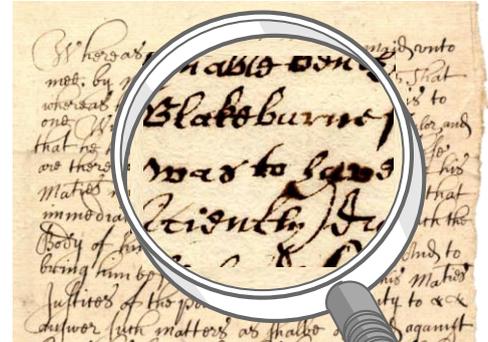


# News from the Archives

Newsletter of Lancashire Archives



## Summertime

On a hot summer day Lancashire Archives' searchroom provides welcome relief from the heat outside; on a wet day, when gardening and walking are not a pleasant prospect, it provides shelter from the rain. Whatever the weather, we will be open throughout the summer. Do come and spend some time with us!

At the end of last year I promoted two new volunteer projects – one on behalf of the Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society - to index the Lancashire crew lists; the other - on behalf of the Lancashire Place Name Survey - to extract historic forms of placenames from our archive catalogues. Both projects are making good progress but additional volunteers are always welcome. More than 25,000 names have been indexed by the crew list volunteers while the place name volunteers have completed 7 catalogues – some 1100 placenames.

The crew list volunteers meet each Tuesday at Lancashire Archives between 9.00am and 4.00pm while the Placename volunteers come and work as and when they can.

You can read more about the LPNS project elsewhere in the newsletter.

If you'd like to help either project please get in touch with me

**Jacquie Crosby**  
Archives Manager  
Email: [Jacquie.crosby@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Jacquie.crosby@lancashire.gov.uk)

## ARA Registration Scheme

Many Congratulations to Keri Nicholson on becoming a registered member of the Archives and Records Association. Registration involves submitting a professional portfolio which shows learning and development in 12 areas and over at least 3 years since qualification. It is a very rigorous process and Keri has done especially well to complete it so quickly.

## New books

We no longer sell publications at Lancashire Archives and the display shelves are now used for new books and periodicals which have been added to the Lancashire Printed Collection. In addition to the items on display we have just purchased the 4-volume ***Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland*** – a wonderful resource for family historians (and for the crew list volunteers). It includes 45,000 surnames and gives their frequency; main GB location; derivation and early references of the name. We have also purchased the latest edition of ***Crockfords Clerical Directory*** which is extremely useful when we are unable to read clergy signatures!

## The Place-names of Lancashire



In 1922 Eilert Ekwall published *The place-names of Lancashire* and The English Place-Name Society is hoping to produce a new work to celebrate the centenary of his seminal volume. Although much of Ekwall's work has stood the test of time, there

has been new thinking about the origin of some groups of names and a better understanding of the landscape-specific nuances of name-elements.

This new thinking needs to be applied to Ekwall's corpus of name spellings. New theories need to be based on sound evidence and for place-names that means 'excerpting' [extracting] name-forms from the earliest documents that we can find, so that philologist and editor of the new work, Professor John Insley can investigate their derivation.

This is where the Lancashire Place Name Survey (LPNS) and the volunteers come in. The LPNS was established in 2000 to support this project and has done a huge amount of significant work in the last 17 years. The LPNS oversees the excerpting project. Not only are we looking for volunteers who can work on catalogues in the searchroom at Lancashire Archives but also for people who are able and willing to work in Manchester and in Lancaster University Library.

There is no need to commit to a regular day or time – just to being part of the project. As you will be working from catalogues and calendars there is no need for palaeography skills – just accuracy and the ability to record the information on an EXCEL spreadsheet.

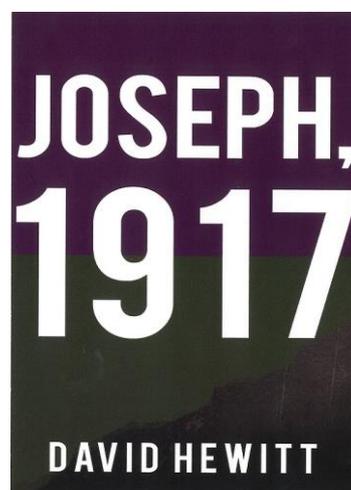
If you are interested in helping please get in touch with the LPNS Volunteer Co-ordinator, Jacquie Crosby.

[jacquie.crosby@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:jacquie.crosby@lancashire.gov.uk)

## Joseph, 1917

A book by David Hewitt, lawyer and writer.

The book tells a true but unusual story. It is about a man from the Fylde who got caught up in the First World War, but it isn't just a soldier's tale. It is about his family and home and about what happened to him when he left them behind.



Joseph Blackburn, born in 1886, only fought because a military tribunal forced him to. The tribunal sat in London, many miles from Joseph's home, and its decision was so outrageous that his own local tribunal went on strike.

*Joseph, 1917* is also about what happened to a man and a community in a terrible time. It draws on fascinating legal records and newspaper reports.

David Hewitt will be visiting Lancashire Archives to give a talk about the story behind the book in the autumn. Look out for further details in our next programme of talks and events. For more information about the book contact:

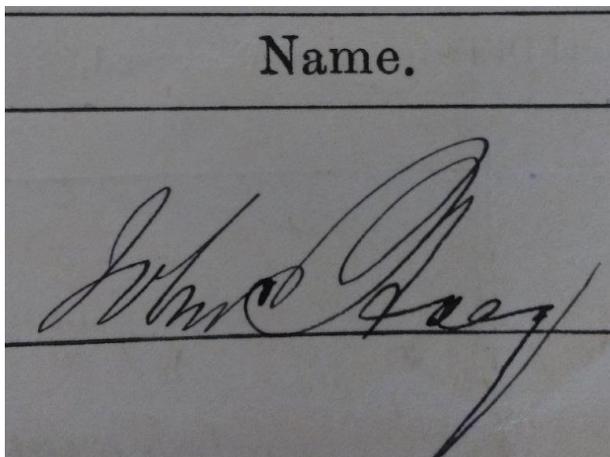
Joseph1971@btinternet.com

## ***Could you be a crew list volunteer?***

Yes; his first name is definitely John; but what is his surname?

'It's too curly', said one volunteer, and even the experts were stumped. But we have identified it using other evidence in the document. Can you read it?

Answer next month.



## ***Heritage Open Day***

**Saturday 9 September**

Lancashire Archives will be one of the many places across England you can go behind the scenes in as part of the Heritage Open Days heritage festival. Look inside one of the strongrooms at some archive treasures from 900 years of Lancashire's history and find out how they are being kept safe for future generations. Watch one of our conservators give a demonstration of how documents are repaired when they come to us in a damaged condition and enjoy a special exhibition of architectural drawings of some of Preston's most important buildings – from Miller Arcade to the Bus Station. Café Archive will also be open, serving tea and homemade cakes.

**Open 10-4 with tours at 11.00, 12.00, 13.30, & 14.30**



[www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

## ***Blackburn Workhouse***

The volunteers continue to work on indexing the Workhouse registers (HRBQ/1). It is a lot of work and I am very grateful for their efforts as are all the Committee! So far they have indexed 2487 entries but as yet none are available online.

If you are interested in being involved in the project please get in touch as there is plenty to do! I can be contacted via the web page or at [annawatson55@virginmedia.com](mailto:annawatson55@virginmedia.com)

**Anna Watson**

## ***More Tales from the Lancaster and Morecambe Coroner***

Our volunteers are making great progress repackaging and updating information on the Lancaster and Morecambe Coroner's inquests, 1896-1934 (DDHD/CR). We are now up to 1917 and will be covering many of the inquests used in the Friends of Lancashire Archives *Time & Tide* creative writing project.

It was while giving a talk about the uses of coroners' records for family history research recently, that I remembered just how useful local newspapers can be. Unlike years ago however, when you had to visit a local studies library, many of the newspapers are now online and accessible via our Digital Library using the 'British Library Newspapers Online' link. This came in very useful when researching further details of the very tragic death of Reginald Field Riley aged 7, who was murdered in July 1908.

On the 8 July 1908, Reginald had returned from Morecambe County School to find both his mother and father at home. His mother had been unwell so he had asked her how she was feeling, she replied that she was better, gave him a kiss and sent him out to play. It was Reginald's habit to go over to a nearby playing field to collect wild flowers for his mother. However, on this particular day he was found under a hedge just half an hour after he had left the house. He had been stabbed through the back of the neck with a sharp implement 'by a person or persons unknown'. The verdict given was murder, however no evidence had been left or suspicious characters seen in the vicinity.

When searching newspapers online a couple of articles from various newspapers posited the idea that perhaps the same killer

had struck three other times, but in different areas of the country. It seems that three other children, one in London, Liverpool and Nottingham, all the same age and of similar build – although the other three were girls – had been murdered in similar circumstances, within weeks of each other and without any evidence.

Whether anything was eventually discovered is not recorded in the inquest file or the newspapers. Perhaps if in 1908 the police had had access to modern forensic scientific methods they may have been able to catch the killer. Sadly it remains a mystery.

## ***Lancashire Adult Learning***

### **Free Family and Local History Taster at Lancashire Archives**

**Wed 2 August, 1.30pm-4pm**

On this course, you will learn how to research your family and local history and trace your ancestors using websites and other genealogy resources.

You will learn about the process of tracing your family or local history, the various sources of information and how to access these where possible. You will form a good foundation from which to develop your research skills.

To book your place on the course or for more information, please speak to the LAL reception staff or call 0300 123 6703.

**Our next Saturday opening is August 12 and our next Tuesday evening opening is August 8 until 7pm.**

**ANY  
COMMENTS?**

*Write to: The Editor, News from the Archives, Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane, Preston, PR1 2RE. Telephone: 01772 533039. Email: [record.office@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:record.office@lancashire.gov.uk)*