

Autumn 2025

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*Mourholme Local History Society (Charity Reg. No. 512765)
Covers the Old Parish of Warton containing the Townships of
Warton-with-Lindeth, Silverdale, Borwick, Priest Hutton,
Carnforth, Yealand Conyers and Yealand Redmayne*

**WARTON FESTIVAL OF LOCAL
HISTORY WEEKEND
SPECIAL ISSUE**

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CHAIR'S REPORT NOVEMBER 2025
Nina Gaubert

Spotlight on Warton's History,

This year, Mourholme Local History Society (MLHS) once again created a History Weekend, this time celebrating the rich heritage of Warton. Building on lessons learned from last year, the committee ensured that everyone could enjoy the talks in comfort, thanks to the generous hospitality of St Oswald's Church. The church not only provided a beautiful setting but also kept visitors refreshed with teas and coffees throughout the event.

Archbishop Hutton School inspired a younger generation to come and find out about their village history. Children were thrilled to handle coins dating back to the Roman Empire, and their curiosity was sparked by stock car racing, looking at some of what, in their eyes, were old fashioned cars. Their enthusiasm reminded us that history is not just about books and archives: it's about tangible connections to those who came before.

Local residents opened their doors to share the stories hidden within their homes. The Old School Brewery welcomed visitors, and former pupils of old schools travelled from as far as the south coast to revisit familiar walls. Their anecdotes about those schools that are now homes, added a personal touch for the owners of these properties. Thank you to everyone who assisted or came to the event, it was another resounding success. Roll on to next year, yes, I am already planning it.

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Behind the scenes, MLHS has been busy reviewing its archives. In an effort to streamline storage, the society offered for sale books of general historical interest that were not directly tied to local parishes. During this process, a remarkable discovery emerged: a typed manuscript from the 1970s, capturing oral histories from Warton residents then in their seventies and eighties. This treasure offers a vivid snapshot of village life in bygone days, and MLHS is pleased to announce plans to publish it next year.

Lancaster's Heritage Open Days brought a rare treat this year: Borwick Hall opened to the public for the very first time. Unsure what to expect, the organisers anticipated modest interest, but were met with an overwhelming response. Over 400 visitors arrived each day, filling the tiny car park and proving just how much local history matters to the community. They are hoping to open again next year and I have offered to support, share our experience and work with them to understand their archives.

This year there were generous donations The Landscape Trust funded new display boards for MLHS, which were used at the Warton History Weekend. One of the donation conditions is that the display boards are to be used for other village activities, so if you are wanting to borrow them, please email me. Meanwhile, the Victoria Wood Foundation provided a new sound system for Gaskell Hall, a much-appreciated upgrade that members say has transformed audio quality during talks.

As winter approaches, the MLHS committee is turning its attention to next season's speaker programme. Do you know an inspiring speaker or have a topic you'd love to explore? We'd love to hear from you. On a personal note, I will soon have more

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time to dedicate to MLHS as I move away from full-time work. This means I can look for opportunities for spring and summer visits—watch this space.

Remember, this is your society so please share your suggestions.

WARTON HISTORY WEEKEND
October 11th and 12th 2025

Bob Haworth

Saint Oswald's Anglican Church and Mourholme Local History Society. worked together to prepare the programme for the Warton Local History Festival Weekend. Displays, presentations and visits to local homes of historic interest helped to make a varied event that attracted over a hundred people. Two main venues were used, Archbishop Hutton's Primary School in Back Lane and St Oswald's Church in the centre of the village.

There was a range of different displays in the school hall, and also in the church, which gave visitors a picture of how the village had developed over time.

Displays in the school hall:

The history of Warton Crag from pre-historic to contemporary times was traced in a number of interesting displays. One display of the investigations of the caves on Warton Crag, revealed that the sites were occupied from before the last Ice Age. Other displays about Warton Crag showed: the Bronze Age ramparts; the lime kilns; and the more recent quarry.

The history of Mourholme Castle and its location near to what some local people describe as 'The Roman Dock' at Dockacres was on display. It's possible that the Romans built a dock there, later used by the Vikings, and that later still helped to decide the location of the Castle because stone could easily be brought to

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the site. The dock may have been used even later; in the 19th Century a large anchor and ships timbers were unearthed there.

Other displays showed:

Details about the WWII fatal crash of the Avro Anson, and the activities of the Warton Crag WI during the same conflict.

Research, into the history of the four schools in Warton, dating back to 1594

The diary and a photograph of Ada Edwards, a young girl living at Kiln Croft in the early 20th century proved to be fascinating reading.

A local farming family, the Gravesons, featured photos of generations of family members helped visitors see what working life was like in the area.

Photos showing the shops and businesses which were once on Warton Main Street.

There were photos of the Stock car racing which has been held on the shore at Warton for many years

Photos of Warton Sports Day, once an important event in the village calendar, made a nostalgic display.

The 1846 Tithe map and the 1841 census showed visitors who was living in different houses in the village - at the time nearly 200 people were living along the length of Main Street.

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A local metal detectorist, Nigel Law, proved to be a big hit with visitors. In just six years he has made hundreds of finds from the Bronze Age onwards, many of which he allowed people to see and handle. Nigel is due to give a talk to the MLHS in April 2026.

Displays mounted in the church:

There was the story of The Red Lion, a pub opposite the Black Bull.

The story of the fatal train crash near Cotestones was described,

There was the tale of the three still unidentified bodies washed up on the shore in 1848. It is thought they were victims of the sinking of an emigrant ship sailing from Liverpool.

Visits to historic sites and houses

Visits had been arranged to Washington House; Windsor House (formerly the Red Lion pub), the Old School Brewery, and two former school buildings. The visits were very popular and many thanks are due to the owners of the properties for allowing access to their homes

Talks

Four talks had been arranged, one in each of the half days.

Kevin Grice gave an illustrated talk on Saturday morning about human activity on the crag from the Bronze Age. A LIDAR survey has shown there are three ramparts, one of which may date from a different time from the other two. Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age people have left remains on the crag, some of these remains are now in the British Museum.

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On Saturday afternoon **Liz Howard Thornton**, a volunteer with the War Graves Commission, related the history of some of the First World War's servicemen who are recorded on Warton's War Memorial. Of the twenty names, eight are servicemen buried in St Oswald's churchyard, their having returned after Armistice Day. Of these eight, five were in their twenties when they died.

On Sunday morning **Mike Moon** gave a talk about the photos on old postcards of Warton, beginning with a short history of mail in the UK and the rise in popularity of postcards. He showed many photos of Warton taken from 1910 onwards. The locations were easily recognisable; Main St. has changed little apart from the number of parked cars.

On Sunday afternoon the last talk was given by **Nina Gaubert** who took the audience through the rich history of the village, providing fascinating glimpses of how occupation of the area began and how humans used the local land and resources to develop through time a thriving and important centre of agriculture, industry, religion and education. Nina described many of the buildings and places of interest in the village, all of which could be seen on a short walk from the Church.

Many thanks are due to all the people who helped make the event such a success, from all the contributors, the Church members who provided tea and cakes, the musicians who entertained everyone in the Church, and the organisations who manned stalls on both days.

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Mr Pugh, the headteacher of the Primary School, is to be thanked for allowing use of the school, and who trusted everyone with its care.

A special thank you must go to Sue Brown and her husband Malcolm who worked tirelessly collecting and coordinating the material from the many people who provided local knowledge and information for the very successful local history festival.

DANIEL ALEXANDER WILLIAMSON
BRITISH ARTIST, 1823-1903

Sue Brown



Figure 1: Daniel Alexander Williamson

A Family of artists

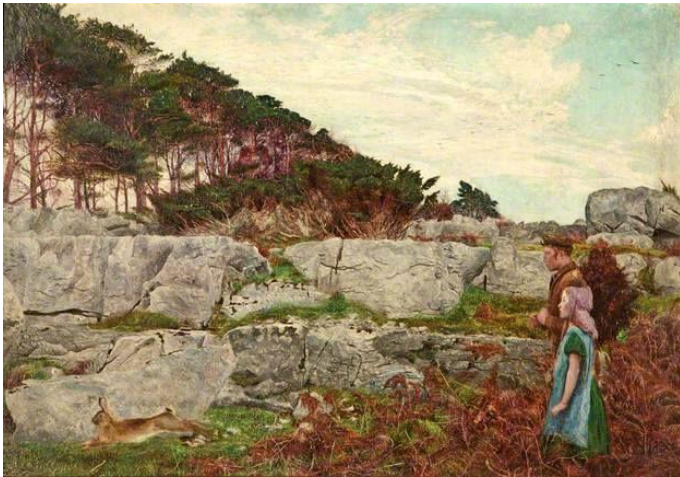
Daniel Alexander Williamson was born on the 24th September 1823, into an artistic family in Liverpool: his father, his uncle and his grandfather were all artists. Daniel Alexander's father, also called Daniel Williamson, was a member of the Liverpool Academy; his grandfather, John Williamson was an artist; and his uncle, Samuel Williamson, was a Liverpool landscape and marine painter. Daniel Alexander's mother was Elizabeth Litherland, daughter of the interesting Peter Litherland, a watchmaker.¹

¹ See article on page 13

Career

Daniel began his career as a draughtsman apprenticed to a Liverpool cabinet maker. He began painting portraits, and examples of these were exhibited at the Liverpool Academy from 1845-1851. He left Liverpool in 1847, and moved to London where he stayed for fourteen years. He continued to send paintings to exhibitions in Liverpool and exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1853-1858.

In 1861 he married Emma Ellen Parkinson and returned to Lancashire. He came to live in Warton and three years later moved to Broughton in Furness where he stayed for the rest of his life.



**Figure 2: The Startled Rabbit, Warton Crag,
by Daniel Alexander Williamson
(In the Williamson Art Gallery Birkenhead)**

It was in the 1860s that Daniel turned to landscape painting. Whilst in London he had painted scenes of sheep and cattle on

Clapham Common; and when he lived in Warton, he painted scenes on Warton Crag



Figure 3: Spring, Arnside Knott and the Conistone range of fells from Warton Crag, 1863 by Daniel Alexander Williamson (In the Walker Art Gallery Liverpool)

It was while living in Warton that his style changed to be more like that of the Pre-Raphaelites. It is thought this was encouraged by his friend, William Lindsay Windus, who had associated in the 1850s with Pre-Raphaelite painters

Death of Daniel's mother

Elizabeth, Daniel's mother, must have been staying with Daniel and Emma in Warton when she died. It is her grave that brought this story to our attention. It is interesting that her memorial merely records her name, the place of her death, her dates and age at the end of her life. There are no words that express regret at her death. Perhaps this is because she is described in terms of

her late husband and her father, details of whom occupy much of the available space. Her husband rates two lines, including his location and occupation; her father rates three lines, including his place of birth, his location at his death, and what must have been his greatest professional achievement.

IN MEMORY OF ELIZABETH
Widow of DANIEL WILLIAMSON
of Liverpool. Artist.
daughter of PETER LITHERLAND
of Liverpool formerly of Warrington
and Patentee of the Lever Watch
who departed this life at Warton
on 26th of May 1863
In the 86th year of her age.

Figure 4: Elizabeth Williamson, née Litherland's memorial.

Note:

*Daniel Alexander Williamson's pictures courtesy of galleries
and The Victorian Web*

PETER LITHERLAND, WATCHMAKER
1756-1804

Sue Brown

This article is linked to the previous article (on page 9) about the artist Daniel Alexander Williamson, whose paternal grandfather, John Williamson was also an artist. Daniel's maternal grandfather, Peter Litherland was an C18th watchmaker; it is his innovative work that is the subject of what follows.

Litherland was born in 1756 in Warrington, the son of John Litherland who was also a watchmaker. He worked in Warrington until 1790 when he moved to Liverpool, which at that time was the centre of the watchmaking trade in Northern England.

On his daughter Elizabeth's memorial stone (see figure 4, previous page), Peter Litherland is described as the Patentee of the Lever Watch, an enigmatic statement that brings an odd picture to mind. In full it should have read, 'Lever Watch Escapement,' an improved component of clockwork watches that Peter Litherland developed and patented.

The escapement itself is a mechanical linkage that delivers impulses to the timepiece's balance wheel, keeping it oscillating. Each swing of the balance wheel allows the gear train to advance a fixed amount thus moving the hands forward at a steady rate. The escapement makes the ticking sound of a watch or clock.

The Lever escapement

The lever escapement, which was more accurate than earlier escapements, was invented by Thomas Mudge around 1754. Peter Litherland improved on this and invented the rack lever escapement, patenting it in 1791 (figure 1).

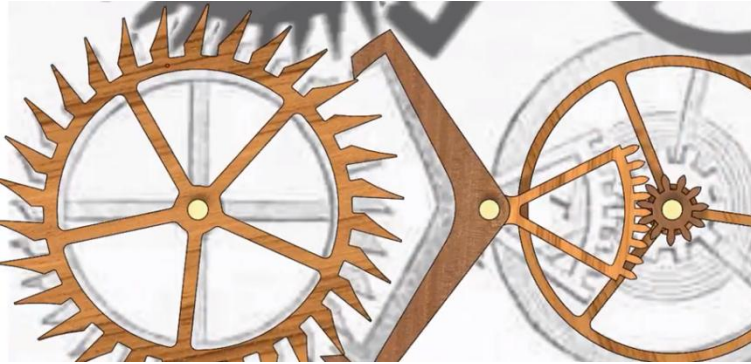


Figure 1: the rack lever escapement.

In the figure, the lever escapement which governs the progress of the toothed wheel, on the left of the figure, is controlled by the balance wheel, on the right of the figure. This balance wheel does not turn round and round: it moves backwards and forwards. Forming part of the lever is the triangular rack, the cogs of which are engaged with a small toothed wheel in the centre of the balance wheel, causing the lever can rock at an accurate rate.

In the introduction to his second patent of 1792 Peter Litherland wrote, ‘an entire escapement to be applied to watches... for use on sea and land...producing greater certainty of time than any hither invented being more simple and less likely to be out of

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repair... especially for ascertaining the longitude at sea at much less expense than those now used.'

Litherland made chronometers and watches and also added the rack lever escapements to watches made by other watchmakers, in particular those made by Robert Roskell, a neighbouring watchmaker. Litherland also supplied complete movements to retailers in several cities. Roskell went on to make watches on a large scale and Liverpool became dominant in the mass export of watches.

Peter Litherland appears not to have made money from his patents and never licensed their production by other watch makers. He died in 1804, and his patents expired in that and the following year. Production was taken up by other Liverpool and London manufacturers. and the business continued with different partnerships until Litherland Davies & Co closed in 1876.

An inventive thinker, Peter Litherland seems to have applied his mind to other mechanical problems of the day. At a time when wooden framed pianos readily fell out of tune, needing frequent attention, Litherland developed and patented a system for keeping such pianos in tune

Note:

There is a Litherland watch on display in the excellent World Museum, Liverpool.

JESSIE WALMSLEY 1895 - 1935
Alan Bird

Peter and Grace Walmsley and their children lived in the Tudor House which stands at the entrance to Croftlands, Warton. Peter Walmsley was an engine driver at Carnforth railway sheds. His untimely death, in 1905, at the age of forty-six, left his widow, Grace with seven children to support. In those days, Ripley school in Lancaster, accepted children where there was a single parent struggling to cope. So Grace reluctantly decided to send the three youngest, Jim, Walter and Jessie, to Ripley school in Lancaster. Here they received a good education and were allowed to go home for the weekends.

When she left school, Jessie's first job was working as a domestic assistant for a couple in Morecambe. However, the first World War had broken out and Jessie began working in the National Filling Factory no. 13, on the White Lund, Morecambe. This factory covered forty acres of farmland taken over by the government, and was a significant site, producing millions of shells for the British Army. It employed thousands of workers, primarily women. Jessie must have been in charge of a group of women responsible for putting the explosives into shells.

It was the 1st of October 1917 and at 10pm most of the workers were having their evening break in the canteen when a massive explosion took place. The explosion was said to be heard in both Burnley and Liverpool. The whole area was flattened but remarkably only 9 people were killed, mostly firemen working to control the blaze. Secrecy meant that the event was not published until 3rd of December 1918 when the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire presented bravery awards to both employees and

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the firefighters. Jessie was commended for her bravery in leading her girls to safety.

Just two weeks after the explosion the family received news that Jessie's brother, George Richard Walmsley, had been killed in action on 12th October 1917. According to the family, he was killed when an enemy shell landed next to him. No remains were found. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot memorial in France. He was only 20 years old when he died.

By now, Jessie was working as a nurse at the Moor Hospital, Lancaster. She was a keen sports woman who excelled at badminton, swimming, tennis and hockey. During her lunch she would cycle to watch the Lancaster ladies football team playing, the team she later joined. In December 1918, Dick Kerr's Preston Ladies played at Lancaster. He was impressed by the performances of three of the Lancaster players, Jessie being one, and invited all three to join the Preston factory team. The players were paid the sum of 10 shillings per game. Noted for being strong in defence, Jessie could score goals as well.



Figure 1: Dick Kerr's football team in the 1920s

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During the following two years she played in most of the historic games throughout the country and also played in the first women's international against France. This match was played at the Deepdale ground Preston in May 1920. November saw the return match in Paris in front of 22,000 spectators. The score was one all, up until the last 5 minutes when the English girls won a corner. The French supporters objected to this and invaded the pitch surrounding their team. The English team, of course, did the same. Mayhem ensued and the gendarmerie were called in to clear the pitch. The referee then abandoned the game. The team also played in Scotland, Ireland, Canada and the USA.

Hanging up her boots in 1922, Jessie returned to mental health nursing, this time at Whittingham Hospital, near Preston. In 1930, she moved to Surrey to join the West Park Mental Hospital where she later became a matron.

Jessie died of bronchial pneumonia in 1935, at the young age of forty. Her brother Walter paid to have her body returned to Warton and she is interred here at St Oswald's. Many of her friends and team mates attended her funeral remembering the good times they shared together. Jessie had been a big part of the success of Dick Kerr's Ladies. St Oswald's was full as was the churchyard. Her grave was covered from top to bottom with floral tributes from friends at Whittingham Hospital; Femmina Sports Club Paris; and Dick Kerr's Ladies Football Team.

Coincidentally, the family gravestone was cleaned a few years ago. The work was carried out by Tony Holmes, our monumental mason. His workshop is on the White Lund Estate, perhaps even on the spot where Jessie was working when the explosion took place.



Figure 2; The Walmsley memorial stone

Note

Should anybody wish to visit Jessie Walmsley's grave, please contact me as Heritage Warden, via St Oswald's Church, Warton.

DISCOVERING MY GRANDFATHER'S LEGACY IN SILVERDALE

Bernard Halford,

I am the grandson of Police Officer William Henry Halford, who served in Silverdale in the early 1900s. The 1911 Census records him as the Police Officer for Silverdale, but newspaper reports, as will be seen, place him in Silverdale from 1908. As a child, I spent many happy days exploring the village and visiting the former Police House on Emesgate Lane, close to the Church. Decades later, while living in Germany, I pinpointed that very house and learned there was once a second Police House on Cove Road near Townsfield, although I never had the chance to visit it.

Notable Court Cases from Local Newspapers

My grandfather's name appears in several reports in the Lancaster Standard and Northern Counties Advertiser. These snippets bring to life the everyday challenges he faced on patrol (to protect anonymity, initials only have been used):

June 5, 1908 L B of Silverdale pleaded not guilty to keeping an unlicensed fox terrier puppy. PC Halford accepted her explanation and allowed her to pay only the court costs.

In the same issue (1908) Poultry dealer G J was summoned for riding a bicycle without a light on May 20. PC Halford proved the case and G J was fined ten shillings plus costs, or 14 days' imprisonment.

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July 16, 1908 T H of Silverdale was summoned for riding a bicycle without a light on at 11.30 pm. PC Halford shouted for him to stop, which he failed to do so. The defendant claimed that he did not know it was a constable that had called to him and thought some boys were shouting at him and therefore took no notice. He was fined 2 Shillings and costs.

February, 26 1909 Mr B, farmer of Silverdale was summoned for allowing four cattle to stray onto the highway. PC Halford confirmed he had found the cattle roaming down Church Road at 1.30 am. He had previously reported to Mr B about a defective stile which enabled the cattle to leave the field. Mr B in his defence said he had put a temporary hurdle and piping up, but as his field was also a public right of way, the public had moved it or left gates open. Mr Bt who is Mr B's landlord, confirmed that he had often seen the gate being left open. Supt Barnett stated there had been many complaints of cattle getting into people's gardens. Mr B was fined 6d in respect of each animal.

March 5, 1909 W E R was charged with stealing a brass-plated monogram, the property of Mr W L of a Cottage [on] Church Road, Silverdale, who was employing Mr R as a cab driver. The case suggests that during December 1908, Mr L gave Mr R the monogram, although Mr L appears not to have any recollection of this. PC Halford states that Mr R stated that 'I took it'. It then explained that Mr R comes from a very respectable family. The case against Mr R was dismissed.

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March 26, 1909 J G, cycle repairer pleaded guilty for being drunk and disorderly in Silverdale at 8.30 pm on Sunday March 14. PC Halford proved the case. The defendant expressed his sorrow to the bench, he was fined 5 Shillings or 14 days hard labour.

February 28, 1911 It wasn't just criminals that my grandfather had to deal with, like modern police, they attend fatal accidents. The report from the coroner about a carriage crash in Silverdale, is reported. Mr W S (69) had moved to Arnside last August, in the hope that his recent illness which had resulted in his retirement would improve. The move had indeed improved his health significantly and he had therefore had arranged for his former property in Ilkley to be sold. His normal carriage man was at the old property on the day of the fatal accident. He was being transported by carriage from Silverdale back to Arnside, when Mr S asked the driver J E to pull the hood up over the carriage due to the onset of rain. While clipping the hood up, the sound of the metal startled the horses. They both started in a trot and then a gallop, Mr E was not able to grab the reins quickly enough and ran after the horses. As they turned a corner, Mr S was thrown from the carriage. Mr E found him on the side of the road with blood from his nose and mouth, he died a few minutes later. The horses were eventually stopped some 3.5 miles further down the road, the carriage totally smashed. The coroner recommended to the Jury that this was an accidental death and the Jury agreed.

May 5, 1911 J W of Silverdale was charged with drunkenness on Silverdale Road. PC Halford found him helplessly drunk, escorted him home, and subsequently reported him. W was fined five shillings plus costs or faced seven days of hard labour.

A Career Spanning Nearly Three Decades

By the time he retired in May 1926, William Henry Halford had risen to the rank of Police Sergeant serving Haslingden. The Haslingden Gazette commemorated his career with an insightful retrospective:

- He was a native of Stratford-upon-Avon and descended maternally from John West, a Lord Mayor of London six generations earlier.
- Before joining the Lancashire Police, he spent four and a half years as an under-gardener at Cuerden Hall near Preston, an estate once owned by Richard Charnock until 1521.
- He dedicated more than twenty-five years to the police force and upon retirement was honoured with a case of cutlery.
- After stepping down, he settled in Leyland.

Lessons in Family History Research

These newspaper clippings revealed connections and career details I never before knew: links to civic leadership; early horticultural work; and the minor infractions of village life. They remind me that newspapers are treasure troves for anyone tracing their own roots. Beyond court reports, historic papers preserve:

- Business advertisements
- Marriage and birth announcements
- Community events and local governance

Exploring local archives and online newspaper repositories can unearth vibrant stories about ancestors. Whether you uncover a

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surprising lineage, a forgotten career, or the day-to-day challenges they faced: these discoveries enrich your understanding of family heritage and the world one's forbears inhabited.

INGRAM DOBSON
1890-1915

Chris Jenkins

I was visiting Silverdale on 10 November 2024 and attended the Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial. I noted after the service that on the memorial, among the fallen, were the names of soldiers serving with the Canadian and New Zealander forces. I was curious. I decided to find out about Ingram Dobson and so I viewed the website of the Canadian Great War Project and found he was in the 31st Battalion Alberta Regiment,

I then searched [Findagrave.com](https://findagrave.com), and discovered an intriguing reference to the Exshaw murder, so I researched the Calgary Herald, and found that the copy published on 22 December 1915 recorded Dobson's death and also that for four years he had been employed by the Canada cement works in Exshaw, Alberta. It also said that he had been born in Silverdale, Lancashire, which is why his name appears among the fallen, on Silverdale's cenotaph. When war was declared, Dobson immediately signed up. The following line read:

‘[Ingram Dobson's] name came in great prominence at the time of the Exshaw murder case, as he single-handed, captured Manelik, one of the thugs’.

This got me digging about the murder, by reading the Calgary Herald reports including the subsequent trial. Jack Wilson, the paymaster of the Exshaw cement works was murdered in May 1914 by three Russians Max Manelik, Joe Smith and Afancy Sokoloff.

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The trial took place in June 1914, the newspaper report on 18 June 1914 includes his Lordship Mr Justice Walsh's comments about the capture of the perpetrators. In addition to mentioning the part the Royal Canadian Mounted Police played, there is a specific reference to Dobson's part in the capture of Manelik.

‘I have a great deal of admiration for Dobson and Murby, the civilians who captured Manelik. Perhaps Dobson went a little too far in shooting Manelik but no one intends to prosecute him and his is an offence against the law which the crown and the court are willing to overlook.’

Smith and Sokoloff were sentenced to death and were hanged in August 1914, Manelik's sentence were commuted from death to life imprisonment.

Ingram Dobson died while serving in France. His death was caused by being accidentally shot in the thigh by a fellow soldier whilst cleaning his weapon. Dobson is buried at Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension in France.

REPORTS OF EVENING MEETINGS
Gill Ribbons, Christine Boydell

26th March 2025: Cromwell's Northern Journey

Nick Burton

A well-filled Gaskell Hall welcomed Nick who began by showing a map of the route Cromwell and his New Model Army of professional soldiers took to meet the Duke of Hamilton's Royalist and Scottish Army which had invaded England in support of King Charles I. Cromwell joined John Lambert who had been holding Parliament's position in the North. Nick went into great detail of the route taken which was dictated by the landscape at that time and by existing bridges (key to crossing rivers) and cart tracks, as there were very few useable roads at that time. The army went via Ilkley-Skipton-Gisburn-Stonyhurst-Preston. Some key locations once they neared Preston being: the River Ribble, Ribble Bridge was a crucial crossing point; Darwen Bridge, crossing the River Darwen and Winwick, the site of a major rearguard action and significant fighting.

The Harris Museum in Preston has paintings and artefacts which have been recovered, including the skeletons of horses, and armour. This battle was the death blow of Royalism as so many were killed and the armies scattered to the North and South.

It is possible to walk the route taken by the army, which Nick had done and he illustrated his talk with photos from the sites as they look now. There were lots of questions afterwards from an engaged and enthusiastic audience.

**30th April 2025: The Leeds Children's Holiday Camp,
Silverdale – Stephanie Davies**

Stephanie Davies, a curator from Leeds Museums and Galleries, provided a fascinating talk about the Leeds Children's Holiday Camp in Silverdale. Stephanie began by showing a rather well-worn film of girls on holiday at the Camp in the 1970s. The film showed the children feeding chickens and petting rabbits, swimming, eating dinner and walking crocodile-style from the Camp to the Methodist Church.

The Leeds Children's Charity was founded in 1904 by Helen Currer Briggs, Miss M E Richardson, and others. Helen Currer Briggs was married to Arthur Currer Briggs JP and the couple were Lady Mayoress and Lord Mayor of Leeds in 1903/1904. They regularly visited the northwest as they had a beautiful house on Windermere called Broadleys, designed by the Arts and Crafts architect CFA Voysey. The charity was originally named 'The Leeds Poor Children's Holiday Camp Association' and they accepted applications from Leeds families with incomes of less than £1 per week. Stephanie explained that the children who were eligible to have a holiday had to have a bath and a medical examination before they travelled. They were given a uniform and clogs. They were also weighed, as one of the primary functions of the holidays was to feed up the children, sending them home healthier than when they arrived. The holidays continued during the First World War when children from Leeds were joined by Belgian refugee children.

The charity had several locations before it finally settled on a site on the coast to the north of Silverdale village, which was purchased from the Dallam Estate. A specially designed

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building was constructed and was completed in 1952 to accommodate 60 children. A swimming pool was added in 1960.

Stephanie completed her talk by providing some examples of oral history accounts. It was clear that the visitors from Leeds loved coming to Silverdale. She also mentioned that the museum at Lotherton Hall in Leeds was showing an exhibition of the Silverdale Leeds Children's Holiday Camp until September, when it would transfer to Leeds City Museum. She thanked Silverdale resident Ruth Redman for her help on the project.

25th September 2025: The Tides of Morecambe Bay and the Kent Estuary – Mike Warren

There were over a hundred people present for this talk by Mike, from the Arnside and Silverdale National Landscape. He began with the Science behind what causes the tides and why there are high tides – tides are the interaction between the Sea, the Moon, the Sun and the Earth's rotation. Morecambe Bay has a large tidal range with spring tides reaching up to 10.5 meters. There is also the factor of Atlantic flow, which also affects the Bristol channel giving the big tides and bore. Arnside also has a bore which is extremely fast moving.

Mike also mentioned people crossing the sands, which historically (before trains etc.) was significantly easier than trying to navigate the salt marshes surrounding the bay. There was, and still is, an official Guide to the Sands, which the Duchy of Lancaster took responsibility for after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, during the reign of Henry VIII. The current Guide is Michael Wilson who took over from Cedric Robinson; generally, crossings are now made for charity.

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Mike had many interesting photos and videos of the bores, floods and the changing routes of the rivers which flow into the bay being the: Kent, Keer, Leven, Lune, Wyre, Bela (a tributary of the Kent) and Duddon. Mike discussed the reasons that the channels created have been moving very significantly recently, making striking changes to the shoreline.

There were many questions and anecdotes from an engaged and interested audience.

29th October 2025: Harriet Martineau – Terry Bond

Terry Bond presented a talk about an extraordinary woman, who, against all the odds, became a successful writer, social theorist, abolitionist and translator. Unusually for a woman at the time, Harriet Martineau made a living from her writing and should be better known. Terry described how he had come across Martineau when researching tourism in the Lake District, specifically her 1855 book Complete Guide to the English Lakes.

Martineau was born in Norwich in 1902; she was the sixth of eight children. Her father Thomas, was a textile manufacturer and her mother, Elizabeth was the daughter of a sugar refiner. As was customary at the time, the Martineau daughters were initially educated at home. But at fifteen Harriet was sent to her aunt and uncle in Bristol who ran a school. By the age of eighteen she had become profoundly deaf and was often unwell. When the family business failed and her father died, Harriet was forced to earn a living, first through needlework but increasingly through writing.

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Terry outlined how her first paid pieces were for the Monthly Repository; she had a particular talent for communicating complicated theories and ideas in a clear and understandable way. She moved to London in 1832 and her first book was published: *Illustrations of Political Economy* in which she explained free-market ideas. At this time, she developed a strong anti-slavery conviction and travelled to the USA where she lectured, often experiencing considerable hostility to her ideas.

Martineau continued to suffer ill health, but on the advice of friends she tried mesmerism which seemed to provide a cure. In 1845 she moved to Ambleside where she designed and had a house built, The Knoll. Martineau walked the Lake District fells and consequently wrote her *Complete Guide to the English Lakes*, which included itineraries, hints for transportation and the best clothing to wear. During her time in Ambleside, she farmed, had 13 houses built and set up a building society. Martineau continued her social reform work including supporting the Married Women's Property Bill. She corresponded with many political, literary and social reformers throughout her life. She knew Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell and Florence Nightingale.

To end this fascinating talk, Terry noted the plans for a major exhibition on Martineau in Ambleside next year to mark the 150th anniversary of this remarkable woman's death.

NOTES AND QUERIES

A wall near Bank House Farm, Silverdale

There are three of these small alcoves in this wall. What were they used for? Does anyone have any ideas?



**NEW RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES:
LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE
ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
and
LANCASHIRE COUNTY ARCHIVES**

Nina Gaubert

Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society,

The society promotes the study of the history and archaeology of the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire. There is a wealth of interesting articles, covering topics such as Bronze Age child cremation at Lytham; the architectural brain behind Port Sunlight and a new look at Lindow Man, forty years after the discovery of the extraordinary 'bog body'.

As a society, they arrange regular talks via Zoom covering diverse and fascinating subjects and organise trips to places of local historical and archaeological interest. They already have a wide-ranging programme, touching on family history, rebellion, folklore, literary giants, architecture, museums and archives - something for everyone. This programme is available on the Society's website www.landcas.org.uk

The membership fee for individuals is £25. Concessions for students are available.

Lancashire County Archives

Our local County archives in Preston have a wealth of information available. The extent of the collection can be found on their website <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office/our-collections/> They have

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been updating the Lancashire Catalogue affectionally shortened to Lancat, launched in early 2025. It allows more structured searching and strings of words can be used in order to home into the records more quickly. They have also recognised that some items are described in different ways. A good example are the terms, 'work house' or 'poor house'; and also that sometimes such terms may be spelt as one word, 'workhouse', or 'poorhouse'. It will be no longer necessary to search all such terms separately as they have added useful features to enable one search.

They understand that people have in the past had to write the name of an item and then request it, and that sometimes this has caused transcription errors. You are now able to print the item, or list of items, you want to view or to email it to them to book a time slot for your research.

Lancat is another great asset for anyone wanting to do historical research on a wide range of topics.

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MOURHOLME LECTURE PROGRAMME
2025 – 2026

**Venue: The Gaskell Hall, Silverdale Meetings begin at
7.30 p.m. and generally finish by 9 p.m.**

17th December 2025:

Ice Houses and the International Trade in Ice

R David

An illustrated talk about the ice houses of North Lancs and Cumbria and the almost forgotten international trade in ice during the C19th. The talk also includes information about the experiment in 1980 when Levens Hall ice house was filled with ice for the first time in over 100 years.

28th January 2026:

Lancaster's Roman Fort

Dr Chris Tinmouth

This lecture will trace the history of Lancaster's Roman fort, from its earliest occupation in c.80 AD to its abandonment in the 4th-5th centuries AD. The four stages of the fort's reconstruction will be addressed and will be set within the wider historical context of the role of Lancaster's Roman Fort in the defence and rule of Roman Britain.

25th February 2026:

Carnforth Haematite Iron Works

Phil Baggley

A study of iron and steelmaking employed at Carnforth between 1866 and 1930. 65 years of innovation, process development, boom and bust.

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25th March 2026:

Gandhi's Northern Holiday

Nick Burton

The fascinating tale of Mohandas Gandhi's weekend 'up North' in September 1931, during which he visited Lancashire and the West Riding and stayed at the Quaker guest house at the invitation of a Darwen mill owner.

29th April 2026:

The local finds of a metal detectorist

Nigel Law

An illustrated talk about the remarkable finds made in this locality. The finds cover a period of over two millennia, and how what is unearthed often leads to rich and fascinating research.

This will be preceded by a short AGM.

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