certain sensitive information relating to infirmity and to children of women prisoners will be held back until 2012.

It is the most detailed census since UK records began and the first for which the original census schedules have been preserved - complete with our ancestors' own handwriting - providing a fascinating insight into British society nearly a century ago. The 1911 census is a poignant reflection of how different life was in early 20 century Wales, before the Great War.

'Fertility Census' The 1911 census was the first to ask questions relating to fertility in marriage. Married women were asked to state how long they had been married and how many children had been born from that marriage. The census also provides a fascinating snapshot of the population of the country just a few years before a whole generation of young men perished in the Great War of 1914-1918.

Temporary closure of the British Postal Museum & Archive

The Search Room at The British Postal Museum & Archive will close from 29 June to allow urgent work to take place on the air conditioning system. The work will take at least 8 weeks, possibly longer. They will continue to deal with email, letter and telephone enquiries during this time but responses may take longer than usual.

If you are planning to visit the archives in July or August please contact the Search Room in advance of your visit by emailing info@postalheritage.org.uk or telephoning 020 7239 2570 to check the current status. Updates will also be posted to the website www.postalheritage.org.uk

British Convict Transportation Registers

The State Library of Queensland has just re-released the British Convict Transportation Registers Database (over 123,000 convicts sent to Australia between 1787 and 1867). A new feature of the database is the ability for researchers to post comments on a chosen convict's record. This comment field is a great way for researchers to share their notes on a convict's life.

<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/fh/convicts>

Example of a comment written:

"Thomas Dowse was born in Hackney, London in 1809. In 1824, at the age of 15 he was convicted at the Old Bailey for theft and sentenced to death, which was later commuted to transportation for life. He spent the next few years onboard English hulks (the Bellerophon and the Euryalus) awaiting transportation. In January 1828 he arrived in New South Wales onboard the convict transport Florentia. After receiving his pardon he made his way to Moreton Bay. Between 1862 and 1869 he became Town of Clerk of Brisbane. Thomas died on 9th November 1885 and is buried in Toowong Cemetery".

Dates of conviction are continuing to be added to each record - this will be an ongoing project.

ScotlandsPeople website - www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

The following records have been added to their site

1. New 1881 census indexes and images: this now completes the set of Scottish census records 1841-1901, uniquely available on ScotlandsPeople. Please note that this new version is in addition to the current LDS version of the 1881 census
2. Old Parish Records (OPR) Deaths & Burials indexes and images have also been added from 1538 to 1854
3. Coats of Arms 1672-1907 (free to search) have been added.

More modern Birth, Marriage and Death (BMD) records have also been added to the site. This now increases the range of statutory records, so you can trace your more recent ancestors

Indexes of Scottish births and deaths now run from 1855 to 2006 with marriages from 1855 to 1933. Indexes to modern marriages will be added later this year.

Images of births are now available from 1855 to 1908, marriages from 1855 to 1933

The Surman Index of Congregational Ministers

Charles Surman's extraordinary biographical card index of Congregational ministers includes the names of about 32,000 individuals, and, where known, their dates, details of their education, ministries or other employment, together with the sources used. It covers the period from the mid-seventeenth century to 1972. Though it focuses on England and Wales, it includes Congregational ministers serving abroad provided they trained or served as ministers in Britain. It also gives details of 17th- and 18th-century Presbyterians. Further information can be found on the website where the index can now be freely searched online <http://surman.english.qmul.ac.uk>.

Archives for the 21st century: consultation draft

On 7 May 2009, The National Archives released the long-awaited consultation document via its website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archivesconsultation/. It sets out the Government's strategic vision for the sustainable development of a vigorous, publicly funded archive service across England and Wales. It replaces the government policy on archives that was issued by the Lord Chancellor in 1999 and builds on both the positive achievements around public access to information and technological developments. The challenges facing the archives sector and the actions to address them are outlined in the five sections of this strategy. The TNA press release can be viewed at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/6may2009.pdf

TNA Digitisation Projects Update

The following information is provided by The National Archives.

A) Licensed Internet Associateships ("LiAs") - available free onsite at TNA:

1. 1911 Census - Free access at Kew is now available across all public terminals.
2. World War I Soldiers' Records - Pensions Records (WO 364) complete and online from Ancestry. Service Records (WO 363) - surnames A-N live. Final content launch (surnames O-Z and mis-sorts) is due later in the year.
3. Non-parochial births, marriages and deaths - RG 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 33 live on www.bmdregisters.co.uk from S&N Genealogy. Rest of package still to come: RG 32, 34-36 and BT 158-160
4. Immigration Records (BT 26, HO 2, 3 & 5). BT 26 live online from www.ancestry.co.uk HO 2, 3 & 5, transcription in progress, due later in 2009
5. Chelsea Pensioners' Records (WO 96, 97) - Scanning is underway onsite by findmypast.com. First content launches due late in 2009. Timetable of record availability onsite is at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/stories/212.htm

B) Academic, non-exclusive and non-commercial projects

1. State Papers Domestic, Foreign and Ireland 1509-1714 Series I (Domestic, Tudor) launched 18 November 2008, available free in TNA reading room via "OPERA" menu. Series II (foreign and Ireland, Tudor) is due for release shortly. The collection offers fully word-searchable calendar entries linked to original document images, and will match TNA documents with papers from the manuscript department of the British Library.
2. RG 18: Census Maps - Digital versions of the original Registration District maps from the 1871 census are now available to download at www.cassinimaps.co.uk.

C) Documents Online - Series Currently in production:

- ADM 139: Naval Ratings' service records 1853-72 - first 200 of 1000 pieces online; remainder online later in 2009.
- ADM 159: Royal Marines registers of service now complete online.
- ADM 196: Navy Officers' service records 1756-1966 - selected 98 pieces up to 1920 now online- for piece list see: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/adm196.asp>
- ADM 337: Royal Naval Volunteer Reserves records, World War I live online.
- BT 389: World War II merchant shipping movement cards now online.

Free access to online records at libraries

In the Impact Assessment of The Government Policy on Archives (obtainable at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archivesconsultation/documents.htm>) there is a reference to free online access to Cheshire tithe maps in all Cheshire libraries. Are there any counties where this type of facility is thought to be particularly lacking? Replies can be posted on the Federation Forum at <http://www.ffhs.org.uk/forum/index.php?board=42.0>

East Riding of Yorkshire Archives and Local Studies

In the same document there is mention of a very significant improvement in service following a move to purpose-built premises in 'The Treasure House' in Beverley. This brought together the archives with the local studies unit, public library, art gallery and museum as well as a café.

SOCIETY RESOURCE CENTRE, 2 STRAITS, OSWALDTWISTLE

The centre is open every Thursday afternoon from 1pm to 5 pm. If you have not already been to visit the LFHHS Resource Centre, it is near to Oswaldtwistle Mills. There are four PCs with internet access to Ancestry (Worldwide), a set of all the society's microfiche plus some from other societies and hundreds of reference books. Go to <http://www.tinyurl.com/22o3oq> for a map. If you would like to volunteer to help out, please contact Tony Foster, e-mail: ga.foster@btopenworld.com

QUERY CORNER

HUTCHINSON - Mr Hutchinson, 66 Grosvenor Road, Shipley BD18 4RB

Mr Hutchinson is searching for a marriage of a George HUTCHINSON around 1790. His son, Richard Emmott HUTCHINSON was baptised in 1791 and Mr Hutchinson is trying to work out where/why the EMMOTT name came into the family. The HUTCHINSON family are predominately resident in the Bingley area.

NELSON FOOTBALL CLUB – Garth Dykes, 15 Cedars Court, London Road, Leicester, LE2 1ZD

Garth is writing a book about Nelson Football Club and would like someone to undertake some research at Nelson Library. He has had other football books published and they include not only the club history but also a short biography of each of the players from the club - a sort of "Who's Who" of the players.

Nelson F.C. was a member of the "League" from 1921 to 1931 and during that time they used 166 players. Garth is attempting to write about each of these players. Many local men played for Nelson F.C. and it is possible that some of their relatives may still be living in the area. These relatives may have memories, photographs or other information about the players. Garth has a certain amount of information about the history of Nelson F.C., but anything previously published would be a good help for him, even if it is only to check what he already knows.

Items For Publication should be sent to editor@lfhhs-pendleandburnley.org.uk