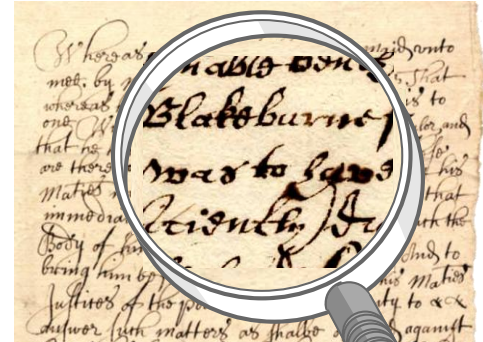


# News from the Archives

Newsletter of Lancashire Archives



## *Time for tea?*

We are starting to look at different options for providing refreshments in our tea room. At the moment it costs Lancashire Archives about £1500 each year to provide the hot drink facility for our users. The present cost of 60p per drink covers the cost of cups and ingredients but not the machine rental which is due for renewal this autumn. If we decide to keep the machine we will have to charge at least £1 per drink. Would you pay this? If not, what would you prefer us to provide?

Please let me know what you think.

**Jacque Crosby, Archive Services Manager**

## *Goals & achievements*

As part of our service planning process we were asked this year to identify what helped us to achieve our goals. We came up with the following list:

- we all believe what we do is important
- we are passionate about Lancashire's archive collections and want to share them

- we share the same ambition: to be (and to be seen to be) one of the best archive services in the country; and we put archives and high quality service at the heart of everything we do
- we have the support of our customers, of the owners of our archive collections, of our Friends organisation and of politicians

Your support is invaluable to the staff at Lancashire Archives and we do listen to your comments on our service - and act upon them. The staff are a great team and I am very proud of them, their hard work and commitment and their achievements.

Some of the things they did this year which have made a difference include:

- adding 150,000 more entries to our online catalogue, LANCAT
- enabling access to 1,214,956 archive images online through Ancestry
- accepting 230 new accessions of archives
- answering 6727 enquiries by email, post or phone

- helping 6494 people in searchroom to find the information they need
- producing 23,835 documents on demand
- making 79 tithe schedules available for research by the Lancashire Place Name Society and other users
- hosting events and group visits which 4025 people attended
- celebrating 25 years of volunteering at Lancashire Archives with a big party
- providing a programme of Tuesday evening talks

Our detailed plans and policies are available in a white binder in the searchroom – do take a look.

**Jacque Crosby, Archive Services Manager**

## ***Searchroom News***

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new searchroom supervisor, Hina Gohil, who joined us in March. We are happy to have her aboard.

We are also thrilled to have a decent pencil sharpener at last – if you are suffering a blunt trauma in the searchroom, just hand the offender over to us and we will make a point of it!

## ***Chorley Workhouse Minute Book, 1800-1818 (DDX 985/acc 11468)***

Details of the content of the Chorley Workhouse minute book have now been added to Lancashire Archives' online catalogue LANCAT.

The book contains a record of the monthly meetings held in respect of applications for

relief in the Parish of Chorley. There was a requirement for the Church Wardens – the Overseers of the Poor – to meet once a month and either to set the applicants to work or to relieve if appropriate.

The details of the applicants, although limited in scope, provide some interesting information. At the very least we have an insight into the extent of the numbers seeking relief, their names and sex and the responses of the Overseers. Taking into account an unexplained gap in the records from 5 June 1811 to 10 April 1816 there are 1,696 entries now accessible on line. A very small number of these relate to members of the Committee or individuals being paid for their services.

The range of responses to the applications included monetary assistance, provision of clothing and rent, admission to the workhouse and refusal of the application.

The responses include a number of, what we might term 'human interest', stories including the exercise of a social welfare function.

- The son of Thomas Partington – 'he is lame and will be sent to the Whitworth doctor'.
- The wife of John Grundy – 'allowed nourishment when she is confined'.
- Richard Foster – 'referral to the Liverpool Infirmary, to be taken into the lunatic asylum'.
- James Thompson – 'allowed 1s 6d per week and a belt for his rupture'.
- Thomas Whittle's daughter – 'taken to the saltwater and to be allowed a guinea for expenses'.

However harsher measures could be employed if the applicant was poor through 'rioting, idleness or drunkenness'. Although it was not recorded which of the three categories applied to him, Richard

Pilkington was sent to the House of Correction for hard labour but, at the same meeting, his family were allowed 2s per week.

Others were afforded the means to work, trained in work skills or 'put to work'.

- Betty Halliwell – 'learn to weave at the workhouse, free of expence (sic)'.
- Ellen Ormerod – 'pair of looms bought for her'.
- Margaret Kershaw – 'to be bound an apprentice and have clothing bought'.
- James and John Dickinson 'to be taken out to the roads'.
- Intriguingly an 'old fiddle' was provided for Henry Knowles, perhaps to enable him to ply his trade.

It was not unknown for animals to be provided at the parish expense: Nancy Ainscow 'had an ass lent to her by the Town' and, similarly, George Milton was given £1 to purchase an ass.

However Henry Higson had his application for relief turned down and his dog was ordered to be destroyed. Similarly in the case of John Green, a shoemaker, 'his dog was to be hanged', although he was given 5s for leather to make shoes.

The parish would also provide the funds to remove individuals – presumably to the place of their own original settlement.

- Jane Sanderson – 'admit to workhouse or 20s to carry her to Whitehaven'.
- Wife and children of Richard Vaughn – 'allowed £2 and their expenses paid at Dublin Packet in Liverpool'.
- Thomas Brownlow and family – 'removal to Rivington'.

- Betty Williams, a deserted wife from Llandundag, South Wales – 'relief and resettlement to Wales'.

On only a few occasions was a home address provided. This was also the case with regard to family size, ages and number of children. It is thus problematic to assess the numbers of older people who are being assisted in comparison to families of the parish. The only period when families and children, along with occupation, was recorded in detail was from March 1817 to June 1817.

Occasionally the administration of the workhouse would also be discussed: on 7 January 1802 it was noted that John Waddington, governor of the workhouse, and his wife were dismissed following an inspection of the accounts and, at the same meeting, Robert Miller of Chorley and his wife were appointed as the new governor and governess of the workhouse. However, the following week, this decision was overturned and Lawrence Ashurst and his wife were appointed to be in charge. On 16 July 1807 and 17 November 1808 the future of the workhouse was discussed and discontinuation was considered as an option, although this was not followed through.

As well as providing an insight into the workings of the Poor Law before its reform in 1834 these records should also prove useful for those researching family history details in the early 1800s in Chorley.

### **Bernard Melling**

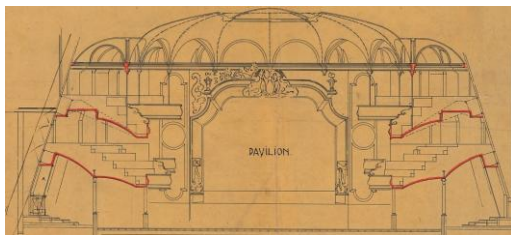
As a rider to this splendid article, thanks must go to Bernard and Janet Melling for their meticulous work in compiling the index to this book. It is wonderful that the volume has survived at all but to have it indexed is a bonus. We hope that many of our family historians from the Chorley area will find it useful. Thank you Janet and Bernard!

## Collections

Each month we bring you the highlights of this month's new acquisitions. In March we processed 18 new deposits of documents, 17 of which were selected for permanent preservation.

### Morecambe Tower plans (Ref: DDX 3025)

Not many people know that Morecambe, like Blackpool, used to have a tower. If completed, the tower would have been a unique design, consisting of a cone-shaped tower ascended by a spiral tramway. Unfortunately the Morecambe Tower Company never had the funds required to complete the building, and those parts of the tower which had been built were taken apart during the First World War so that the metal could be used for munitions. The pavilion itself remained as a cinema until the early 1960s.



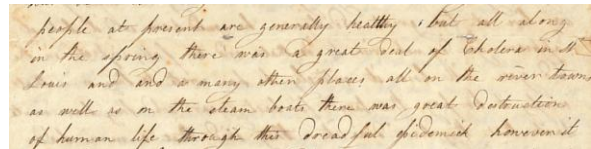
### Poulton le Fylde Petty Sessions Court (Ref: DDX 3034)

Very few petty sessions records survive for the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, which makes this volume, found in the Golden Ball pub which used to hold petty court sessions, such a fantastic find. The minutes record numerous bastardy cases, as well as instances of assault, drunkenness and even smuggling at Fleetwood. The cases are fully indexed in our catalogue.

### Letter of James and Ann Taylor (Ref: DDX 3035)

James and Ann Taylor were married at Penwortham St Mary in 1836, but would move to Jacksonville Illinois shortly afterwards to start a new life for their family. Though we have only one letter, it describes

in great detail their life in America, with information about their crops, health worries, the gold rush which is drawing people to California and personal circumstances such as the recent death of Ann's father.



**We will be closed on the following bank holidays: Monday 5 May and Monday 26 May 2014**

**Our next Saturday opening is 10 May 2014**

## Don't miss...

**Tuesday 13 May, 6.30-7.30pm**

**Mark Walmsley, Archive Conservation Manager**

**The Wolfen Triptych: Using Archives as Inspiration for Visual Art**

This month Mark Walmsley will describe how Lancashire's archives have inspired his work as a visual artist; using recipes and information found in historic records to help produce his uniquely beautiful works of art.

## Be Creative

As part of Preston Arts Festival 2014, Lancashire Archives will be working with writer Deborah Morgan and the Preston Arts Association to run workshops using archives relating to the First World War as inspiration to create new pieces of written or visual artwork. The first workshop will be on **10 May 2014 between 1pm and 3pm**. The project will culminate with an evening of readings and exhibitions as part of the festival on Tue 14 October. For further details or to book a place please contact Vicci McCann on (01772) 533033 or email: [vicci.mccann@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:vicci.mccann@lancashire.gov.uk).

**ANY  
COMMENTS?**

*If you have any comments on, or suggestions for this newsletter please send them to: Vicci McCann, News from the Archives, Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane, Preston, PR1 2RE. Telephone: 01772 533039. Email: [vicci.mccann@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:vicci.mccann@lancashire.gov.uk)*