



Lancaster Archaeological and Historical Society

<https://lahs.archaeologyuk.org>

Research Group Newsletter

No. 5: May 2021

Welcome to the Research Group e-newsletter

At last! The Lancashire Archive and other regional offices re-opened in mid-April, with the exception of Liverpool, which remains closed. Lancaster Central Library, Morecambe and Heysham libraries are also open now although the Lancaster City, Cottage and Maritime Museums remain closed. Full details are provided below.

We now have ten members in the Research Group and are seeking to increase this to twelve. If you would like to join the Research Group or contribute to the e-newsletter, contact details are provided at the end of the e-newsletter.

By 21 June 2021 the government are planning to have reviewed all Covid restrictions which means that societies and educational institutions might be able to resume their programmes of public meetings, talks and lectures. It will be interesting to see how many organisations revert to public meetings immediately or wait until there is clear evidence

how effective the Covid vaccine programme has been in restoring people's confidence to attend face-to-face meetings, despite precautionary safeguards still being in place.

Online meetings have become more popular as the lockdown progressed and the LAHS 25 March talk by Dr Ian Saunders "*Getting About: a history of roads around Lancaster*" attracted the highest number of participants ever at 78 – considerably more than previous meetings - and resulted in an increase in Society membership. Perhaps the answer is a mix of both: time will tell.

In addition, the LAHS Committee over the last year has issued a bumper edition of *Contrebis*, updated the website and kept members informed of online information and events with regular email announcements. The only casualty has been the lack of excursions but that is likely to change too in the near future.

NEWS UPDATE

REGIONAL ARCHIVE SERVICES UPDATE

Archive services update (information is correct as of 05/05/2021)

Cumbria Archive service:

All archive sites re-opened on Wednesday 14th April. Opening hours are currently every Wednesday to Friday 9:30am-1pm, and all visits must be pre-booked by emailing the location you wish to visit. All

items must be pre-ordered in advance. Their enhanced remote enquiry service is still available to those unable to visit in person. Further details regarding booking a visit, opening times, the enhanced enquiry service and the latest news about Cumbria Archives are at this link:

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/archives/whatsnew/default.asp>

Lancashire Archives:

Lancashire Archives re-opened on Tuesday 13th April. The opening hours are Tuesday to Friday 9:30am-12:30pm; 1:30pm-4:30pm. The archives will also be open on the second Saturday of each month 10:30am-12:30pm; 1:30pm-3:30pm from Saturday 8th May. All visits and archive material must be pre-booked in advance of visiting. A full copying and enquiry service is available for those unable to visit in person. The latest news about Lancashire Archives can be found at this link: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/coronavirus/our-services/archives/furtherinformation>

Cheshire Archives and Local Studies:

From Tuesday 13th April they re-opened on an appointment-only basis on Tuesdays and Fridays 10am-12:30pm; 1:30pm-4pm. All visits and archive material must be pre-booked. A copying and research service is available for those wishing not to travel to the record office. Further details on this and the procedures for visiting the archives service are at this link: <https://www.cheshirearchives.org.uk/visiting-us/visiting-us.aspx>

Manchester Archives: - various opening hours between Monday and Saturday. For the latest information see: www.archivesplus.org or email: info@archivesplus.org

Liverpool Record Office: – the website currently says the archive service is closed. I would advise it would be best to email them before planning a visit: <https://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/archives-family-history/>

Derbyshire Record Office: – currently open Tuesday Friday, and occasional Saturdays, all on an appointment-only basis. Further details can be found here: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/record-office/visiting-us/visiting-the-derbyshire-record-office.aspx> or by email: record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk

The New Archives Card

The new Archives Card was recently launched and replaced the previous CARN scheme. Users visiting most archives in the UK (including Lancashire, Cumbria and Cheshire Record Offices) will need this card to access archival material. You can begin registration at the following link and need to visit a

participating archive within three months to complete the registration, bringing also two forms of ID with you:

https://www.archivescard.com/ARAHUB/About/Card_Guidelines.aspx The Archives Card is free of charge and valid for five years.

Darren N. Webster, Archivist

Lancashire Libraries: Lancaster Central Library, Morecambe and Heysham opening hours (from 14 April 2021)

Lancaster:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday – 9am-1pm; 2pm-5pm

Wednesday – 9am-1pm; 2pm-7pm

Morecambe:

Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday – 9am-1pm; 2pm-5pm

Tuesday -1pm-7pm

Wednesday - 9am-1pm

Heysham:

Monday, Tuesday, Friday - 9am-1pm; 2pm-5pm

Wednesday, Saturday – 9am-1pm

Thursday – 9am-1pm; 2pm-7pm

All libraries are closed on Sundays, bank and public holidays

For more information visit:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/libraries/find-a-library>

Michael Haslam

RESEARCH GROUP WEBPAGE

The Research Group has its own webpage on the Society's website at <https://lahs.archaeologyuk.org>

The LAHS website has recently been updated to include the addition of our e-newsletters, Issues 1 to 4.

MEMBERS' RESEARCH PROJECTS

Keith Walton shares his boyhood memories of “the Street that Disappeared” in Lancaster

The street that disappeared is St Nicholas Street, where I lived from 1948 to 1960. It led down from Horseshoe Corner, at the junction of Penny Street (the Roman road through the town) and, Market Street to Stonewell. The original horseshoe was said to have been cast adrift by John of Gaunt's horse when he visited on being made Duke of Lancaster in 1362. In fact he never came to the town, and it is

more likely to be an emblem of a horse fair held on this important north-south road.¹

The medieval town of Lancaster had much the same street pattern as that recorded in plans of the eighteenth century.² Then, as now, one of the principal thoroughfares was Market-gate or Market street, extending from the conjunction of the presently named King Street and China Street to at least Penny Street, and possibly to Stonegate. The name *Market Street* occurs in a Cockersand charter which may be dated between 1200 and 1240; it relates to a toft (*Old English meaning Homestead*) on the east side of Market Street.³ Is it possible that this length of Market Street was later renamed St Nicholas Street? White has postulated that the name St Nicholas Street was first mentioned in a Priory rental in 1360, although conceded it may have been earlier.⁴

St Nicholas Street, together with St Patrick's Lane (later part of China Street) and Pudding Lane (later Cheapside) are certainly recorded in a rental of Cockersand Abbey of 1451. St. Nicholas-gate is also named in a Conishead rental of 1520.⁵

But where did the name St Nicholas derive from? It is possible that an earlier veneration of St Nicholas may have taken place in the town, associated with Pope Nicholas IV's 1292 indulgence of one year and forty days granted to worshippers who visited church on the Nativity, Annunciation, Purification and Assumption of St Mary and the dedication feasts of St Nicholas.⁶ In 1204 half an acre of land close to the castle was given to the parish church of St Mary the Virgin for the maintenance of a chapel to display a candle referred to as St Mary's light, and a St Nicholas's light is also mentioned that burned daily.⁷ This local veneration was still being commemorated in 1564, after Elizabethan law forbade such practices.⁸

Speed's 1610 map (Figure 1) shows buildings along most of St Nicholas Street (17), with a pond at Stonewell (11), and a stream from the well to the Green Ayre mill race.

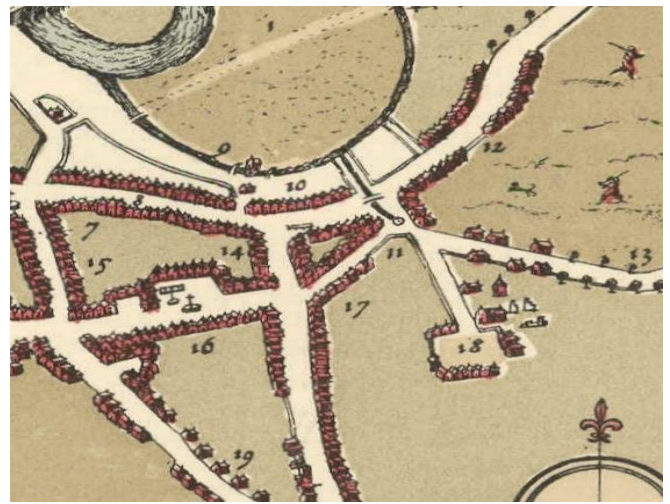


Figure 1: Speed's 1610 map of Lancaster
Source: Lancaster University Library Maps

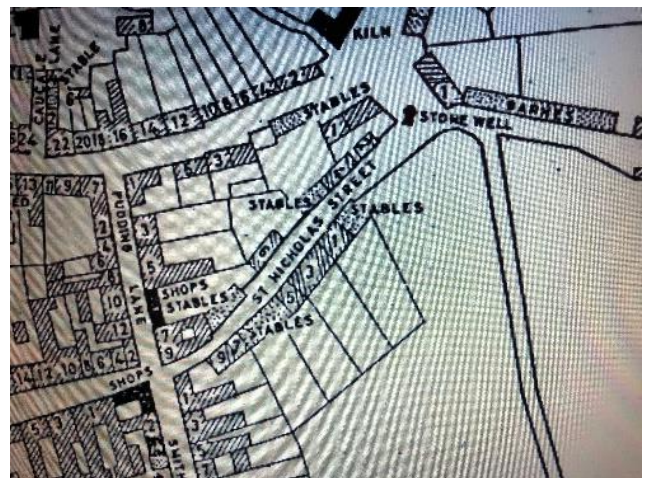


Figure 2: Docton's 1684 map of Lancaster
Source: Lancaster University Library Maps

Docton's 1684 map (Figure 2) lists four stables on the street. There was a large triangular open area around the well which must have been an important place to water not just the horses from the stables but also the farm animals that were barned in the town rather than on communal fields.⁹ This would have been part of Lord Derby's comprehensive burning of the centre of the town in 1643, in which eighty-six "barns, stables, cow houses, replenished with corn, hay and cattle were burned."¹⁰

An 1810 painting by Gideon Yates (Figure 3) shows Stonewell as still surprisingly rustic, unpaved, with thatched houses, decades after much of the town had been rebuilt in fine Georgian style in stone and flag paving on trading profits from the West Indies.



Figure 3: The Stonewell area of Lancaster
Source: Lancaster City Museum

By 1905 the pump and pond had gone, the stream was a covered sewer, and Stonewell was the terminus of the horse-drawn tram service to Morecambe. The town centre streets had been paved, not with granite setts but with wood blocks, set upright in tar. This was cheaper than stone, and quieter under the hooves of horses and the metal rims of carts. When the tar-soaked blocks were taken up in the 1950s, a large number found their way into our cellar, making for a very cosy winter (Figures 4 and 5).



Figures 4 and 5: St Nicholas Street in 1894
Source: Red Rose Collections, Lancashire County Council

St Nicholas Street had settled into being a town centre street. The shops changed little between Bulmer's Directory of 1912, and when I lived there: the same Unitarian church, *The Golden Ball* and *Boar's Head* pubs, Galbraith's ironmongers, Gorrill's drapers, two tripe shops (including ours), two newsagents, a hairdresser and a clog maker. The fried fish shop had become a fishmonger, the hosier a haberdasher, and the corn merchant a pet shop.

The street was demolished in 1967-71 to create a car park and St Nicholas's Arcade shopping centre.
Keith Walton

References:

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3. The parish of Lancaster op cit. p.10 and fn58
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5. The parish of Lancaster op cit. p.10 and fn66
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7. The parish of Lancaster op cit. p.4 and fn19
8. Mullett M "Reformation and Renewal 1450-1690" in A White ed. *A History of Lancaster 1193-1993* op cit. p.60
9. Derbyshire M (2008-09) The Agricultural Landscape of Lancaster, *Contrebis*, 32, p.26
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Acknowledgements:

*My thanks to Darren Webster, archivist, for this information (see References (4))

Darren Webster discusses his collection of the Lancaster City Museums Local Studies series

I have recently completed collecting the Local Studies pamphlet series produced by Lancaster City Museums and published from the late 1980s until 1994. There are 21 titles in the series covering a wide range of topics relating to Lancaster and the local area, written by eminent local historians (including several current members of LAHS). They are short booklets written by a specialist author and provide a helpful introduction/refresher to a local history topic.

I managed to purchase a few of the series in new condition from Lancaster City Museum - however, they no longer stock all the titles, and most were acquired second-hand from a well-known local charity bookshop. Some, I bought online, and the others from second-hand booksellers.

There is a diverse coverage of topics from subjects that I am more familiar with, such as Roman Lancaster or Lancaster Maps, or to a lesser extent, the history of Clockmaking or Rowing in the area. Other topics include The Castle, Industrial Lancaster, Lune Shipbuilding Company, the Lancaster Slave Trade, Paley & Austin, Maps, the Penny Almshouses, Country pottery, St. George's Quay, The Old Town Hall, Lancaster Canal and Lancaster Markets (Figure 1).

Most booklets in the series also contain interesting photos, drawings and tables/lists relating to the subject matter. They provide an informative introduction to a new subject, and most titles have a helpful further reading list, which is worth consulting if you wish to pursue further research.

Darren Webster, Archivist

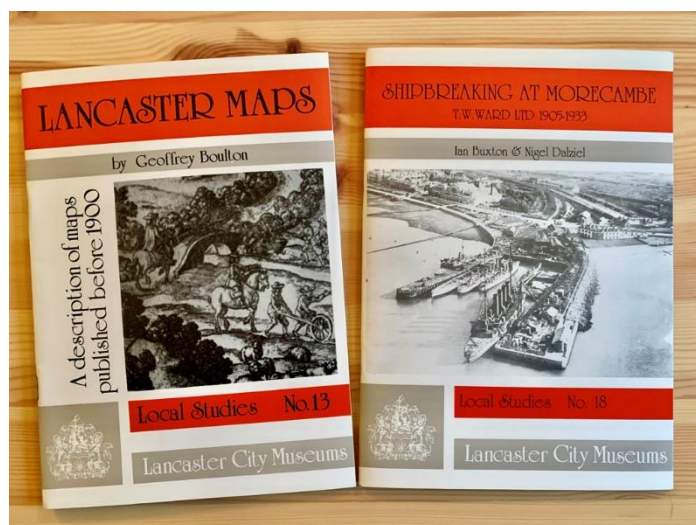


Figure 1: Examples of two publications in the series
Source: Author's own

PARISH CHURCH ARCHITECTURE: THE HISTORY OF PEWS

Part III: The Reformation

The Reformation was a sixteenth century process that started in the late 1520s by the state with totally unplanned consequences and continued until the 1660s due to the many issues it raised. The lengthy period of upheaval commenced during the reign of

Henry VIII and progressed through the reigns of Edward VI (1547-53), Mary I (1553-58), Elizabeth I (1558-1606) to c.1570, and thereafter at a lesser pace until the end of the Commonwealth (1660). The main area of debate was the difference in ideology and practice between Catholic clergy and post-Reformation clergy, the impact Protestantism had on the role and function of the clergy and laity, and upon the relationship between church and society.¹

As a result of Cardinal Wolsey's proposed reforms of the church, considerable change was inevitable but at the outset it was possible that England could have remained within the Catholic order. Protestantism was not a foregone outcome until Henry VIII claimed supremacy of the church in England denying the previously accepted authority of papal jurisdiction. The Act of Supremacy in 1534 forced the clergy to swear allegiance to the Crown rather than to the papacy resulting in separation from Rome in 1536.²

When Mary ascended the throne after the death of Edward VI, she restored England to Catholicism reinstating the liturgy, the creed and governance of the church, completely reversing the changes of Henry VIII.³ Six years later, Elizabeth I overturned Marian legislation in the Act of Supremacy of 1559, restoring ecclesiastical powers to the Crown.⁴

There is insufficient space in a brief article like this to comprehensively address all the implications of the Reformation. I will therefore confine my discussion to the impact the Reformation had on parish churches.

In 1535 a survey of church finances, the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (church valuation) was carried out in England, Wales and parts of Ireland by Commissioners appointed on the orders of Henry VIII after his separation from the papacy (Figure 1). The purpose of the *Valor* was to impose taxes on the clergy in place of those formerly paid to the Pope, and additionally, a new tax of ten per cent on annual income on church lands, property and revenue from all other sources. Approximately 8,800 parishes were identified varying in size and population. Clergymen and parish priests were required to give sworn testimony to the Commissioners on their income. The *Valor* enabled the Crown to assess the wealth of the church for the first time.⁵

After the Reformation regular church attendance became obligatory on Sunday in the morning and afternoon with longer services and sermons resulting in the need for more seating. Subtle differences appeared in pew design such as sloping book rests

which had previously been horizontal and rows of long-backed permanent benches were installed with books rests for the benefit of those sitting on the bench behind.⁶ Box pews were introduced, many with lockable doors, upholstered seats, often with curtains and a carpet, which wealthy parishioners could rent for their exclusive use providing the church with additional income.⁷ In the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods, churchwardens allocated seats according to social standing which frequently led to disputes in the courts. When the gentry entered the church the congregation stood up continuing the hierarchical structure of the community.⁸



Figure 1: Title page of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*
Source: The National Archives, Kew, London, ref. E344/22 f2

The cult of saints and pilgrimages was abolished to eradicate superstition resulting in suppression of chantries in 1547 to put an end to purgatory where formerly masses for the dead were directed for the salvation of named souls, but now had to apply to all souls. English bibles were initially introduced but restricted in 1543. Church services therefore remained principally in Latin with the process of liturgical reform changing the services and introducing new primers. Setting out the reforms more explicitly resulted in an increased awareness of English usage which everyone could understand.

Under Protestantism, transubstantiation was banned marking the difference between the Mass and communion service and the distinction between Catholicism and Protestantism. Priests were allowed to marry; private masses were permitted and hearing confession was mandatory. Indulgencies for the remission of repentant sinners disappeared.⁹ In 1547, the year of Henry VIII's death, several of the

traditional ceremonies of the medieval church were abolished and an order was made for the destruction of religious images in parish churches, although this mainly occurred during the reign of Edward VI, and again a century later during the civil war. The majority of people were illiterate and could not understand Latin, so the scriptures and beliefs prior to the Reformation were conveyed in stained glass windows, wall paintings, Rood screens, shrines, statues and stone carvings. After 1547 these were variously broken, destroyed or disfigured causing much resentment. The process of introducing reform had a significant impact on parishioners in favour of books and lengthy sermons.¹⁰

Before the Reformation more permanent pews were starting to be introduced with testators stipulating a request in their will to be buried inside the nave where they used to sit, indicating a desire to retain their place in the community and to solicit prayers from their successors. After the Reformation, funerary inscriptions were more commonly in English rather than Latin, recording not a request for prayers but declaring the Christian virtues of the deceased. Duffy was unclear if this was due to the passage of time or simply a product of increasing literacy to personalise the memory of the dead to a greater extent than before, reflecting a desire for personal existence among the living.¹¹

By the end of the religious changes in Edward VI's reign between 1547 and 1553 Mass had been abolished and Mass books and breviaries surrendered in most churches. Stone altars had been removed and replaced by wooden communion tables, church walls internally had been painted in white limewash after the iconoclastic despoliation, and the majority of vestments, chalices, candlesticks, pictures, paintings and monuments were surrendered to the King's Commissioners to remove all memory of superstition and idolatry.¹²

Despite the post-Reformation reforms, parish churches still remained community centres where people worshipped and met their neighbours to celebrate the seasons of the year and to share important stages in their lives, to be reminded of their duties, to ask for forgiveness of sins, to seek solace in this world and salvation in the next.¹³

In the next issue I will discuss the controversy surrounding box pews leading to their removal, and further reforms up to the Victorian period.
Michael Haslam

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4. O'Day, op cit. p.35
5. Swanson, op cit. pp.4-5
6. Fryer, op cit. p.47
7. Sharpe R G (2011) *Historic English Churches*, London: Tauris, p.211
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9. Swanson, op cit. p.356
10. Swanson, op cit. p.359
11. Duffy E (1992) *The Stripping of the Altars, USA*: Yale University, pp.332-3
12. Duffy, op cit. pp.478-80
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