



Bolton's Genies

The Monthly Newsletter of the Bolton Family History Society
Edition 119 – April 2024



Photo by Ron Cole

Spring is here and with it “A Host of Daffodils” in Queen’s Park.

“I wandered lonely as a cloud That floats on high o’er vales and hills, When all at once I saw a crowd, A host, of golden daffodils” William Wordsworth

In 1864 William Henderson from Birkenhead prepared plans for the park and in the same year the first piece of land was purchased from The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, with a second portion being purchased from a Miss Pilkington and the final piece of land was acquired from the estate of a Mr Tipping.

The park was built by a workforce of unemployed cotton workers during the cotton famine which came about due to supplies of raw cotton being cut off as a result of the American Civil War.

Thousands and thousands of cotton workers in Bolton were laid off due to lack of work and this prompted the government to make a series of low interest loans available to local authorities. These loans had to be used for civil improvement projects.

The park was finally opened on 24 May 1866 by The Earl of Bradford and was a huge source of pride for the town. It gave employment to many who would otherwise be destitute and also provided a great amenity for Bolton’s citizens.

The park was originally called “Bolton Park” but in honour of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee year was renamed Queen’s Park in 1897.

Sourced by Ron Cole

Editorial Musings

Thank you to Helen Pitt for her brilliant work writing up our monthly speakers' talks. Helen's accurate recording of the content of a speaker's input lets readers of Bolton's Genies increase their knowledge and understanding of family and social history.

Thank you also to Jane Milne for her work in providing varied and interesting speakers.

Best wishes
Cath Cole

Information and Updates for Members

National Libraries of Scotland

NLS have added a new feature to their Map Images Website or Georeferenced Viewers. Find out more by following the link:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/help.html#ngr>

Sourced by Jane Milne

Isle of Man Parish Registers

Search transcriptions of parish registers from the IOM for free via Manx National Heritage's website at www.imuseum.im/search/people

Sourced by Ron Cole

Parish Registers Online

In the April 2024 edition of "Who Do You Think You Are?" there is an article on Parish Registers. It covers areas of Britain such as London and Middlesex, the South East, the South West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, the East, North West, North East, the West Midlands, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. There are too many websites to list here. Anyone interested should consult Issue 216 or email to boltongenies@mlfhs.org.uk

Sourced by Ron Cole

Recent Events

April Meeting

Wednesday 3 April 2024

The presentation album of Henry Dawson of T.Taylor's Ltd - An Heirloom Photo album

This talk, given by Maggy Simms, explored a commemorative album presented to Henry Dawson in 1924 on the occasion of his 50th anniversary with T Taylor's Ltd, a textile firm. Maggy who is involved with U3A (University of the Third Age) was approached through U3A by a descendant of Mr. Dawson to see if Bolton Archives would be interested in acquiring it. The album is made of thick card 'window' pages and bound in wooden boards covered in red leather. The cover is embossed and gilded as are the page ends. It is in good shape and includes 33 photographs and a few related keepsake items. Apparently three long-term employees were honoured at the same time and likely all received similar books. There are several remarkable things about this album, in addition to its condition. It was made using 19th century technology, such as leather embossing and stamping blocks for the illuminated pages; and it gives a rare photographic picture of all aspects of the factory.

Thomas Taylor, the founder of T. Taylor, and joint patentee of the Satin Quilt, was also Liberal MP for Bolton from 1912 to 1916 when he died. His family had been corn merchants but Thomas Taylor became a manager at Barlow and Jones but left to establish his own company on Saville Street in Bolton. Unfortunately, the Saville Street mill appears to have been demolished around 2016.

The two first pages of the album are beautifully illuminated. The title page includes a photograph of Henry Dawson and a commemorative dedication, the second lists the mill owners and the officers of the factory, including several women. The album then proceeds like a tour, through the various factory departments starting with the Directors' office. This appears to have been an elegant wood-panelled room with two desks. It is interesting to note that the desks are positioned against the wall, rather than facing the door. We then move to the Enquiries Office where a young woman acts as receptionist and answers the telephone (very modern!) Maggie noted that by this time, female employees were required to have seating rather than using standing desks, like the male clerks. The receptionist even has a stool for her feet.

Most of the photographs are formal and posed, which becomes more obvious as we move to the Hank Winding room where yarn was wound before dyeing and the Cop Winding Room where the yarn was twisted. All the machinery is stopped in these areas (no blurred images) which probably meant that employees came in on a Saturday afternoon for the photography session. We next have a photo of the

Weaving Shed where one can see the jacquard cards, which contain the patterns for the looms. Maggie also pointed out that in the background are two smiling young women hiding, apparently unnoticed by anyone including the photographer. Another view of the same room shows rather young workers posed in front of the looms. The group seems to include two young men and perhaps a young woman with a very interesting hairstyle. Maggie noted that it would have been unusual to have young men and women working together and later suggested the thing on her head may have been a bunch of lint put on her head for fun.

All maintenance at the mill was done in-house, so we next visit the Joiners Shop, complete with skylights, wood supplies and benches, but no joiners. Perhaps they were unwilling to come in for the photo session? By contrast, the mechanics in the next photo of the Mechanics shop seem to be enjoying the session and the opportunity to show off their machinery. In the Card Cutting Room are two men and a woman working on jacquard cards. Here, the woven designs were created, and jacquard cards were cut (holes were placed) to create patterns that could be read by the looms. This was an early form of computer.

Thomas Taylor's also had a warehouse in Manchester (at the corner of George and Charlotte Streets). In the 1920s Taylor's was one of a number of businesses in the Portland St. area that signed on for a shared hydraulic system fed by enormous tanks of water and powered by and distributed via pumping stations and pipes. Parts of the system were in use until the 1970s. The Taylor's location still exists. Maggy showed "before and after" photos.

The presentation album's next photos are of this location. First, a photo of the General Office in the Manchester office where the clerks (women) are sitting on high stools. The office is equipped with typewriters and natural light. The Pattern Room is next, and we see two women in smocks either choosing fabrics or designing patterns. The Sale Room shows what appears to be an example of a satin quilt. Three men, possibly representing a customer and salespeople are pictured. The next photo, of the Stock Racks shows what are likely individual quilts packed, labelled, and awaiting shipping. In the next slide, of the Mail Room, employees are packaging and mailing orders. Apparently, quilts were packed in paper and then sewn into custom packages for shipping. This is the last photograph in the presentation album, but in the next slide Maggie included a record from the Bolton Museum describing a Taylor's custom quilt designed by the customer in pink warp and white weft.

The next pictures in the presentation are the programmes for a staff excursion to the British Empire Exhibition in London, tucked into the album. Some of T. Taylor's designs were on display and the company evidently put on a trip for employees to attend. The program included leaving at 1 a.m. and arriving in London at 6:30. On arrival at guests were treated to a sightseeing tour by charabanc and breakfast in a restaurant before heading to the exhibition grounds. The excursion seems very well organized; attendees were issued with celluloid identification buttons which allowed access to the restaurant and exhibition. At least one item in the exhibition

was by T. Taylor's – a woven textile sample of the Cenotaph in Whitehall displayed to showcase the company's capabilities. This textile is now in the Bolton Collection. Despite all the information the presentation album provides us, there are also some interesting questions remain: where was the album made, who chose the design, and who are the workers in the photos?

There was another mill called Taylors in Horwich but evidently the two were not related. T. Taylor's of Bolton was founded by Thomas Taylor and three colleagues who had been at Barlow and Jones. Jane Milne researched the WT Taylor family and learned the Victoria Mill was founded in Horwich in 1903 and they do not appear to be connected. While T. Taylor produced high end satin bedcoverings, WT Taylors was known for towels.

The history of T. Taylors is spotty after 1910 and the archives appear to be missing. We do know that the Quilt Manufacturers Ltd was formed in July 1929 by T Taylor's and six other companies. At that time, the 7 companies between them owned 72% of all the quilt looms in England. Unfortunately, the September 1929 stock market crash wiped out share prices around the world shortly afterwards. A timeline produced by a descendant of one of the other seven companies shows that the name of the Quilt Manufacturers was changed to Vantona Textiles in 1936 and it was significantly reorganized (perhaps this is when T. Taylors went under).

Vantona was a listed exhibitor at the 1947 British Industries Fair and in 1951 occupied Milton Mill in Bolton. A series of mergers and acquisitions followed through the 60s, 70s and 80s until it acquired Coats Paton in 1986, becoming Coats Viyella. The company is still in business as part of the Coats Group.

At the moment, we only have the digital version of this wonderful artifact. The album is a rare snapshot of mill life at the time and unusual in its demonstration of working processes and the people involved in them as well as the number of women employed and the use of technology.

Questions and comments:

1. There is a jacquard loom in the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry.
2. One attendee noted the hierarchy of hats in discussion of one photograph. It was possible to tell social status by the hat a person wore.
3. There was a discussion about the typewriters in one of the photographs and a former typist identified them as 1950's models. Maggy referred to a stationers and typewriter shop in Mawdesley Street and was told it was probably Maxwell Jones Ltd.
4. In reply to a question, Jane confirmed that Thomas Taylor's residence was on Chorley New Road.

Upcoming Events

Catholic Research in Lancashire

Wednesday 1 May 2024 - HYBRID MEETING

Kate Hurst - Kate has passionately studied family history since her late teens. She spent endless hours at the Lancashire Archives in Preston and is now familiar with some of the records there. She is keen to help those researching in the north-west of England.



Advance Notice of 2024 BFHS Speakers

How the American Civil War affected the Lancashire Cotton Famine

5 JUNE 2024 - HYBRID MEETING

Stephen Irwin - Stephen, a historian, recently retired after more than 17 years as the Education Officer for Blackburn Museum. His talk will explore the impact of the American Civil War on the people of Lancashire.



Speakers for the remainder of 2024 will be published each month in this newsletter. Speakers have been invited for all months up to November 2024 and are available to view on the following website: <https://mlfhs.uk/Bolton/events/meetings>

Bolton History Centre and Bolton Records

Bolton History Centre is now open in the Central Library. The Centre has informed us that “It will be located in the far right hand corner of the main library; in one of its original positions!”

The telephone number for any local history and archive queries and requests for material is 01204 332185 or send an email request to archives@bolton.gov.uk. Requests take seven days to turn around and will either be looked at in the lab or at the Central Library. References to some of the websites:

<https://boltonremembers.org/> has some of the WW1 & WW2 records we have found for Bolton military personnel either born, resided, or enlisted in Bolton.

<https://bolton.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRN/WPAC/HOME> Spydus catalogue for local studies search.

<https://www.boltonlams.co.uk/history-centre-1> This link is the History Centre page for the services that are offered to researchers. It gives some information about archives and the records that are held.

An interesting website sourced by Bolton News – “Unclaimed estates in Bolton revealed by HM’s Treasury Department for June and July”

<https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/23622610.unclaimed-estates-bolton-revealed-treasury-june/>

<https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/23688759.unclaimed-estates-bolton-revealed-treasury-july/>

Lancashire Records

News from The Archives

UK BMD Summary www.freebmd.org.uk



Lancs OPC www.lan-opc.org.uk



Lancashire Archives News and Events - their latest newsletter and more - <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/7mS1Cj789vgwTDac?ref=Link>
And a further up-date - <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/inf9LsCiCXDHzPs8?ref=Link>

Lancashire Archives Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/lancsarchives>

Lancashire Parish Register Society link - www.lprs.org.uk

Lancashire Infantry Museum link - www.tinyurl.com/lancs-inf-mus

Activities and Events from MLFHS Branches



Please note these events are all free to subscribed
MLFHS members, £5 to guests.



Manchester branch –

Next meeting – Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 10.30 am - “Salford Through Time” A talk by Paul Hindle followed by the MLFHS’s Annual General Meeting at approx. 11.45 am. Both events in Manchester Central Library.



Oldham and District Branch

Next meeting - Saturday 11 May 2024 at 2.00 pm - “19th Century Boom and Bust - Exploring Business and Family Fortunes” An illustrated presentation by Jackie Depelle. A free, zoom only meeting - all are very welcome. Booking for Zoom attendance is on Eventbrite



Anglo Scottish Branch

Next meeting: Saturday 4 May 2024 at 2.00 pm - “Who Are the Scots, What is a Clan and Why Are We Not Celts” - a talk by Bruce Durie. This meeting will be in person at Manchester Central Library.
Booking via Eventbrite - Free to members Non-members £5.00

Other Local History Societies’ Meetings

WE ADVISE CHECKING THEIR RESPECTIVE WEBSITES PERIODICALLY FOR UPDATES AND DATES OF MEETINGS.



Halliwell Local History Society <http://goo.gl8erYyr>

Email: enquiries@halliwell-lhs.co.uk

Next meeting – Tuesday 30 April 2024 at 7.30 pm - “Lost Businesses of Bolton” by David Lloyd at St Luke’s Church, Chorley Old Road, Bolton BL1 4JE. Members £1.00 and Guests £2.50



Turton Local History Society <https://goo.gl/adx4GM>

Next meeting - 25 April 2024 at 7.30 pm. "Lancashire Comedians" by

Tom Preston at Harwood Methodist Church

Email: mlandypublishing@yahoo.co.uk

Westhoughton Local History Group – <http://goo.gl/XNugI5>

Next event - Thursday 16 May 2024 at 10.00 am - "Lancashire and the English Civil War" by Stephen Irwin at Westhoughton Library, Market St, Westhoughton BL5 3AU.

"A general Plague of Madness!" This is how Stephen describes this important era in England in the middle of the seventeenth century

Horwich Heritage Centre - <http://goo.gl/fSPsij>



Next event – 14 May 2024 at 7.30 pm - "Bolton Transport" by David Lloyd at Horwich Community Centre, Beaumont Road, Horwich BL6 7BG . Free parking and disabled access is available. Free to members but non-members are welcome to attend for £2.00 payable at the door.

Open Days, Admission Free, are held most months on Saturdays between 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Exhibition: "Centenary of Horwich Harriers" On now till 31 May 2024 at Horwich Heritage Centre with free admission.

BFHS's Regular Venue

Our regular venue is Bolton Golf Club, Chorley New Road, Bolton BL6 4AJ, although this may vary occasionally due to circumstances beyond our control. Any changes will be announced on our Facebook page (link <https://www.facebook.com/BoltonFHS> accessible without subscription) and in this newsletter. It is always advisable to check before leaving home. <https://www.boltongolfclub.co.uk/contact/how-to-find-us/> provides helpful directions.

Talks are usually provided by a visiting speaker, but occasionally speakers may deliver their talks by zoom. This happens when the speaker, who is known to be a first-rate expert in their field, is based some distance from Bolton. Those present at the golf club and zoomers will see our speaker streamed on screen. It is not necessary to book a place to attend the golf club in person, but it is essential to book for a zoom place at <https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton/events>. The link will be emailed to you several times.

Meetings are on the first Wednesday of most months. The golf club opens for roomers at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start and zoomers can sign in from 7.15 pm. The

club has a bar and tea or coffee is available. We have a table with recycled genealogy books and magazines, Godfrey maps of local areas and discounted equipment.

Meetings from other branches of the MLFHS are available and free to all members. These meetings, like ours, may be live, zoomed or hybrid. <https://www.mlfhs.uk/> is the link for events.

Key Information about Bolton Family History Society

<https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton>

- Speaker Bookings: Boltonprog@mlfhs.org.uk
- Bolton helpdesk: boltonfhishelp@gmail.com
- Newsletter Archives since July 2014:

<https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton/newsletter/archives>

- General Society enquiries to the BFHS Secretary, Christine M Ellis bolton@mlfhs.org.uk

- Manchester Research - email a brief enquiry to <https://www.mlfhs.uk/virtual-help-desk>

or visit us at

- Bolton Facebook page <https://goo.gl/n99qtW> 976 Likes and 1K people following on Facebook

- Bolton Research Collection on the MLFHS website: (For members only)

<https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton/research>

- Join the MLFHS/BFHS at: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/join>
