

FORTY YEARS

with

FAMILY
HISTORY

The Manchester and Lancashire
Family History Society
1964 -- 2004

David H Vaughan
Vice-President

Forty Years with Family History

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To

*all those, named and unnamed, who
have given their time, energy and experience
for the benefit of fellow members
and the development of the Society.*

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PREFACE

‘History is not what you thought, *it is what you can remember*’

W C Sellar & R J Yeatman—1066 and All That (1930)

‘Compulsory Preface’

The idea of writing a history of the Society came to me when I was its Treasurer. On a number of occasions I found myself asking, ‘When did we do that?’ or ‘Why do we do this?’ or ‘Who thought of that?’ When I asked people, I got either blank looks or two or more conflicting answers. There seemed no escape, I had to look for the answers myself. This was easier said than done. The records for the earliest years are, curiously, quite extensive including much correspondence. The minutes of meetings of the Council are available from 1964 with the exception of a few years in the early 1970’s for which the records have disappeared. The Manchester Genealogist, of which a copy of each issue is available, carried very little detail of the running of the Society in its early years but the later issues are invaluable for filling in or confirming details.

I have deliberately restricted myself to looking at contemporary written records rather than interviewing long-standing members on the grounds that memories can fail or be selective. I have, however, talked to people who were involved in the running of the Society in past years. This has elaborated or clarified the details missing from the written material. Most of them are still members but some are not. I am grateful to them all.

Encouragement has come from the present officers, particularly the Chairman Dennis Baxter. I was not prepared, however, for the decision by the Council to make the volume, of which it had not seen even a skeleton draft, a central feature of the Society’s 40th anniversary celebrations. I hope it is felt that this faith is justified.

David Vaughan

Poynton, Cheshire
March 2004

PART I

The Society

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CHAPTER 1

1964 — When It All Began

In February 1964 Mr Robert G Chorlton, employed at the AVRO Aircraft Factory, Chadderton near Oldham, put up notices round the factory asking if any other workers were interested in genealogy as a social pursuit. He received a total of 27 names and at a meeting of the founder members held at the Gardeners Arms, Moston, near the factory, it was agreed to form the AVRO-Whitworth Genealogical Society. After 6 weeks it was realised that the Society would not grow if confined to workers in the factory. Mr Chorlton therefore wrote to the Society of Genealogists in London asking if it knew of a genealogical society in Manchester or the North West. On hearing that there was no knowledge of such a society in the North of England, it was decided to form the Manchester Genealogical Society.

The next step was to find a suitable meeting place in the centre of Manchester and after much searching it was decided to use the Methodist Central Hall in Oldham Street. There was then a need to ensure appropriate publicity. Material was sent to the editors of local newspapers and this resulted in items being published highlighting the new society. Mr Chorlton received a visit from Peter Brock of the Daily Express. An article in all editions of that newspaper brought very many letters from all over the country and, as a result, new members.

The committee of the Society held meetings at the Gardeners Arms. The first notes to have survived are for a meeting on 6th April 1964 but they refer to the notes of a previous meeting. The matters discussed were the Constitution and Rules; publicity; membership forms and cards; meeting places; financial support and the frequency of meetings. It was agreed that fortnightly meetings were needed. The following appointments were made—Chairman Mr Wright; Vice-Chairman Mr Saunders; Secretary Mr Chorlton; Treasurer Mr Hampson; Librarian and Public Relations Officer Mr Randall Jones; Minute Secretary Miss Carlton. According to an early membership card, the founder members were the above, less Miss Carlton, together with Mr Fennel, Mr Moir and Mr Slater. A further meeting was arranged for the 20th April but no record of this has been found.

Letters to local newspapers invited those interested in genealogy to a meeting in Central Hall, Oldham Street on Thursday 7 May at 7.30 p. m. This was to be the first of regular monthly meetings. The meetings at first lasted for about two hours and took the form of questions and answers about the records available locally and advice about how to start researching one's family. Contacts were made with local libraries and record offices with a

view to compiling a list of the holdings which would be of benefit to members. Letters were sent to bookshops throughout the country with a view to starting a library. The first Newsletter went out to members in June, followed later in the year by a Supplement. At the meeting in July, Mr Randall Jones gave a talk introducing the use of heraldry by family historians. This was followed in the autumn by talks given by the County Archivists of Lancashire and Cheshire.

The first Constitution of the Society was agreed in August. The affairs of the Society were to be governed by a Council whose members were to be elected by those present at each Annual General Meeting with the Council later electing various Officers. A feature of the early days of the Society was the number of contacts made with genealogists in other countries—France, North America and Australia. Much of this came from the efforts of the first secretary, Mr Chorlton. He told the Council that he had been asked to write articles about the Society for publication in the United States.

During the autumn the Council gave much thought to the need for publicity for the Society and posters were approved for display in libraries. Material of all kinds was accumulated for the Society's library. This was to be available for the benefit of members. Work on monumental inscriptions was planned and the idea of a course for beginners (possibly in association with the Workers Educational Association) was discussed. Membership cards were approved and printed.

CHAPTER 2

1965 - 1969 Consolidation

1965

Among the news items contained in the first issue of *The Manchester Genealogist* for 1965 (Spring 1965) were the fact that the Society held forms of application for birth, marriage and death Certificates for the use of members and the arrival of, perhaps, the first exchange journal—the *Bulletin of the French Genealogical Society* (in French). It was also noted that the Society had been granted permission by Manchester City Council to use the city's Civic Badge to indicate its connection with the City. This appeared on the cover of the journal for several years after March 1966.

At the first Annual General Meeting held on 6 May 1965 a number of new members were elected to the Council. These included Mr Burling who was later elected Chairman when the new Council met the following week and Mr Beckett, later elected Vice-Chairman. This Council meeting on 12 May discussed its work and drew up a series of speakers for the Society's meetings in the following 12 months. It was agreed that the last 30 minutes should be made available for general questions from members to help them pursue their own enquiries and a short statement of the decisions of the Council were to be made at each Society meeting. In the next 12 months the Council devoted much time to what were considered the main aims of the Society—the collection of appropriate material for members, the arrangement of suitable meetings and the establishment of a regular newsletter (*The Manchester Genealogist*).

Part — I The Society

1966

At the end of the financial year in April 1966 there were 45 paid-up members, including 4 in the United States and the Society had a little over £31 in the bank. The minutes of the AGM of April 1966 are not available but from September 1966 onwards the minutes of the meetings of the Council and of the Society have, for the most part, been carefully recorded.

In September 1966 two officers offered their resignations. One was the Secretary, Mr Chorlton, who apparently felt that the other members of Council were not doing enough to help him in running the Society. The resignation was accepted and Mr Randall Jones became Secretary with Mrs Bumby as Assistant Secretary. The other resignation offered was that of the Chairman, Mr Burling, because of his growing business activities. This was not accepted and the Council felt that the Vice-Chairman, Mr Beckett, could stand in, at least for some time. Clearly the Society was going through a rough patch at this period. This did not prevent the programme of meetings, the development of the library and the forging of links with other relevant societies continuing. The Society had a stall at an exhibition at Oldham which proved successful and led to enquiries being made as to other suitable exhibitions which might be held. Visits to local places of interest were planned—to Manchester Cathedral, the Rylands Library and the Chethams Library—and also a trip to Somerset House.

1967

At the beginning of 1967 the Council meetings began to be held at the Millstone Hotel, Thomas Street in central Manchester. This change was presumably for the convenience of its members because most of them no longer came from the northern parts of Manchester. The production and regular distribution of the *Manchester Genealogist* was a major burden for members of the Council. A typewriter was bought to assist in this.

After the AGM in May 1967 Miss McLachlan took over the position of Vice-Chairman from Mr Beckett. She was effectively the chairman for the year. She is, in fact, designated in the minutes as Chairman with Miss Pendleton as Vice-Chairman from the meeting in February 1968 onwards. During this year the meetings of the Society and even meetings of the Council were poorly attended. The need for new members was emphasised. A difference of opinion arose in the Council as to whether local history should feature in the Society's work. The view was expressed that it did not mix with genealogy.

The year 1967 was a difficult year for the Society. The Secretary, Mr Randall Jones, was away from Manchester on business a lot of the time, the meetings at Central Hall were poorly attended and only one issue of the *Manchester Genealogist* was published due, at least partly, to problems with the typewriter and duplicator. Various suggestions were made to improve attendance at meetings. It was felt that members did not derive much benefit from the Society and that, in particular, the library should be re-organised.

1968

The beginning of 1968 saw some improvement. Mr Jones resigned as Secretary and Mr Beckett took over this position. It was agreed to form a Journal Sub-Committee and Mr Wild and Mr Jones prepared an issue which duly appeared after some production difficulties. The Chairman, Miss McLachlan, put to the Council a list of changes to the Rules which she thought should be considered by members at the next Annual General Meeting. A number of

members of the Council resigned or did not seek re-election at this meeting. Miss McLachlan did not want to be considered for election as Chairman and Mr Shepherd was elected with Mr Wright as Vice-Chairman. Miss Pendleton was not elected to Council. Mr Beckett, Mr Hampson and Mr Wild continued as Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian respectively. Mr Shepherd also became editor of the journal.

The changes to the Constitution which had been put forward by Miss McLachlan were approved by members. They amounted to a complete re-writing of what had been agreed in August 1964. The Constitution became more general in approach and lacked some of the detail set out in the original one. In this, it resembled the version of 2002. The new Council set out to improve the workings of the Society. Projects such as the recording of monumental inscriptions were started, the programme of meetings was given much attention and regular editions of the journal were produced. In November 1968 the Treasurer reported that there were 45 paid up members but finances were low because of the regular production of the journal. A letter to the Manchester Evening News resulted in an article about the Society in the paper. Enquiries were made into the existence of local history societies in the local area and when none was found in Manchester it was proposed that, at the next AGM, the Society's name should be changed to 'The Manchester Genealogical and Local History Society'.

These efforts, however, did not result in much improvement and in January 1969 the Secretary, Mr Beckett, resigned seemingly because he disagreed with the approach being adopted. He felt that more attention should be paid to assisting members in their own researches. The secretarial work was temporarily undertaken by the Chairman, Mr Shepherd.

1969

In February 1969 Mr Denyer was co-opted to the Council. As a sign of the number of members from overseas, the Council defined a new category of membership for members living in the United States.

The agenda for the 1969 AGM contained two items to amend the Constitution in addition to the confirmation of the category of membership for those living in America. One was that the Council should consist of the Officers and 4 other members instead of the Officers and 9 other members as in the existing (1968) Constitution. It is not clear how many Officers there should be. The other was to change the name of the Society to 'The Manchester Genealogical and Historical Society' The minutes of the 1969 AGM have not survived, but the next issue of the journal reported that the amendments to the Constitution 'were discussed and resolved'. The change of name was not put into effect but the number on the Council was reduced to 9, including 3 who were designated 'Members'. At the AGM, Mr Hampson's final report as Treasurer showed that in the year to April 1969 the income of the Society was £40 and expenditure £35 (including £12 for the production and postage of the journal). There was £35 in the bank.

There were many changes among the officers at the AGM of 1969. Mr Shepherd was leaving Manchester and Mr Hampson said that business commitments meant that he could not continue as Treasurer after serving in this position since the start of the Society. Mr Denyer became Chairman, Mr Beckett Vice-Chairman, Miss McLachlan Secretary and Mr Nash Treasurer. Mr Wild continued as Librarian and Miss Pendleton became Editor of the

Manchester Genealogist. The new Council developed a number of ideas to improve the position of the Society. These included more publicity for the programme of meetings with a wider range of speakers for these, evening classes in conjunction with education authorities and, perhaps most importantly, the production of a leaflet giving information about the Society. Copies of this were to be sent to societies with kindred interests as well as being available to direct enquirers. The leaflet incorporated an application form and an opportunity to pay the subscription by a bankers order. It was later reported that 34 students attended an evening class given by Colin Rogers at North Hulme Education Centre, but they may not all have been members.

During the rest of the year, efforts were made to ensure that members paid their subscriptions at the due date and, for the first time, it was noted in the Council that members who were overdue by more than 3 months were not to be considered members, but letters were to be sent to them reminding them of the position. A programme of regular meetings was publicised in the journal as were acquisitions of material for the library.

CHAPTER 3

1970 - 1975 The Start of Better Times

1970 - 1971

The new decade started as the previous one ended, with a search for new members, the collection of subscriptions due and the planning of meetings with interesting speakers. On several occasions the monthly meeting was given over to a workshop with the aim of helping members in their researches. The journal continued to have difficulties in its production and the last issue of 1969 came out early in 1970 and was described as covering two quarters. It noted the names of 20 new members.

There were 16 members and 5 visitors at the AGM held in May 1970. The meeting agreed that subscriptions were payable in advance from the date of admission to the Society. Nine members were elected to the Council, but curiously the names listed in the minutes do not correspond to those appearing later in the journal. In particular, Mr Trunkfield became Secretary in place of Miss McLachlan, although she remained on the Council, and Mr Manock became Treasurer in place of Mr Nash.

Unfortunately, there are no minutes available for the Council or the Society between September 1970 and July 1973. Information about activities has to be gathered from the journal. In the spring of 1971 it was arranged that future meetings of the Society would be held at Fernley House, St Anne's Churchyard, St Anne's Square, Manchester. It was also announced that the editor of the journal, Miss Pendleton, and Miss McLachlan, former Secretary who had undertaken the typing for the journal, would not be standing for re-election to the Council.

At the AGM of 1971 an appeal was made for volunteers to transcribe and index parish registers. Reference was made to the big growth in interest in genealogy and in the growing links between the Society and other family history societies. To cover increasing costs the

Treasurer had to ask for an increase in the subscriptions. No new member was elected to the Council and Mr Trunkfield, the Secretary, took over as editor of the journal.

During the summer of 1971 Mr Trunkfield organised three events which proved popular. A minibus took members on a day trip to visit Somerset House. The bus could have been filled several times over. Members completed the recording of monumental inscriptions at St George's, Hulme in association with the Salford Local History Society. One of the regular meetings took place at Salford Central Library to hear a talk by the Librarian. About 40 members attended. Other visits were paid to Chethams Library, Chester Record Office and Manchester Museum of Science and Technology. This latter visit was specifically to look at the tools and working conditions of the past. In the following March a more ambitious visit was paid to London, this time staying in an hotel to allow more time for research at Somerset House and elsewhere. The cost of the coach and 4 nights bed and breakfast was £14.

1972 - 1973

At the AGM in 1972, Mrs Hardman replaced Mr Perkins on the Council but all the other members were re-elected. After the Summer issue of the journal in 1972, Mr Beckett took over as Editor. His first editorial referred to the articles by the Chairman, Mr Denyer, in the Mr Manchester column in the Manchester Evening News. These created much interest and many new members joined the Society as a result. He also commented on the fact that family history societies were being formed in many parts of England and looked forward to the time when each county would have a society. In October 1972 what was billed as the Society's First Annual Dinner was held. This was one of an ambitious series of monthly meetings in 1972-1973. Unfortunately, the attendance at these meetings was small; so poor in fact that the Council decided that it was unfair to invite speakers from other societies to address the meetings.

However, in March 1973 the Chairman, Mr Denyer, showed his film, 'Skeletons in the Cupboard', to a full audience. The AGM of May 1973 saw a number of changes on the Council. Mr Beckett became Chairman as well as Editor, with Mr Denyer moving to the post of Treasurer, replacing Mr Manock who continued, however, as a member of Council. Two new members of Council became Officers—Mr Anderton as Vice-Chairman and Mrs Seddon as Librarian. Another new member of Council was Mr Hidden and Miss Boardman and Mrs Miller were co-opted. Mrs Hardman, Mrs Roberts and Mr Holt left the Council.

On 5th July 1973 an Extraordinary General Meeting was held at Fernley House. After discussion and by a two thirds majority, it was agreed that the Society should be called 'The Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society' The inclusion of Lancashire was expected to give the Society a wider membership and the term Family History Society would be more easily understood and was in common use by other societies. In his first editorial after the change, the Chairman and Editor of the journal pointed out that the only other family history society in Lancashire was in Rossendale and that attention should be given to activity in the west of the county, towards Liverpool. He also thought that a larger part of the journal should be given to articles on everyday life in the 18th and 19th centuries and less to long lists of surnames although accepting that these had been of great interest to members.

1974

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Early in 1974 the Secretary, Mr Trunkfield, resigned because of the pressure of his other commitments. Mrs Seddon took over the post. She had been responsible for the design of the cover of the journal following the change of name of the Society. In February 1974 the Treasurer reported that there were 66 fully paid up members and the Society had a healthy bank balance. Mr Jenyon was co-opted as a Council member. At the AGM in May 1974 the newly appointed Secretary said she felt that there needed to be more contact between members and had sent out a questionnaire asking for views. Perhaps as a result of this initiative, there was a larger than usual attendance at the AGM. The officers reported a generally healthy state of affairs. Amendments were made to the Constitution. One important one was that the officers were to be directly elected at the AGM rather than by the Council members from within their number. As a result, the existing officers were elected as Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Other Council members were then elected—Miss Boardman, Mr Hidden, Mr Jenyon, Mrs Marlor, Mrs Miller and Mr Wild.

At the first Council meeting held after this AGM it was agreed, after a vote, that the Society should be represented at a series of conferences to be held at Brighton in August 1974 under the heading of 'Heritage '74'. Besides family history, other organisations covering subjects such as antiques and old coins would be providing displays and lectures. This was the first time that the Society had been present at an event held so far from its home base. Mr Jenyon volunteered to go and later presented a favourable report although saying that the publicity was not good and most of those attending were from Sussex.

At the same Council meeting a much more important decision was made. It was agreed that the Society should be represented at a meeting in Birmingham on 8 June 1974 to discuss an International Congress on Genealogy to be held in 1976. Mr Beckett agreed to go. It is possible that the Society mis-understood the main purpose of the meeting. This was to discuss the setting up of a Federation of Family History and related societies as a prelude to having an International Congress two years later. Six societies had written before the meeting expressing a desire to join such a Federation and five more of the 18 representatives present joined on the day of the meeting. Mr Beckett did not feel that he had the authority to commit the Society to join and so it did not become a founder member. Of the 11 founder members there was only one in England based north of Birmingham—The Macclesfield (now the Cheshire) Heraldry Society. About two weeks later, the Council unanimously agreed to join.

Mr Jenyon later reported on the first meeting of the Federation which was held at Brighton at the same time as 'Heritage '74'. He said that the original title was the Federation of Family Historical, Genealogical, Heraldic and Allied Societies, but the first move was to change it to the shorter title by which it is still known—Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS). Another decision taken at Brighton was to institute a system of exchanging journals with all the other member societies—then expected to number about 30. This arrangement still stands, although the number of societies had grown by 2003 to over 200. Societies overseas also expressed an interest in exchanging journals.

A letter from a member was also discussed in May 1974. This criticised the way in which meetings were handled and expressed the opinion that insufficient time was allowed for the discussion of individual problems. The writer said that this opinion was widely held and this led (not for the first time) to a decision to hold more meetings in the form of

workshops. The success of the first workshop led to a later decision that every second meeting should take the same form.

Once again, the importance of recruiting new members and ideas of publicising the work of the Society were discussed. It was agreed that the collection of books and other material which had been acquired by the Society and was then housed within the Salford Local Studies Library should be made more accessible to members. Mr Hidden agreed to take over responsibility for the library and said he would remove the collection to his house. Most of the contents would be taken to each of the monthly meetings and would be available on loan to members against a deposit of 50 pence. This deposit was discontinued a year later. A cupboard was purchased at the end of 1975 so that the collection could be safely stored at 3 St Ann's Churchyard, where the monthly meetings were held. It was agreed that the library should be increased gradually and ideas for new books were welcomed. The production and distribution of the journal was discussed at length at many meetings of the Council.

Much was happening in the family history scene outside the Society at this time. Apart from the formation of other societies, many parishes were depositing their records with the appropriate archive repositories, libraries in Lancashire towns were obtaining census records for their areas, original wills could be inspected in Manchester and Manchester Central Library was continuing its programme of microfilming parish registers. All this made research into family history a little easier.

1975

At the AGM in May 1975, with 19 members present, the Chairman reported on a good year, although attendance at meetings had been disappointing. The project to index Stockport marriages had made a good start. The rise in membership, now approaching 100, had resulted in increasing revenue but costs had also risen and it was agreed to raise the subscription rates. Mr Anderton and Mr Denyer did not want to be considered for offices and Mr Jenyon was elected as Vice-Chairman. The position of Treasurer was left vacant. Mrs Marlor and Mr Wild left the Council, and Mrs Knott was elected for the first time. Mr Charles was co-opted to the Council as Pedigree Referral Organiser even though he lived in Lincolnshire. At the first Council meeting after the AGM, Mr Hidden took on the position of Treasurer. He gave up responsibility for duplicating the journal. On his suggestion, it was proposed that future subscriptions should become payable on 1st January each year but an Extraordinary General Meeting would be required to amend the Constitution. This was held on 5th September 1975 and the change was agreed.

CHAPTER 4

1976 - 1980 Growth and Development

1976

Early in 1976 Council agreed that their number should be increased because of the amount of work which had to be done. Mr & Mrs Cresswell, Mr Lewis and Mr Prescott were co-opted. The first issue of the Members' Interests Directory was issued to members in

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January 1976. It was available to non-members for 40 pence. At the AGM of 1976 the Chairman reported much activity by groups and individuals in indexing parish records in Stockport, Manchester Cathedral and Eccles. He also said that Manchester Library now had the Computerised Index of Parish Registers for Lancashire and Cheshire. [Now known as the International Genealogical Index—IGI] Membership was noted to be about 130. It was reported that a complete set of the Manchester Genealogist had been assembled through the generosity of long-standing members donating missing copies. It was agreed that this 'Archive Set' should be bound. Because many early issues were not easily available, reprints of selected articles were made for purchase by members.

All officers and members of Council were re-elected with the exception of Mr Jenyon who resigned as Vice-Chairman. It is not clear whether the relevant minute included the recently co-opted members but some later attended Council meetings and Mr & Mrs Cresswell became joint Librarians. The position of members overseas was discussed in two ways. A proposal to reduce their subscriptions was turned down, but the idea of having correspondents for them was agreed and Mr Green and Mr Lewis volunteered for this work. During 1976, Mr Lewis was appointed Research Co-ordinator for the Society. Recording of monumental inscriptions and parish registers and indexing of registers continued, especially those of Manchester Cathedral and Eccles. Mr Beckett started an Index of Scottish Emigrants to England and foresaw the possible formation of an Anglo-Scots Society.

1977

In March 1977 the Society, along with the North Cheshire Society and the Macclesfield Heraldry Society, hosted the annual meeting and conference of the Federation of Family History Societies. This very successful two-day meeting was held at Owens Park, Manchester University. Many members of the Society, particularly the Secretary, Mrs Seddon, assisted the Conference Secretary, Mrs Pauline Litton, in the running of this event.

At the AGM in 1977, which attracted 35 members (described as an exceptionally large number), it was reported that the membership had reached 170, about one third of whom lived overseas, and additional help was needed in the running of the Society. Mrs Pollard was elected Membership Secretary, Miss Boardman Programme Organiser and Mr Lewis was confirmed as Research Co-ordinator. Among a number of changes to the Constitution was one which allowed the Council to decide the rate of subscription.

The Society joined the Lancashire Parish Register Society, which meant that the library received a copy of each volume of transcribed registers published by that society. Members continued the indexing of marriages at Manchester Cathedral and the transcribing of MIs at Barton-on-Irwell. Methodist marriage registers, which had previously been held in London, were transferred to the John Rylands Library in Manchester.

1978

A number of changes took place in the Council at the AGM of 1978. Mrs Seddon stood down as Secretary but was elected to the vacancy of Vice-Chairman and also became the Archivist. Mr Jenyon became Secretary and Mr Hidden stood down as Treasurer to be replaced by Mr Normansell. Mrs Knott, Miss Boardman and Mrs Miller left the Council and were replaced by Mrs Simpson and Mr Crosby. Mrs Miller had undertaken the typing for the

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journal for the previous five years. The meeting agreed to purchase a microfiche reader and county copies of the Mormon Computer Parish Register File Index (MCPRFI).

The Council later agreed to purchase a microfilm reader and obtain a copy of the Manchester census. Visits were organised to York and to London. The reports of the trips to London make special note of the sandwiches provided for the outward journeys by Mrs Hulme. As early as the AGM in 1977 it had been reported that at the more popular of the monthly meetings some members had to stand and in the autumn of 1978 the Council began to look for more suitable premises. Early in 1979 meetings were held, once again, in the Central Hall, Oldham Street. The library was also to be placed there although it was first taken to the Librarians' house for indexing. Two new members were invited on to the Council by the Secretary—Mr Webb and Mrs Hulme.

1979

At the AGM in May 1979, the Chairman reported great progress. Many transcribed records had been deposited in the library for which it was hoped to provide permanent premises. The M CPRFI was expected soon and the Society was preparing to index the Manchester census for 1851. A Development Committee had been set up, under the chairmanship of Mr Cresswell, primarily to raise money to obtain better equipment for publishing the journal for the increasing membership and to pay for library premises which it was hoped could be found in central Manchester. A small printing machine had been donated to the Society, but other machines were needed. The Society was, however, in a strong financial position, with nearly £1,000 in the bank. The Membership Secretary, Mrs Pollard, reported that the membership had nearly doubled and now stood at 350. It was thought that the increased interest had been aroused by the series of television programmes on family history introduced by a well-known TV news reader, Gordon Honeycombe. There was no major change on the Council although an indication of the increased workload was the appointment of an Assistant Editor of the journal (Mrs Lucas), a Minute Secretary (Miss Boardman), a Research Co-ordinator (Mrs Simpson) and a Federation Secretary (Mr Crosby).

The increasing cost of producing and posting the journal was the main reason for the increased subscription rates agreed for 1980, the first increases for 5 years. It was stated that the increasing membership meant that the voluntary efforts of a few members might no longer be able to produce the journal. October 1979 saw another successful two-day trip to London but there was less support for these trips in 1980. In March 1980 the Society was the host to the 3rd Annual Conference of North West Family History Societies. This was judged a success although there was criticism of the Bookstall and the standard of the buffet provided by the hotel in Stockport where it was held. The increased number attending the monthly meetings meant that they had to be moved to a larger room within the Central Hall. The library cupboard was kept outside this room and so easily available on the evenings of the meetings.

1980

The issue of the journal in January 1980 contained an article from Mrs Hulme, Treasurer of the Development Committee, outlining its work and the various ways in which it had raised funds. She also gave a detailed account of a visit members of the committee had paid to a basement in a central area which it was thought might be suitable for the Society to use as its offices, library and meeting room. The visitors were surprised to find an oak-panelled staircase and hall, a large meeting room with dais, several smaller rooms, kitchen, toilet and storage areas. Although thought very suitable, the costs involved were too great for the Society to consider at that time. She ended her article with an appeal to members to consider what each could do to help the Society financially.

The problems of publishing the journal for the increasing membership continued to cause anxiety. Money was obtained from the Greater Manchester Council lottery fund for the purchase of an electric typewriter and a stapling machine. An appeal was made for more volunteers to type the material and 6 members came forward. A course in elementary genealogy was arranged but there were few interested. It was felt that the main reason was that it was to be held in the evening and transport was difficult for those without cars.

The Officers were able to report a very successful year at the AGM in May 1980. There were 530 members—400 in the UK. The Development Committee was able to report that it had raised over £300 through such things as raffles, football cards and donations. Mr Beckett announced that he was standing down as Chairman and Mr Lucas was elected in his place. Mr Beckett continued as Editor of the journal. It was proposed at the meeting that the Constitution be amended to allow the election to the Council of a President, who could be a Life President. This amendment was approved and Mr Beckett was proposed and elected as Life President. The other officers were re-elected. Mr Lomas became Journal Secretary, taking over the work of sending the journal out to members from the Secretary, and Mrs Hulme joined the Council.

The AGM also saw developments in the way in which projects were handled in an effort to ensure that a coherent programme of work was set out and followed. It was hoped that this would encourage more members to be involved. The importance of the Research Co-ordinator was emphasised. The use of tape recorders as an aid to indexing was suggested with material being read off films on to tapes which could be typed later, possibly by other members. The aim of finding premises which could be used as a permanent base and available several times a week was again emphasised.

At the meeting of Council held 11 days after the AGM there was discussion on ‘the room at Piccadilly’, the plans of which most of the Council were said to have seen. Details were given of the space, the rent, rates and other expenses and the expected cost of about £4 per week. Discussions must have been going on for some time but not revealed to the AGM. It was agreed that the Development Committee could pay for the restoration of the room, the rent and rates and that discussion should continue over the details of the lease, planning permission and the rateable value. In this latter connection it was said to be relevant that charity status was being applied for. This is the first time that this is recorded in the Council minutes.

At this same important Council meeting, there was discussion on progress with the indexing of the 1851 census and the need to work closely with the Mormons. To assist in the allocation of work and to avoid duplication, a project committee was suggested to oversee the process. This held its first meeting on 30th October with Mr Ruscoe as chairman and eight other members.

On the 24th May 1980 Mr Graham Lewis was killed in a motor cycle accident. He had for some years been Research Co-ordinator for the Society and had himself done much research work. A fund was set up in his memory and by the time of the Council meeting in July it was reported that about £100 had been collected. Discussion took place as to how this should be used. In July 1981 it was reported that some of Mr Lewis’ papers and copies of some of his pedigrees would have dedication labels inserted and be housed separately in the library. The appeal would close on 1st January 1982. A bookcase bought in his memory was in place by September 1982 and a suitable commemorative plate was awaited. At this time there was £157 in the fund. There was debate and perhaps heated argument about what books, indeed what kind of book, should be bought. By the time of the AGM in 1983, however, the Librarian was able to comment on the increase in the number of items in the library including those purchased using the money from the fund and to report in September 1983 that all the books purchased had been placed in the library. It is not clear what was purchased. The bookcase no longer exists but the commemorative plate survives.

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Concern was expressed at the Council meeting on 7th July (recorded as being held at Cross Street Chapel and not the usual location of Fernley House without any explanation for the change) over the complaints of members yet again that they had not been able to get advice at the monthly meetings and ways of dealing with this were discussed as was the need to have membership cards. The proposed charity status was also discussed and the position of the Birmingham society was reported. It had taken that society six years to satisfy the Charity Commission that the Constitution, after amendment, was acceptable. The importance of education was emphasised. The establishment of other societies was beginning to lead to demarkation disputes as to which one should be the relevant society to cover certain areas.

The Secretary proposed that two assistants should be recruited to deal with the workload involved in the ever-growing business of the Society. This was agreed and some time later one was appointed—Mr Robinson. He also wondered whether the research questions could be passed on to the project group or some other member found to take this work on. Detailed discussions continued on both the new premises and charity status. The Rossendale Society (one of those seen as possibly encroaching on our boundary) proposed the publication of a NW Directory containing material from 4 or 5 groups. This was viewed with some suspicion as to the finances and timing of the idea.

It was not until the journal of July 1980 that it was announced that the MCPRFI had at last arrived and was being held by Mrs Seddon at her home. Members could make arrangements to consult it there. She was also prepared to answer simple queries by post. This journal also carried a notice that Mr Lomas had a small number of research aids available for sale to members. This was the beginning of a mail order service. Discussion continued about the amendments needed to ensure that the Constitution was acceptable to the Charity Commission. These were put to an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society on 13th November 1980 and, after explanation and discussion, the new Constitution was approved.

CHAPTER 5

1981 - 1983 Branching Out

1981

The greater number attending the monthly meetings could not be accommodated in the Central Hall and arrangements were made to hold them from the beginning of 1981 in the upper room at the Thompson's Arms in Chorlton Street on the second Thursday of each month. This was a change from the first Thursday. Many detailed points had to be dealt with before the lease for the premises at Piccadilly could be signed. These covered the responsibilities of the Trustees, hours of access, responsibility for damage, insurance, electricity, water, fire extinguishers, cleaning and the nature of the activities to take place. There seemed to be a reluctance to consult a solicitor about these matters, perhaps because of the possible cost. Meetings with the owners and their solicitor continued in 1981. Work was needed on the hot water tank, the immersion heater, the electric wiring, dry rot,

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plastering, new locks, the replacement of a window frame and the position of doors. The situation was reported to the AGM in May 1981.

The plumbing and electrical work had been completed by July at a cost of about £500. It was suggested that a grant should be sought from Greater Manchester lotteries for the decorations and fittings. Appropriate insurance proved to be costly. Most of the costs were met from the funds of the Development Committee but at the end of the year it was thought that another £500 would be required.

The work connected with the move into Clayton House and the request for charitable status clearly put a great strain on all the officers. Mrs Simpson became co-ordinator within the Project Committee, Mrs Lomas looked after the progress of typing for the journal and Mrs Pollard helped the Secretary with members' research work. It was agreed that the Society should not, for the time being, join with other societies in the production of a joint North West Directory but concentrate on publishing its own high-class directory as quickly as possible.

It was reported that books had been lost from the library and the Council decided that membership cards were needed to check on loans. The Project Committee reported the completion of much work on monumental inscriptions and the beginning of a Strays Index. Work on the indexing of the 1851 census was well under way. The costs related to project work was discussed and a budget was established later in the year. The journal continued to give problems and opinion was divided over whether records of monumental inscriptions should be printed in the journal or printed and sold separately.

At the AGM in 1981 the officers reported another successful year but emphasised the strain in dealing with the amount of detailed work needed to keep the Society going. The Chairman, Mr Lucas stood down and was replaced by Mr Robinson; Mr Walmsley became Treasurer in place of Mr Normansell (who remained a member of Council); Mr Crosby became Membership Secretary in place of Mrs Pollard who, in future, dealt solely with members' research. At the beginning of 1982 she agreed to undertake certain specified research for members living outside the area for a small charge plus postage. New members of Council were Mrs Ramsbotham and Mr Bee and it was agreed that the secretarial post should be designated 'General Secretary' in view of the other members of the Council who had 'secretary' in their titles.

The new Council decided that there was a need for detailed budgets to be submitted by committees and there was further discussion about the finances of the Development Committee. Many projects were being undertaken and all required some expenditure to cover expenses. Mr Bee was appointed to assist the Secretary and later agreed to arrange the programme of meetings for 1982/83. Mrs Ramsbotham took over the book sales. It was suggested that the Society should produce more small publications for sale. The General Secretary recruited two other members to help him—Mr & Mrs Morris.

After an exhibition in Bolton much interest had been aroused and the Secretary was approached about holding an exploratory meeting in that area. This was held on 24th November 1981 and 88 people attended. This led directly to the formation of the Bolton section of the Society. Two Bolton members, Mr Hayes and Mrs Gregory, attended future Council meetings to represent the new section. In his report to the next AGM Mr Hayes, as the Secretary, referred to the Bolton & District Family History Society. He said that the group who met in November 1981 had formed their own family history society and asked the

Manchester & Lancashire FHS to accept them as a sub-section of their flourishing society. The agenda and minutes of the Council of the Society, with the exception of August 1982, referred to the 'Bolton Section' until it was formally established as a branch in November 1995. Another suggestion along the same lines came soon afterwards from Blackburn but it was decided that the Society could not cope with the probable increase in membership. There had been a large increase following the formation of the section at Bolton.

1982

By January 1982 one of the rooms in Clayton House was ready for use, but the other room and the kitchen needed more work to be done. There was no agreement on the floor coverings, the furniture and the heating. The position was not helped by a burst pipe. The Council meeting on Monday 22 February 1982 was held at Clayton House and this became its regular meeting place. By the middle of March, the other rooms were ready and the library and the printing machines had been moved there. At this meeting the finances of the new accommodation were discussed. The Development Committee agreed it had the aim of raising £1000 in the next two years, but needed £475 to complete the work needed. The suggestion that this should be a loan was rejected in favour of a grant of the required sum. The reasoning for having the financial support of a key part of the Society's work as the responsibility of one of its committees rather than being paid for by the subscriptions of the members was not explained.

It was agreed that Founder Members, long-standing members and Mrs George should be given Honorary Membership of the Society. Mr Wild was the only Founder member who was still a member. Two long-standing members were identified—Mrs Bocking and Miss Pendleton. Mrs George was singled out because of her assistance in securing the accommodation at Clayton House. The room at the Thompson's Arms had proved unsatisfactory for the monthly meetings and the meetings from June 1982 were held at the Scout & Guide Hall in Faraday Street, quite near to Clayton House. Through the meeting of NW members of the Federation of Family History Societies it was learned that the Rossendale Society was starting a branch at Rochdale. Concern was expressed that this could lead to duplication of effort in transcribing and indexing. Developments in the NW on a common directory for members led to an agreement that the Society would participate.

Before the AGM in 1982, Mr Ruscoe said he was resigning as Chairman of the Project Committee and in his report the General Secretary, Mr Jenyon, said that he was also not seeking re-election after 4 years in that office. At the AGM the Chairman reported his pleasure at two events during the year—the start of the group at Bolton and the opening of the rooms at Clayton House after their transformation into something of which they could be proud. Largely as a result of the expenditure on the rooms, the Treasurer reported a deficit over the year of just over £400. There was no one willing to take on the office of General Secretary at the meeting and Mr Jenyon offered to continue for a further three months.

Mr Crosby later agreed to become Acting General Secretary with assistance from Mr Berrell as Journal Secretary and Mr King as Social Secretary. Mr Berrell said he would distribute the journals from his home but would not be able to attend Council meetings. Moving into Clayton House gave rise to a number of housekeeping problems which had not been anticipated. The library opened at Clayton House on 8 May 1982. Later in the year the 1981 edition of the Computer File Index was obtained and was made available in the library rather than, as before, at Mrs Seddon's house.

Mr Beckett said that suggestions had been made to form a group for genealogists with Scottish interests and a preliminary meeting was held on 28 November 1982. At the same time it was reported that groups interested in genealogy were starting in such towns as Wigan, Heywood, Bury and Oldham. Discussions took place with the societies in Liverpool and Rossendale about ‘boundaries’. The question of the formation of new societies in neighbouring towns was the subject of discussions in the Council on many occasions in the next few years.

1983

Another sharp rise in membership occurred during 1982 after a series of programmes was shown on Granada TV. To cope with this and other increasing problems, the Acting General Secretary, Mr Crosby, introduced at the end of that year a proposal to re-organise the structure of the Council. This set out clearly the areas of responsibilities of the 4 main officers and other members of the Council. It was agreed that the scheme should be operated for the next few months and reviewed before the next AGM. A special meeting of the Council was held immediately before this AGM to discuss the workings of the new scheme. Before this meeting, four of its members indicated that they were not going to stand for re-election—Mr Wheaton, Mr Walmsley, the Treasurer, and his wife who had been Membership Secretary, and Mr Cresswell, the chairman of the Development Committee. The latter posed a serious problem for the Society. Mr Cresswell had been the driving force behind the move to Clayton House and the transformation of a derelict set of rooms into an acceptable library and office space. The improvements had been paid for largely through funds raised by his committee. It was decided that the committee should be disbanded and its development functions assumed by the Council. An Appeals Fund Committee was set up to raise money through donations and other means. The Council decided that the management arrangements were working well and should be presented to the AGM in May 1983.

The new arrangements were not put formally to members for approval, but it was reported that the Council would be reduced in size and meet monthly. There would also be sub-committees and there would be quarterly meetings of the Council with members of all the sub-committees. The Council would consist of the President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Appeals Co-ordinator, Project Co-ordinator, two representatives from the Bolton group and one representative from the Anglo-Scottish group. Mr Crosby was elected General Secretary, Mr Houliston Treasurer, Miss Forsyth Librarian, Mr Coupe to deal with projects and Mr King responsible for fund raising. Mr Crosby reported to the AGM that he had been negotiating with the Charity Commission so that the Society could be a Registered Charity. Some amendments to the Constitution, agreed at the AGM, would clear the way to securing this status.

The first meeting of the new Council on 20 May 1983 gave an opportunity for an assessment of the general position of the Society. The Chairman praised the improvement in the publication of the journal through the use of professional printers but expressed concern at the increased postal costs. He was pleased to see the number and high quality of the contributions from the Bolton section. The position of work on projects, of the library, the sections and appeals were looked at in some detail. This discussion continued the overview provided by the officers in reports to the AGM. One important point which was discussed was the need for the work on all projects which had been undertaken by members, either of

the Society as a whole or its new branches, to be brought together at Clayton House. It could then be recorded, indexed and suitably bound copies put into the library.

One clear result of the new structure of the Society was that the finance needed to undertake the proposed research and development was made clearer. It was agreed that budgets had to be drawn up and a close watch kept on expenditure. The value of links with archivists, librarians, church authorities and other groups working in the same field was emphasised. The growth of the Society was also viewed with some concern and it was noted that the production of the journal was still a problem.

The availability of a single office meant that consideration could now be given to buying office equipment which could be used in connection with many different activities. In the autumn of 1983 the purchase of a photocopier was discussed. This had, in fact, been under consideration for a long time but a decision deferred. It was agreed that the purchase could go ahead provided that sufficient finance was available after all other anticipated expenditure had been met. The discussion brought home to the Council the need for regular financial statements if due consideration was to be given to comparatively large single items of expenditure. The capital cost of the photocopier was in the region of £750 and it was suggested that it was a suitable subject for fund raising. It was installed by the beginning of 1984.

An interesting point brought out in 1983 was that only the Treasurer had authority to sign cheques for the Society and difficulty was caused because the Treasurer at that time was not able to attend all Council meetings. It was agreed then that the General Secretary should also be an authorised signatory along with the President and Chairman. The finances appear complicated at this time with the reference to several funds for specific purposes. Mr Critchley assisted in the week-to-week financial affairs but the regular absences of the Treasurer on business continued to worry the Council.

CHAPTER 6

1984 - 1989 Unsettling Times

1984

In January 1984 Mr Berrell, in conjunction with Mr Watson, produced a computerised list of the membership. This totalled 1021 but not all had renewed their subscriptions for the year. At the same time it was reported that the library list was being produced on a word processor. The cost of producing this list was nearly £100. These initiatives were made privately, as it were, and not through equipment belonging to the Society. A curious item was reported to Council in January 1984. The Birmingham and Midland FHS had sent a circular asking for a donation for its 21st birthday in February 1984. It was agreed the £25 should be sent. The Society was host to the Annual Conference of the North West Group of the Federation in the spring of 1984 at the University of Manchester Refectory. It was agreed that a separate bank account should be opened for this under the control of Mr King.

The Scout and Guide Hall was not proving satisfactory as a meeting place. Members were concerned at the access through dark streets and up steep stairs. Noise coming from the

nearby postal sorting office was also a problem. A new venue was sought and eventually a room at Manchester Town Hall was rented. Monthly meetings were held there from the beginning of 1985.

For some time the value of having a Patron had been discussed and possible names considered. Eventually Sir Guy Holland was proposed to the AGM in 1984 and this was accepted unanimously. Sir Guy had been a member for some years and, although then living in Gloucestershire, had strong family links with Lancashire. At this AGM the working of the revised Council was outlined to members and reported as being very successful. Reports were given of the activities of the branches and of the project group under the strong leadership of Mr Coupe. During the year 25 projects had been started and, in particular, the work on preparing a surname index of the 1851 census was well under way. The library had also expanded during its second year at Clayton House. Two of the main officers were replaced—Mr Lucas (a former chairman) became Vice-Chairman in place of Mrs Seddon and Mr King took over the work of Treasurer instead of Mr Houlliston. Mrs Gregson succeeded Mr King as co-ordinator of the Appeals Fund. Membership was increasing at a steady rate and then totalled about 1200. Progress was gradually being made towards the goal of applying for registration as a charity. The benefits, largely the ability to covenant subscriptions, were explained.

At its first meeting in June 1984 the new Council had an overview of the position of the Society, in particular the state of its finances. The new Treasurer pointed out the problems of bank standing orders when subscriptions were raised and the gradually increasing cost of the journal—the result of increasing size and increased postal charges. He pointed to the costs of electricity at Clayton House although the total running costs were relatively low. He also pointed out that the accounts of the Society did not show a true and fair record of their activities in that they did not include returns from the sub-sections such as the Anglo-Scots, Bolton, the library, projects and the bookstall. There was no suggestion that all was not in order but it was agreed that an expenditure and income account should be kept by all sections for incorporation in the year-end accounts of the Society.

The discussions at this meeting had unfortunate repercussions for the Society. The following week a meeting of the Bolton committee, attended by Mr Robinson, heard of the resignation of their secretary, Mr Hayes, and considered a report about the Council meeting. At a later meeting of the Bolton committee it was decided that the Bolton members should be asked if they wanted to continue their association with the Manchester & Lancashire FHS or set up as an independent society. A letter, signed by seven members of the committee, was sent out to members in Bolton asking for their views by means of a questionnaire. This was followed by a letter from Mr Robinson, the Chairman of the Society, on behalf of the Council pointing out the advantages of the Bolton branch remaining with the Society and also asking for views.

At a meeting of the Council in July, to which Bolton committee members were invited and four attended, the views of both parties were set out. Fewer than half the members circulated had sent back a completed questionnaire and the great majority of those had not used Clayton House, were unaware of its costs, were in favour of independence but were satisfied with the journal. This meant that fewer than a third of the members to whom questionnaires had been sent were known to be in favour of independence. The view of Bolton was that they sought to have a society with democratically elected committee

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members, responsible for their own finances and maintaining cordial relations with Manchester. At that time the committee was not elected and there was no specific treasurer. It was agreed that a meeting of Bolton members should be held to obtain further views.

This meeting was held on 20 August 1984, chaired by Mr Beckett and attended by Mr Robinson, Mr Crosby and 63 Bolton members. Points were raised on both sides and clarification given. At the end of the meeting, 35 voted to remain with Manchester and discussion took place as to what needed to be done to ensure that the differences of opinion did not affect the development of the Society.

As if this was not enough for the Council to deal with, Clayton House had an increasing number of break-ins and vandalism affecting all the tenants. It was proposed to employ a resident caretaker but the only suitable accommodation for this person was in that part of the building occupied by the Society. Discussions took place with the agent and it was soon found that a move to other rooms in the building would lead to additional expense. During these discussions, it was pointed out that the existing lease expired in June 1985. Contact was made directly with the owner and it was suggested that rooms at the front of the same (5th) floor could be made available and adapted to the use of the Society at the owner's expense. Council agreed to accept this offer of Rooms 51 and 52, subject to agreement on a number of points relating to repair, decoration and fittings.

It was reported in August that the Charity Commission had accepted the Constitution of the Society and that charity status would soon be granted. It is not clear exactly when this happened but it must have been before the end of 1984 because in January 1985 the Treasurer reported that 150 members had signed covenants in respect of their subscriptions, thus increasing the income of the Society. The Charity Number first appeared on the new style of headed notepaper introduced around June 1985 and then in the journal for July 1985. The Treasurer also suggested that the financial position was such that it would be possible to consider major expenditure, especially for the library. A fiche printer was suggested. After making enquiries it was decided to buy one at a cost of nearly £2000.

1985

Early in 1985 planning began for the celebration of the 21st anniversary of the beginning of the Society. It was agreed that this should take the form of a conference to be held at the University on 19 October. There were two speakers, Mr F Palgrave and Mr Rambout, a buffet supper and a slide show given by Mrs Rooney. A souvenir programme was planned but it is not clear whether one was, in fact, produced and no copy has been preserved in the records. The day was deemed to be a great success with around 100 attending. A display was prepared for the event by a member, Mr Lambert, who had previously prepared one for an event at Salford. He was a Road Safety Officer with Greater Manchester Council and he was asked to continue to use his professional skills in future presentations for the Society.

A number of changes were inevitable at the 1985 AGM. Mr Robinson said he would have to stand down for health reasons and Mr Crosby said he would have to resign because of increasing business commitments. Other vacancies arose in important appointments outside the Council. In his report the General Secretary, Mr Crosby, referred to the hard work undertaken by a small number of members and singled out Mr Berrell for his work dealing with publications, including the journal, and for the research he undertook for new and even prospective members. He also noted the strong financial position of the Society and

the progress made by the Bolton section after the difficulties of the previous year. This was underlined in the report from the Bolton representative. The Anglo-Scottish section was also able to report an impressive amount of work done. Mr Bee was elected Chairman and Mr Berrell became the General Secretary as well as undertaking the work of Journal Distributor.

The first item to concern the new Council was the change of accommodation within Clayton House. Representations had to be made to the agent and directly to Mrs George about the physical state of the proposed rooms. The possibility of increased rent was alarming and the possibility of moving elsewhere was considered. However, after much negotiating and work on the electrical wiring, decoration and furnishings, the new rooms opened on 1 March 1986. Some major changes in the work of the Council were proposed and implemented during the year. Items for discussion were to be circulated before the meetings in an attempt to avoid lengthy meetings and ensure that all items were considered. There would be a set agenda of the main items of business and reports from the sections would not necessarily be presented at each meeting but only when it was thought appropriate. In spite of this, the minutes of the meeting on 22 July record that it started at 7.30 and closed at 10.45 p. m.

The idea of a chain of office for the Chairman (a point suggested at the previous AGM) was rejected on grounds of cost. New membership application forms were introduced. It was agreed that the end of the financial year should be changed from April to the 31st December to allow the accounts to be prepared in time for the AGM. An Annual Report was to be written by the Chairman using reports from the various officers and then included in the April number of the journal each year. It would include a brief statement of the financial position but not the accounts. In the July journal there would be a report of the AGM and a list of the elected officers together with an announcement that the minutes and the accounts were available to members on request. In accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission that all charities have Trustees, Mr Beckett, Mr Bee and Mr King were appointed.

Address labels for the journal had been produced by Mr Watson but in July 1985 he indicated that he could not continue to do this. Mr Marlow produced a paper for Council in which he outlined proposals for the provision of computing facilities for the Society. He pointed out that it was unsatisfactory for these to be provided through facilities at members' workplaces. He proposed the purchase of equipment which could be linked to his own BBC computer and would be able to produce not only labels but also master copies of indexes, the library list, details of members' interests and master copies of standard letters and forms. He was prepared to house this equipment at his home and pointed out the flexibility of the equipment and the saving of time which would ensue. It was agreed to proceed with this arrangement at a cost of £928.

During the year the Society became a full corporate member of the Manchester Council for Voluntary Service. Membership continued to increase and this produced a lot of work for the Members' Research undertaken by Mrs Pollard. It was agreed that this invaluable service must be supported. The additional finance now available led to the opening of an investment account with the National Savings Bank. Much discussion took place about the provision of lapel badges for members of the Society and its two branches. The Bolton branch held a members' competition to design a badge. After designs were developed and prices obtained it was agreed that if Bolton and the Anglo-Scots wanted to proceed, the

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badges would have to be financed within the branch funds. Bolton reported that one of their members had taken time off work to attend an exhibition on the Society's behalf and had asked for reimbursement of the costs of employing someone to undertake work in her absence. It was agreed that this was acceptable provided that prior approval had been given.

A Handbook, prepared by Mrs Mason, dealing with family history research and available records was printed for all existing members. It was given to new members as they joined. It was agreed in October 1985 that Mr Robinson should be made an Honorary Member in recognition of the work he had done for the Society and that a social event should be arranged in December 1985 to which those who undertook voluntary work for the Society could be invited to discuss the activities. It was held from 10.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on a Sunday in the St Thomas' Centre, Ardwick Green where morning coffee and lunch were available. This gathering of volunteers was revived, on a smaller scale, in 1992.

1986

The Data Protection Act (1984) was brought to the notice of Council by Mr Marlow who pointed out the need for the Society to be registered with the appropriate authority. He was appointed Computer Officer responsible for these matters. The Society acquired a second hand photocopier but problems with the typewriter led to the journal for April 1986 being typeset by its printers, Richard Boyes & Co. There was no increase in the cost over the typist previously employed.

The Society had co-operated in the publication of a joint NW Register of Members' Interests and it was agreed that it would be advertised and sold by the Society. In February 1986 the General Secretary reported that 70 new members had joined, making the total 1762. He was arranging for a short article to appear in the new publication 'Family Tree Magazine' in which the Society was shortly featuring as the 'Guest Society' of the month. It was felt that there was scope for more publicity of this kind and someone was needed to take responsibility for this. Suggestions were made that occasional meetings should be held in locations distant from Manchester—for example Blackpool and London—but these were not followed up.

In February 1986 Mr Beckett said he would like to stand down as Editor of the journal, having been in the position since the end of 1972. The Council praised him for bringing the publication to its excellent state. He was succeeded by Mrs Mason. One of her first actions was to put forward to the Council a number of changes. It was proposed to reduce the page size to A5 in line with that of the journals of many other societies, thus allowing double the number of pages for the same weight and so the same postage; to incorporate the Anglo-Scots Bulletin (which she edited) and a similar section from Bolton; and to use professional typesetting for all the journal to maintain the clarity and uniformity of the printing. The Council approved all these suggestions and Mrs Mason also emphasised the need for material for each issue to be sent to her by the dates set out in each issue.

There was no change in the main officers at the AGM of 1986 which received a report on the period from 20 April to 31 December 1985 together with the accounts for this period in accordance with the change agreed during the year. The owners of Clayton House submitted a draft of the new lease for the premises and at the same time Mrs George decided to sell Clayton House.

The Chairman reported on the need to liaise with neighbouring societies in relation to projects in order to avoid duplication. This had always been a potential problem but had become greater as a result of the larger number of individuals working on family history. As a result of discussions with the Lancashire society, and taking into account work already done, it was agreed that the 1851 census index for Preston should be published by Manchester & Lancashire FHS and those for Lancaster and the Fylde by the societies jointly. A boundary was agreed for future work. A contentious area was Middleton, which was placed on Lancashire's side of the line.

The Society agreed to host the 1989 Conference of the Federation of Family History Societies on 8 to 10 September and planning began in the middle of 1986. This was to be associated with the 25th anniversary of the Society.

It was agreed (September 1986) that a bank account be opened in the United States to make it easier for members resident in North America to pay their subscriptions and for publications and library services. Enquiries were also made about opening bank accounts in other countries but nothing came of these. The bank charges incurred on the UK account at the Midland Bank were increasing and early in 1987 it was agreed that the account should be moved to the Royal Bank of Scotland which offered lower rates and an additional account was opened at the National Giro Bank on which no charges were levied. In January 1988 it was agreed that arrangements should be made to enable the Society to accept payment by means of credit cards.

1987

In early 1987 it was reported that 75 new members had joined in January, giving a total membership of 2241. About 130 attended the monthly meetings and the gallery of the Conference Room in Manchester Town Hall had to be made available to deal with these numbers. The increasing costs associated with the journal were causing concern and this, together with delays at the printers and an unacceptable number of faulty copies, led to new printers being used. The increasing number of members also caused problems in maintaining the Members Interests Register. This had been held, only for the areas round Manchester, on a card index system. In the middle of 1987 those related to Anglo-Scottish members were amalgamated with those of members of the main society. A member, Mr Griffiths, offered to computerise the Members' Interests and began discussing this project with Mr Marlow. A small committee was set up to look at the policy which should be adopted.

The volume of typing in relation to the journal, census indexes and other projects, the library list and other publications was found difficult to manage and it was felt that a word processor held by the Society would be of great benefit. The photocopier was not performing to the standard promised by the suppliers and another reconditioned machine was acquired from them at the reduced price of £600. An additional room (No 54) became available on the fifth floor and it was agreed to rent this at a cost of £500 per year.

At the AGM in May 1987 officers were able to report another year of steady progress and increasing use of the facilities at Clayton House including the newly available room. This was fitted out at a cost of nearly £2000 to hold the microfiche and microfilm readers and was also available for use as a meeting room. The Anglo-Scottish meetings were held there. There was no change in the major officers and the Treasurer was able to report a healthy financial position although the accounts had not by then been audited. They were

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later audited by Mr Snowden and a Special General Meeting was held on 12 November at which they were approved.

Towards the end of 1987 the arrangements for taking bookings for the library came under review. This was proving onerous for Mrs Rayner who had been taking the bookings at her home. Mr Lambert, who had been appointed Library Steward in October 1986, offered to staff the library each weekday morning in return for an honorarium. This was agreed and, after a telephone line had been installed at Clayton House, enabled bookings to be made with him. In December 1987 Mr Lambert was co-opted to the Council in charge of information and publicity. Mr Chesworth, who had been dealing with publicity for some time, continued to assist in this. Mr Arnold, who already assisted Mr Lambert each day, offered to staff the library on Thursdays and every afternoon but the Librarian opposed an increase in the opening hours because the volunteers needed time to work when other members were not there. Mr Arnold took over as Library Steward in October 1988 (without the honorarium) when Mr Lambert's business commitments increased. At the same time an answerphone was installed to take the pressure off the volunteers and to deal with out-of-hours calls.

1988

Early in 1987 the Scottish family history societies withdrew from the Federation of Family History Societies but the Spring Conference planned to be held in Aberdeen in April 1988 went ahead there. Nine members of the Society, including the President, attended an excellent conference during which Mr Beckett accepted on behalf of the Society the Elizabeth Simpson Award for the journal making the greatest contribution to family history in 1987. The Society had a special mention the year before. The basis of the Award was changed the following year when individual articles rather than a complete issue of a journal were considered. During the meeting the Federation officers had expressed concern about its finances. The following year the Society's representative, Mr Robinson, proposed a levy of 20 pence per member from each society and this was accepted.

The information and publicity work was expanded at this time. Those involved compiled a list of local outlets where posters and application forms could be made available. A display was prepared which could be taken to outside events and it was agreed that it should be taken to Aberdeen for the Federation Conference. This was the first time a society had had an exhibition of this kind and the Federation asked that a similar display be put on at Durham in 1989. The display was also taken to a number of sites in the Manchester area, usually as part of an exhibition or fair but also in response to a request for a talk on family history. Material was sent to many local newspapers, libraries and local radio. In the early months of 1988 11 members attended a series of classes designed for beginners in family history research and a series of more advanced talks was planned.

In March 1988 Mr Coupe reported that the Mormons were intending to index and fully transcribe the 1881 census and were hoping to involve family history societies. It was decided that the Society should agree to be involved in Manchester, Chorlton, Oldham and Ashton under Lyne. The development of this major project is dealt with in a later chapter.

In 1987 the Society was approached by the Society of Genealogists seeking to hold a joint conference on Computers in Family History. The arrangement was that the Society would undertake the local organisation and have half the surplus, with the SOG responsible for any shortfall. The conference was held on 14 May 1988 at the St Thomas Centre Ardwick Green and was fully booked with 125 people attending.

At the AGM in May 1988 the Chairman and Vice-Chairman did not stand for re-election. Mr Robinson was elected Chairman for a second term and Mr Lambert was elected Vice-Chairman. Mrs Simpson was elected to the Council. The President, Mr Beckett, decided that he would no longer attend meetings of the Council. During this year it was agreed that other societies with kindred interests would be allowed to use the rooms for occasional meetings in return for an appropriate donation to the Society funds. It was also agreed, following the success of the display at Aberdeen, that the Society should be represented at as many meetings as possible with a view to publicity but also to sell our publications. Priority would be given to meetings organised by the Federation and those in the North West of England. Speakers were also in demand and visual aids needed to be prepared. A projector and screen were purchased. Mr Lambert represented the Society at Federation meetings in place of Mr Crosby. During 1988 the NW group of the Federation decided to ask the Federation for representation on its Executive Council. It was agreed that the Anglo-Scottish FHS should join the newly formed Scottish Association of FHS and

accept its invitation to publish their newsletter provided that a suitable volunteer could be found.

1989

In April 1989 at the end of the Society's year, three elected members of the Council decided to retire—Mr Lambert, the Vice-Chairman, Miss Forsyth, the Librarian and Mrs Simpson. Mrs Rowbotham, Secretary of the Anglo-Scots also retired. At the AGM in May that year, Mrs Wood was elected (after a ballot) as Vice-Chairman and Mrs E Smith and Mr Snowden as members to replace Miss Forsyth and Mrs Simpson. Miss Forsyth continued as Librarian. Once again the accounts were not audited by the time of the AGM but this was satisfactorily done later and the accounts were accepted at a Special General Meeting held on 14 December 1989. The total income of the Society had now brought it to the level at which it was obliged to register with Customs and Excise under the Value Added Tax regulations. This registration was completed at the end of 1989.

A rent review undertaken in accordance with the lease imposed a rent of £1500 for 1989 with an increase of £500 for each of the next two years. At the same time there was a dispute over repairs to the property which were needed to prevent rain coming through the ceiling. This had already damaged some books. As a result of the proposed increases in the rent and in the costs of the journal it was agreed that the subscriptions for 1991 would have to rise. The agents later said that the review was being suspended because the building was being sold. This change of ownership took place at the end of 1989. In view of the uncertainty about the ownership of the building, the new lease and possible rent increases, there was discussion in the early months of 1990 about finding new premises and at least one possible location was visited.

It was reported that the Mormons were coming to the library to film certain records in accordance with an agreement made some years previously. In August 1989 it was agreed that Mrs Mason, the journal editor, should be co-opted to the Council until the next AGM. It was also agreed that Mr McAlpine should assist her in editing the journal. He had written a number of research articles which had been published in the journal during the previous few years.

At this time the Council was not meeting regularly each month as in the previous years. A number of changes faced the Council at this time. Mr Bee, who had organised the bookstall for many years, wanted to retire from this; an Assistant Treasurer was needed to cope with the increasingly complex finances and a new auditor was also needed. Mr Berrell said that he would have to retire as General Secretary at the end of 1989 as a result of health problems, but would be willing to continue as Membership Secretary and Journal Distributor. Mr Robinson said he would stand down as Chairman at the 1990 AGM because of his business commitments and Mr King, the Treasurer, said he would relinquish the post at the end of 1990. Mrs Dean came forward to run the bookstall, and Mr Irvine agreed to audit the accounts for 1989.

From the beginning of 1990 it was agreed that Miss Connor, Secretary of the Anglo-Scots, would act as General Secretary until the next AGM, assisted by Mrs Wood in the day-to-day running of the Society. Perhaps as a result of the secretarial difficulties at this time, it is recorded that a number of written complaints were received from members who were unhappy with various aspects of the running of the Society.

Part — I The Society

CHAPTER 7

1990 - 1993 Towards a Larger Business

1990

Mrs Mason presented a discussion paper to the Council in January 1990 setting out a possible future structure of the Council. This was discussed at a number of formal and informal meetings by members of the Council and a number of other invited members. The proposal was a development of the scheme put forward in 1983 which had not been working in accord with the printed plan. It was agreed that the duties then undertaken in the important posts of General Secretary and Treasurer needed clarification and divided among more people. Particular attention was paid to the work of the General Secretary who then undertook four roles—General Secretary, Membership Secretary, Journal Secretary and Distributor of the journal and publications of the Society. This had come about when Mr Berrell took on the work of General Secretary while retaining the work which he had done previously.

It was agreed that the General Secretary should deal with the work of the Society as a whole and the work of the Council. Mrs Smith agreed to be nominated for election to this post. Mr Berrell agreed to continue as Membership Secretary and Mr King agreed to be Social Secretary—booking rooms, arranging speakers and conferences. It was agreed that someone was needed to take care of supplies of stationery and Mr Lambert said he would be prepared to return to Council and do this. There was discussion about members who might be invited to stand for election to Council. It was also decided to recommend to the AGM that four members should be appointed Vice-Presidents in recognition of the contributions they had made to the success of the Society—Mr Bee, Mrs George, Mrs Pollard and Mr Robinson. Mr Kent agreed to take over from Mrs Mason as editor of the journal. It was also agreed that the distribution of the journal would take place from Clayton House and not from Mr Berrell's house as had happened for the previous eight years.

At the AGM held on 10 May 1990 there were major changes in the membership of the Council. Mrs Mason became Chairman, Mrs Wood continued as Vice-Chairman, Mrs E Smith was confirmed as General Secretary and Mr Arnold became the new Treasurer. Ten other members were elected—Mr Coupe, Mr Griffiths, Mr Irvine, Mr King, Mr Lambert, Mr McAlpine, Mr Oldham, Mrs Rhodes, Mrs D B Smith and Professor Welland. Members also agreed that the four nominations from the Council should be appointed Vice-Presidents. It is of interest that the Constitution at the time said that the Council should consist of the four officers and six members and did not allow for the position of Vice-President. Members also agreed to a rise in the subscriptions although this could have been decided by the Council under the existing Constitution. At the first meeting of the new Council a number of ideas were discussed. The growth in the number of members meant that the existing accommodation was no longer big enough to cope with all those wanting to use the library at Clayton House. A working party was set up to decide what facilities were necessary and to find appropriate rooms. Miss Forsyth, the Librarian who was co-opted to the Council, worked out that about 3000 square feet were needed to house the books and film readers, provide a reading room of appropriate size, space for a copier, a shop and a separate library

office. The existing space was about 850 square feet. A comment was made that, for the cost of renting this size of property, it might be possible to buy property but it would be out of the city centre. In view of the urgent need to store material relating to the transcription of the 1881 census, it was agreed to rent an additional room in Newton Street. The room would be used to hold other items to provide more space at Clayton House. The fiche printer was moved into the viewing room, thus allowing the office space to be used solely for office staff. At the same time, the value of this project to the Society was questioned in view of the other projects which were being neglected and the costs being incurred.

It was agreed that the size of the Society's finances required the employment of a professional auditor. It was also agreed that the accounts from Bolton should be attached to those of the Society in the report for the AGM. It was reported that Mr Antonie, who had designed the covers for the publications of the Society, had decided that he would charge for this work in future instead of providing it at no cost to the Society. A finance sub-committee was set up to look at all aspects of present and future finance, particularly in light of a possible move to larger premises. Mr King, Mr Arnold (Treasurer), Mr Coupe, Mr Irvine and Mr Griffiths were nominated. It was agreed that this group should not look at general matters which were the responsibility of the Council. The more businesslike approach of the Council was also evident in the drive at this time to have all correspondence addressed to Clayton House and all equipment and stocks of publications held in officers' houses moved there as well. The use of standardised stationery without private addresses was approved. It was agreed that it was necessary for someone to be identified who had the time available to oversee the work in the office and Mrs Wood, the Vice-Chairman, agreed to do this. The finance sub-committee recommended that unauthorised expenditure by members should stop, that a till was needed in Clayton House to deal with cash transactions, that the treasurer of the Bolton Society should join the sub-committee and that budgets should be set for all sections. These proposals were all agreed by the Council.

In view of the increased use of computers in genealogy it was suggested that a computer section should be started. Mr Oldham was proposed as the member who might be involved in this. The question of badges for Council members and other officers was raised. A redistribution of work was also discussed—Mr Bebbington took over Members' Interests from Mrs Wood, Mr King became Speakers' Secretary and Mr R Smith became the representative at Federation meetings and was co-opted to the Council. Doubts were, however, expressed as to the value to the Society of membership of the Federation. An annual payment of up to £800 was being made to the Federation. Part of this covered insurance, but there was no clear indication of how the remainder was being spent. Members would expect a regular report of the activities of the Federation so that the payments could be justified.

Mr Coupe said that in view of the large number of projects now in progress, it would be helpful to have someone to concentrate on the organisation of the recording of monumental inscriptions. He said that local work on the 1851 census was now completed and he was going down to the Public Record Office to see what could be done with the unfiled returns. It was proposed that a computer should be purchased to deal with work in the office and library and Mr Coupe suggested that, if a new one were obtained, it would be appropriate for it to be used on the more complicated project work and the existing one which he used could

be transferred to Clayton House. This was agreed and a computer and a laser printer were purchased at a total cost of about £3,000.

A group of members living in and around London started to meet occasionally and the Chairman said that she would go to one of their meetings. In September 1990, the President, Mr Beckett, said that he no longer wished to attend meetings of the Council but would be available for consultation if required. He had not, in fact, attended a meeting of the Council for more than two years before this.

The General Secretary reported in November 1990 on a meeting for secretaries organised by the Federation at which a job description covering more than secretarial duties was discussed. Some societies were paying their officers and it was felt that this was likely to be the way the larger societies might progress. The Council agreed that officers using their own computers at home on the work of the Society should have an honorarium in respect of this work. To improve efficiency, the Council also agreed that all committee meetings would in future be held on the same day, the third Thursday of each month, starting with the Library Committee, then the Finance Committee and then the Council at 7 p.m.

1991

Early in 1991 Mr Lambert, said that he would not seek re-election at the AGM and Mr Arnold, the Treasurer, said he did not want to continue in that office although he would be prepared to continue on the Council and help on the financial side. Mrs Smith, the General Secretary, said that she could not continue unless more help was forthcoming. A Minute Secretary was thought to be the most pressing need but a recognised assistant was necessary. Mrs de Courcy started as Minute Secretary at the meeting of the Council in March 1991. The Treasurer reported an expected deficit in the accounts for 1990 and referred to an increase in the rate of VAT levied on subscriptions. Action was taken to tighten up the arrangements for the renewal of subscriptions. The scale of the problem was indicated in a report to the Council in April 1991 which said that out of 3,859 members over 1,000 had not paid their subscriptions, due on 1 January, by 27 March. It was agreed that the subscription rates, which Council members thought were too low, should be reviewed every two years. The lease on the rooms at Clayton House was due to expire in 1992 and replacements might be more expensive. At the AGM in 1991 Mr King was elected a Vice-President in recognition of many years of service to the Society. Mr Griffiths was elected Treasurer.

One of the first actions of the new Treasurer was to question whether the Society should pay VAT at the standard rate on subscriptions. After discussions with the Customs and Excise lasting a year it was agreed that a reduced rate was appropriate. This resulted in a substantial saving to the Society and a refund of some of the tax previously paid. Two other long-lasting discussions started at this time. Both derived from changes in the law which required charities to ensure that their Constitutions met the requirements on how the charity was managed and, in particular, how it controlled and accounted for its finances. One concerned amendments to the Constitution to cover the branches and their relationship to the main society and the other was the need to tighten up the administration of the Society and the way in which its accounts were presented to the annual general meeting.

The problem was acute in respect of the financial arrangements between the Society and its Bolton branch. Although the branch was receiving an annual grant from the Society to cover the cost of its meetings and the administrative work related to membership, it had

accumulated, over the ten years of its existence, other finance from the sale of its publications. These derived from the projects undertaken by the Bolton members, largely at their own expense. The Bolton members thought very strongly that this money did not belong to the main Society and, in particular, was not available to the Society for other purposes.

The increasing centralisation of the administrative work can be seen in the discussions in the Council over such matters as the opening and distribution of the incoming mail. Mr Houghton suggested that a computer section should be set up to advise the Council and members about the ways in which this technology might benefit them. The new data base for the Members' Interests was also to be developed on a computer, and to facilitate this work Mr Houghton was co-opted to the Council in July 1991. The problems of publishing the Members' Interests Directory and the financial implications occupied the Council for some years. Another result of the centralisation and computerisation of the administrative work was that the work of the Membership Secretary was done at Clayton House. All work relating to subscriptions, lists of members, numbers of members and the production of labels for the journal was carried out there by the end of 1991. This was considered essential for the production of accurate reports for VAT purposes. At the same time the accounts were being fully computerised.

In September 1991 Mrs Smith, the General Secretary, resigned from the Council for personal reasons and the Minute Secretary, Mrs de Courcy, was co-opted to the Council and appointed Acting General Secretary. Mr Farnell was also co-opted to the Council at this time to facilitate work on the computerisation of the accounts. In September 1991 the Council also agreed that it was necessary to raise the subscriptions. The additional reliance on computers required the purchase of one with greater capacity together with two printers. This released a computer for use in the library.

1992

As has been noted, the lease on the rooms on the 5th floor of Clayton House was to come to an end in 1992 and the Council had been looking for other accommodation. In the autumn of 1991 rooms became available on the 3rd floor of Clayton House and also a smaller room on the 4th floor. Together, these provided considerably more space and negotiations, lead by Mr Oldham, started on a new lease. These were successfully completed and the rooms became available on 2 January 1992. The move from the 5th floor was completed by the end of that month. Many members took part in planning the use of the new rooms, making necessary alterations and moving the library, machines and other material—all without closing the library. The Chairman specially thanked Miss Gill, Mr Bebbington, Mr Farnell, Mr Stephenson and Mr Thorpe for their work.

The room on the 4th floor became the office for the Society. It was now possible to set aside part of the new rooms on the third floor as a shop in which visitors could purchase the publications of the Society and an increasing number of other publications. The shop became fully operational by April 1992. Mail orders were also dealt with from Clayton House. This led to a certain degree of separation and specialisation among the volunteers at Clayton House. At the AGM in 1992 grateful thanks were expressed to Mrs Dean for running the mail order from her home for several years as Publications Secretary. A franking machine for the mail began to be used during 1992.

Forty Years with Family History

This AGM saw the retirement from the Council of 6 members who had served the Society for many years in a variety of ways—Mr Arnold, Miss Connor, Miss Forsyth, Mr Irvine, Mr Oldham and Mrs E Smith. Newly elected members were Mr Bebbington, Mr Houghton and Mr Moilliet. Mrs de Courcy was elected as General Secretary. The auditor appointed to look at the accounts for 1991 became ill and the Treasurer at short notice obtained the services of a professional accountant, Mr Braid. At the AGM Mr Braid was appointed as the Society's Auditor and he was re-appointed to this position each year until 2001. The first recorded auditor for the Society was for the accounts in 1973-74 when the income was £224. Mr Lloyd audited the accounts for that year and each year until 1981-82 with the exception of 1980-81 when the accounts were not audited because of lack of time. Mr Walmsley, the former Treasurer, audited the accounts for 1983-84 and 1984-85 but resigned in January 1986. Mr Snowden took over from 1985 (when the end of the financial year was changed to 31 December) to 1989. The accounts for 1990 were audited by Mr Rose. One of Mr Braid's first actions was to finalise the reduction of VAT on subscriptions with Customs and Excise.

At the first meeting of the new council it was decided to meet every two months with sub- committees—Library Administration and Shop, Finance, Computer and General Purposes—meeting between the meetings. Concern was expressed at the apparent lack of progress in publishing the Members' Interests Directory As a result of general enquiries from the Federation in 1991 about the educational work undertaken by societies, it was agreed to appoint an Education Officer and Mrs Hawkes was appointed in 1992. She started the first of the ten week courses for beginners in family history at Clayton House in September that year. These twice yearly courses were very popular and were regularly booked up very quickly.

An additional room was leased on the 4th floor next to the office in the autumn of 1992 which was to be used as the venue for small meetings and for educational purposes. In the absence of a Librarian, the General Secretary began to look after the arrangements for volunteers working in the library until an appointment could be made. Early in 1992 she took over the role of Library Manager as well as General Secretary. The work related to the latter post had declined since all the administration had been centralised at Clayton House. Instead of the regular meeting in December 1992, it was agreed that it should again take the form of a 'thank you' party for invited volunteers to show the Society's appreciation for the work done throughout the year. This custom has been maintained each year since.

1993

Early in 1993 a 486 computer was bought for the office with the old one going to the publications typesetter. This brought the number of computers owned by the Society to four. A NP580 fiche printer was bought for the library because the old one had been causing major problems. The financial position of the Society was much improved at this time by the receipt of several repayments of tax which had been due over several years from the covenants signed by members. For several weeks over the New Year period, the office had to be moved into the kitchen area of the library while re-roofing took place affecting the room on the fourth floor. This caused much disturbance of the administrative work at a particularly busy period. The Council agreed that, from August 1993, the monthly meetings would take place at the Town Hall on Wednesday afternoons instead of Thursday evenings.

Members had shown increasing reluctance to travel into Manchester in the evening. As hoped, this resulted in an increase in the numbers attending. A small selection of books for sale was taken to the meetings

Three members of the Council indicated that they would not be seeking election at the AGM—Mr Griffiths, Mr McAlpine and Mrs D Smith. At the meeting, Mr Farnell was elected Treasurer and Mrs Lynch and Mr Vinson joined the Council. Mrs Lynch had been one of the organisers of the 1881 census transcription project and Mr Vinson had been assisting in the bookshop and with mail orders. The new Assistant Journal Editor was Mrs Moore but she did not join the Council.

In 1993 the Council tightened up the arrangements for holding meetings of the committees which had become less regular. These were seen as an opportunity for detailed discussions which were not possible at meetings of the Council. They also provided an opportunity for members other than members of the Council to take part in the running of the Society. The need to increase the number of projects was also emphasised and a Project Committee was set up with Mr Coupe continuing as Project Co-ordinator. The disagreements with Bolton, particularly over the arrangements for the sale of its publications and its responsibilities under the VAT regulations, occupied much time at the meetings of the Council from 1993 to 1996.

Two important changes were made in the administration of the Society in 1993. The financial transactions were recorded on a commercial computer programme to facilitate the production of the annual accounts in a way which complied with the tighter requirements of the Charity Commission as well as giving a clearer week by week picture of the general financial position of the Society. Secondly, members joining from July 1993 were given membership for twelve months from the date of their applications. This avoided the difficulties of printing sufficient copies of the journals for the calendar year for an unknown number who would subsequently join within the year. It also avoided the burden of dealing during one or two months with the subscription renewals received from the large number of members now belonging to the Society. Eventually, membership renewals would be more evenly spread throughout the year. To facilitate identification of the memberships covered by the new arrangements, the membership numbering for those joining after June 1993 was re-started at 8000. One result of centralising the administration of the membership procedures was the identification of anomalies in the number of members. In April 1993 this was stated to be 3257, much lower than the figure of nearly 4000 which had been previously reported.

CHAPTER 8

1994 -1996 A Revision of the Constitution

Discussions on a new Constitution began in the middle of 1991 when the Council began to study the model Constitution prepared by the Federation and circulated to its members as a guide to what was required as a result of the changed legal framework for charities. The existing Constitution had been adopted in May 1983. As early as September 1991 differences emerged between the Society and the Bolton branch which had produced its own

rules to be used as an appendix to the new Constitution. These differences centred on the matter of finance and, in particular, what happened to the branch funds if it dissolved.

At the AGM of the Society in May 1995 the position was set out by the Chairman, the Treasurer and a representative from Bolton, Mr Bevitt, who drew attention to the low morale of the branch as evidenced by the fact that, although a committee had been elected, no one was prepared to be an officer of the branch. There was a long and sometimes heated discussion before it was agreed that the views of the wider membership should be obtained through the publication in the journal of the two opposing positions.

A letter was sent, after consultation with those involved at Bolton, to the Charity Commission in June 1995 asking for clarification of points it had previously raised in a letter to the Secretary of the Bolton branch. When the reply to this letter was received in October, it took the Council by surprise. The Commission took the view that the Society had no power to set up branches. The letter was confused as to whether the Constitution had been recently amended and whether the branches had agreed to the constraints placed upon them. The Council had already given notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held on 8 November 1995 to discuss the position after the AGM in May and it took the opportunity to put forward two proposals—to give powers to the Council to establish branches and to set up two (Bolton and District FHS and the Anglo-Scottish FHS). Both were accepted by large majorities. A resolution from the floor of the meeting was also passed to the effect that the Society would maintain the branches under its umbrella.

As well as tidying up the Constitution, the Council set up a small group, under the chairmanship of Mr Stringer, to look at the standing orders under which branches would operate in the future. The financial aspects of these, as might be expected, gave rise to problems. A new Constitution was at last agreed at the AGM of 1996—five years after discussions started.

1994

At the AGM of 1994 Mrs Mason stood down as Chairman, although she continued as a member of the Council acting as Social Secretary. Mrs Wood was elected in her place and Mr R Smith became Vice-Chairman. Two members, Mrs Thomas and Mr Moilliet, did not seek re-election and were replaced by Mrs O'Brien and Mr Charge. Meetings of the Council were changed to the afternoons of the third Wednesday of ten months of the year. The Council agreed that the Vice-Chairman should take over responsibility for Administration from Mrs Wood to release time for her other work as Chairman. At his suggestion the Finance and General Purposes Committees were merged and it was agreed that officers, branches and sections should prepare short reports for each meeting of the Council as an aid to the conduct of business. Plans to hold a dinner to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Society in 1994 had to be abandoned because of lack of support.

Clayton House became a listed building on 8 June 1994. In the next month the Council agreed that the Society should lease an additional room which had become available next to the library. This would be used as the bookshop and as the mail order store. Space would, as a result, be released in the library to allow the reception area to be redesigned and for a library office to be established. In addition, the 'kitchen' area could become a Common Room. Direct access to the new room was available from the library through a previously blocked doorway. This additional room became available on 1 September 1994.

In the spring of 1994, Mrs Moore resigned as Assistant Editor of the Journal in order to take up the chance of becoming editor of a magazine related to another of her interests. She was succeeded in the autumn by Mrs Hartley. The resignation was also received of Mr Coupe as chairman of the Project Committee. There had been difficulties in the previous year or so as a result of the reduced amount of time he was able to devote to the work. In August 1994, Mrs Thornton resigned from the Council as Representative of the Irish Ancestry Group and was replaced by Mr Clements. The Society received another blow with the sudden death on 3 January 1995 of Mr Vinson. He had assisted in the bookshop and mail order sections for several years and had been a member of the Council since 1993. In the same month Professor Welland resigned. In February 1995, Mr McKinney was co-opted to the Council.

1995

In October 1994 a letter was received from the Patron of the Society, Sir Guy Holland, offering to resign so that someone who would take a more active part in the affairs of the Society could be appointed. It was agreed to persuade Sir Guy to continue but to approach the Lord Mayor of Manchester with a view to the holder of that office succeeding him in due course. This was a proposal which had been first mooted in the Council in March 1992. In February 1995 it was reported that the Lord Mayor would be pleased to accept the appointment as Patron and the Council duly agreed. The Lord Mayor visited Clayton House in April and was impressed with the work done. Many of her successors have visited Clayton House. Sir Guy was made an honorary member of the Society so that he could continue his association with its work. Sadly he died in September 1997.

In March 1995, the Society was approached by the Oldham Library Services for assistance in setting up a family history society. Discussions took place and the first meeting did not take place until 27 March 1996. On 29 April 1995 the Society was host to a very successful conference of the North West Group of Family History Societies held at St Thomas' Centre, Ardwick Green with the title 'In the Clink'. It was, however, said that some aspects of the financial arrangements of the conference provided lessons for any other conferences which the Society might organise.

At the AGM of 1995, the first to be held at Clayton House, much of the time was taken up with discussion of the problems of proposed amendments to the Constitution. In view of the lack of agreement, two small changes were proposed and passed. One concerned the changes of the timing of subscription renewals (a belated recognition of what had been happening for over a year) and the other was concerned with the rules for future branches of the Society. Mr Snowdon was elected Vice-Chairman, and Mr Houghton, Mr McKinney, (both previously co-opted) Mrs Topham and Dr Vaughan were elected members of the Council.

Later in the year discussions were started, on the suggestion of Mr Houghton, on the idea of the Society being connected to the Internet so that members, particularly those living overseas, could be contacted by e-mail. There was appreciation that this would be developed in the future but more thought should be given to the implications. The Society already had a presence on the Internet through the GENUKI site which was hosted by the Manchester Computer Centre and the Lancashire section of this was the responsibility of Mr Stringer, a member of the Society who worked at the Centre. He was co-opted to the Council during the

year. The site carried an application form for the Society and new members began to be recruited from this source.

Another innovation considered at this time was the possibility of publishing smaller items 'in house' rather than using an outside printer. It was thought that the computers and printers available could allow these to be produced more cheaply without affecting the quality. In the autumn of 1995 a further computer and laser printer were purchased, further increasing the possibilities of this work. The first booklet to be considered was the Handbook prepared primarily for new members, containing general advice and useful local contacts. Another change was the decision to produce the 1851 census indexes on microfiche when the stock of printed books was exhausted.

The new Charity Commission rules about the conduct of charities lead to consideration of using standardised stationery for all aspects of the work of the Society. There was prolonged discussion about this and about the need to have separate application forms for the two branches when membership of the Society automatically included membership of all the branches. Separate forms still exist although very few are used. One relaxation from the Charity Commission was that charities with turnovers of less than £250,000 no longer need to have their accounts audited but could have an external examiner. Although the Society fell into this category, it was decided to retain the services of Mr Braid as an auditor in view of the sound advice he was able to give.

1996

In March 1996 ideas for increasing the income of the Society were discussed. One was the introduction of a joining fee for new members. It was reported that several societies had introduced such a fee. A decision was postponed, but an enrolment fee of £3 was introduced in September 1996. It was noticed that donations to the Society had reduced in the previous years and it was agreed that more prominence should be given to the idea that a small donation would be appropriate from those using the library. It was also agreed that a raffle should be held at the monthly meetings and Mrs Topham agreed to run this. The idea of holding some of the monthly meetings on a Saturday afternoon was also discussed and these were started in September 1996 but were discontinued after September 2001 because of the small numbers attending.

It was agreed to hold a competition for the design for a badge for members. It had been suggested that this would be a way of identifying fellow members in libraries and record offices. There was considerable interest in the idea of a badge from members living abroad. No entry was received in the competition and it was decided to use the design, based on the Lancashire rose, which had been used on the cover of the *Manchester Genealogist* for many years. Badges were available for sale to members in October 1999. An idea to have sweatshirts with a logo of the Society for use by helpers in the library and at family history fairs was not accepted.

At the beginning of 1996 the Council considered proposals to start a branch in Oldham with close links with the Local Studies Section of Oldham Library. A large meeting was held in Oldham in March and the branch was established. In April 1996 it was noted that no rent increase had been notified but that several improvements had been made to the interior of Clayton House. The ceilings were lowered in the rooms, windows had been replaced and the stairs, corridors and other public areas generally updated and re-decorated. It was agreed that

the bookshop and mail order section should have its own bank account but this was not put into effect. This was primarily because the Treasurer, Mr Farnell, said he was not seeking re-election at the forthcoming AGM as he was planning to leave the area. The Council passed a vote of thanks for the work he and his wife had done over several years in developing the accounting and other systems used in the office.

At the AGM held in May 1996, the Constitution, which had been under discussion for several years, was finally agreed. Four members—Mr Charge, Mr Coupe, Mr Houghton and Mrs O'Brien—left the Council and were replaced by Mr Baxter and Mrs Newman. With the remaining members—Mr Bebbington, Mrs Lynch, Mr McKinney, Mrs Mason, Mrs Topham and Dr Vaughan—this brought the number of elected members to eight, one less than the nine expected by the new Constitution. However, no one was found to replace the retiring Treasurer and the Society was without one for several months. The items of work required to maintain the business of the Society were undertaken by a number of different members of the Council but no one was taking overall responsibility. Mr Farnell continued to go to Clayton House from time to time and was available to give advice. The situation was made worse by the knowledge that the accounts for 1995, which had been presented as unaudited, provisional accounts at the recent AGM showing a moderate surplus of income over expenditure, had been audited and then showed a moderate deficiency for the second year in succession. To make things worse still, in July Mrs Wood resigned as Chairman for personal reasons.

In August the Council agreed to appoint Mrs Mason, who had previously been Chairman for four years, as Acting Chairman and Dr Vaughan as Acting Treasurer, even though he had little experience of the financial side of the Society. Other appointments around this time were Mr Baxter as representative to the Federation of Family History Societies in place of Mrs Wood, Mrs Topham as Social Secretary in place of Mrs Mason, Mrs Newman as Education Officer and Mrs Jones as Minute Secretary. The Finance Committee had an urgent look at the state of the Society and proposed that an enrolment fee be immediately introduced as discussed earlier in the year. This was agreed at £3.00, which was enough to cover most of the cost of the publications (copy of the most recent journal, the Society's handbook and the mail order catalogue) sent out as a 'starter pack' to each new member. It was also agreed that the subscriptions should be raised in the middle of 1997 but this was not in fact acted upon in light of the improved financial position in the early part of that year. Other proposals to increase income made at this time were also not followed up. These included charging for the use of microfiche readers in the library and a charge for inserting entries in the Members' Interest section of the journal. It was agreed that the Auditor, Mr Braid, should visit Clayton House each month to advise on financial matters and keep an eye on the accounts, thus making it easier to prepare the annual accounts in time for the AGM in May. A small additional fee was paid.

By the end of the year it was clear that the enrolment fee was not having any effect on the number of new members. Member number 10,000 joined in November 1996 and he was presented with a special certificate by the Patron, the Lord Mayor of Manchester, at the Christmas Social. The number joining using the form available on the Society's website on GENUKI and sales of publications through the website catalogue increased. After the Finance Committee reported that the costs of being linked to the Internet would largely be offset by the increase in membership and sales, it was agreed that the office should have its

own Internet connection as soon as possible. This was set up in July 1997. The Internet Group established by Mr Houghton and Mr Stringer had more than 200 members and in November 1996 Mr Wood was co-opted to the Council as Overseas Representative to act as a link between the members raising points in e-mail messages and the Council, although many members of the Group lived in the UK.

CHAPTER 9

1997 - 1999 Developing in All Directions

1997

In the early months of 1997, two major pieces of equipment began to give trouble, the photocopier and the machine used to copy from microfiche. The latter was important because of the service given to members who could not visit Clayton House. Both had been in use for years and it was agreed that both should be replaced with up-to-date models. In the case of the microfiche copier this meant using computerised images. In February 1997 it was agreed to close the American bank account (opened in 1986) because of the large increases in the bank charges being levied. The increased use of credit cards meant that difficulties for members in the United States were minimal.

At the AGM in May 1997, the Acting Chairman and Treasurer were confirmed in office and Mr Baxter was elected Vice-Chairman in place of Mr Snowdon who was, however, elected as a member of the Council along with Mr Broadhurst, Mr Marsden and Mr Wood. These, along with five continuing members (Mrs Lynch did not seek re-election), made up the total of nine as required by the Constitution adopted the previous year. Mr Coupe was elected a Vice-President in recognition of his work for the Society over more than twenty years. (The announcement had already appeared in the journal published at the end of February.) The Treasurer was able to report that the excess of expenditure over income in 1996 had reduced to £550, much improved from the immediately preceding years.

This improved financial position was partly due to the enrolment fee which had been introduced but also to the increased number of members joining. It was emphasised that renewal of memberships was also important and after the summer of 1997 colour-coded renewal forms were included in each issue of the journal, the colours corresponding to the colours of the membership cards which changed each quarter. Previously, members had received personalised reminders included with the appropriate journal but this caused great problems for the volunteers packing the journals each quarter. Despite gloomy forecasts, the new system worked quite well but individual reminders still had to be sent to the small percentage who were overdue with their subscriptions. A rigorous control of the active, paid-up membership list was introduced to ensure that no journal (the biggest expenditure for all members) was sent to those whose subscription was not paid.

In August 1997, rooms became available on the fourth floor of Clayton House adjacent to the Office and Seminar Room. Since the Society had moved into rooms on the third and fourth floors in Clayton House in 1992, a small room on the fourth floor had served as the administrative office. Apart from being small, the layout was inconvenient as a result of an

iron pillar forming part of the internal structure of the building. The rooms on the third floor suffered from the same difficulties. The increasing number of members together with the stricter rules for running a charity and thus the need for having a more businesslike approach to the affairs the Society had made the advantages of having more space apparent for some time. The officers, after consulting members of the Council without having a formal meeting, decided to take an additional lease on the rooms. The additional rent and other expenses of this amounted to about £4,500 per year and an increase in the subscription was inevitable. This was restricted to £1.50 for each membership in the UK, the same amount that had been agreed a year before on the basis of the existing accommodation, but not put into effect.

The additional space made it possible for office equipment—photocopier, fax machine, Internet access and computer—to be brought together and also provided desk space for the General Secretary and Treasurer, room for filing cabinets and the Society's archives. Over the next months, the room vacated was designated for the use of the mail order section and the publication store. This in turn freed space on the third floor for a proper office for the library and more room in the bookshop to display publications.

More and more material relating to family history was becoming available on CDs and on the Internet and additional computers were provided in the library. Many of these were donated by members who were upgrading their own machines but some were purchased. One of these was the result of a noteworthy response to a proposal made on the Internet Group that they should contribute to a machine which would be available to assist members to become more familiar with the new technology. Volunteers in the library and the office needed to have this training too.

1998

Early in 1998 two members were identified who could be specially kept in touch with the affairs of the Society and thus be in a position to represent it in distant parts of the UK where they lived—Mrs Baptye in Scotland and Mr Hulley in the South of England. Mr Hulley began to take a stall at family history fairs in the south where Society publications were displayed. The number of fairs attended increased over the years as did the number of publications on sale. New members were also recruited and display boards and a banner were provided to increase the publicity for the Society at these fairs. Plans were started to host a computer conference in association with the Society of Genealogists in April 1999. Arrangements for making credit card claims were changed from the paper-based system which had been used since cards had been accepted to an electronic system which meant another machine needing room in the office. The frequency with which members changed their credit cards led to difficulties in maintaining the facility of having standing orders to collect subscriptions from the cards and this was phased out in 1998.

At the AGM in 1998, Mr Wood was replaced as an elected member by Mrs Abson but he remained on the Council as a representative of the Oldham branch. The summer of 1998 was occupied in finalising the use of the additional space available and in getting rid of certain old equipment which was no longer used. This necessitated the movement of stock and shelving from the bookshop to the fourth floor and making room for two display units which had been donated. In the process, the room was decorated and re-arranged to make the best use of the space. Much of this work was done by Mr Clements and Mrs de Courcy. More volunteers came forward to help in the shop and with mail orders. In October 1998 Mr

McKinney resigned from the Council because of his work commitments. Difficulties with the office computer led to the purchase of a new one but the old one was returned to working order by Mr Marsden to act as a back-up. Another addition was an up-to-date digital photocopier. These improved facilities were seen as being appropriate in easing the work of the volunteers and reducing the time spent in the routine work of the office. Mr Marsden began to take an increasingly important role in developing and maintaining all the equipment belonging to the Society in Clayton House.

Analysis of the costs of being on the Internet and using e-mails during 1998 showed that these were not excessive and even cost-effective when the increase of business (including the number of new members) and the reduced postal costs were considered. The Computer Group agreed to keep the website up to date. This had previously been done by Mr McKinney. It was decided, however, that the Society should not, at least for the time being, set up facilities to shop on-line.

1999

The beginning of 1999 saw a number of developments needed to cope with increases in the size of the Society, the use of Clayton House and the business being undertaken by the mail order section. It was agreed to redesign the reception area of the library, to provide more computer facilities for visitors and to separate the mail order section from the bookshop. Much of this was possible as a result of the improved financial state of the Society and the additional space available on the fourth floor. At the AGM in May, Mrs de Courcy did not seek election as General Secretary and was replaced by Mr Marsden, although she remained on the Council as an elected member. Mr Snowdon and Mrs Abson, left the Council and were replaced by Mrs Hall and Mrs Whitefield. Mr Broadhurst remained on the Council but as the representative of the Irish Ancestry Group. Mrs Abson, however took over the role of Strays Co-ordinator. Mr Bebbington had hoped to be concerned only with mail order but it was a year before Mr Clements agreed to take over responsibility for the bookshop. Mr Baxter took over as Project Co-ordinator, replacing Mr Snowdon, and his first action was to have a list of all on-going projects compiled.

It was agreed that the Constitution needed to be amended to take account of the fact that Mr Braid was no longer a registered auditor but was still able to act as an independent examiner of the accounts in the eyes of the Charity Commission if the Constitution were amended to allow for this. The opportunity was to be taken to tidy up some other paragraphs and to introduce paragraphs dealing with the conduct of members which had been shown necessary by events reported from other societies. It was also decided that the Special Interest Groups—Computer and Irish Ancestry—should be converted into branches so that all the subsidiary groups could be dealt with in the same way, as branches. A more fundamental proposal was that Fellowships could be bestowed on members who had made a substantial contribution to the advancement of the Society and its aims. These changes were all agreed at an Extraordinary General Meeting held in March 2000.

A committee was set up in the autumn of 1999 to explore the idea of having a conference on family history at the same time as the Commonwealth Games were to be held in Manchester in August 2002. Closer links were started with the Local Studies Unit of Manchester Central Library. Mr Marsden and Mr Wood gave a talk on the use of the Internet in family history and plans were developed to co-operate on projects. The Anglo-

German Society began to use the Seminar Room in the same way as the Greater Manchester Heraldry Society had done for several years. Each gave a donation to Society funds.

CHAPTER 10

2000 - 2003 The New Millennium

2000

Plans were put forward in January 2000 for the gradual development of the library at Clayton House, for the possibility of preparing a video, for holding a meeting for members in the London area and for training absolute beginners in computing. The number of computers available to library users was increased and all computers, linked to a printer, were sited in an area of the bookshop. Members were able to access the Internet from January 2001. A small fee was payable for this but it was made free from 2003 when the Society's telephone connection was converted to broadband.

Another matter discussed by the Council at this time was insurance against injury for those aged over 75 when working as volunteers for the Society. A number fell into this category and no policy was found which would cover them. Efforts were made to dissuade members from using credit cards rather than cheques whenever possible because of the higher charges to the Society when this method of payment was used. A valuable donation of furniture, including shelving, was received from an industrial firm. The shelving was used in the archive room and the mail order room.

An indication of the tighter supervision of charities by the Charity Commission came early in 2000 when the Society was informed that its Chairman, Mrs Mason, could not continue holding that office, which included being a Trustee of the Society, because she benefitted from an honorarium she received for being the typesetter of the journal. She resigned as Chairman forthwith and was replaced at the AGM in May by Mr Baxter. Mrs de Courcy was elected Vice-Chairman and Mr Moore was elected as a new member of the Council. Mrs Mason was elected a Vice-President and three elections were made to the new position of Fellow -- Mr Arnold, Mr Berrell and Mr Marlow.

A change in the law which came into effect in April 2000 was to have a significant impact on the finances of the Society. The system through which charities were able to reclaim the income tax paid by those who gave regular donations to them was replaced by a scheme called Gift Aid. There were two advantages: donors no longer had to covenant to pay for at least four years and the arrangements for the reclaim of tax were considerably simplified. Subscriptions were regarded as donations for the purposes of the scheme but other donations were also included. All eligible members were encouraged to sign the simple form and the result was that in a year or two the reclaimed tax increased by five or six times to about £8,000 by 2003. Another factor which assisted the finances of the Society in 2000 was the large increase in the number of new members. Numbers had been increasing gradually towards the end of the century and 911 joined in 2000—the largest total for any year. It was suggested that it was related to the impact of the celebrations of the millennium and the number of new members has declined since then.

Forty Years with Family History

Discussion started in the autumn of 2000 about the advantages of having permanent, probably plastic, membership cards. Although the cards were used to control entry to the library at Clayton House, the majority of members did not visit. There would be a saving in postal costs and the time of volunteers if replacement cards were not sent out each year. There was agreement in principle but it took time to find an appropriate type of card and to amend the computer programme which dealt with membership. The method finally agreed on was a printed card with the appropriate details and with colour coding for the date of renewal which was printed for each new member or first subscription renewal and then laminated with a plastic cover in the office. The first of the new cards was issued in November 2002. The introduction was linked with new computer programmes dealing with the membership and also the record of the daily post. These were based on Microsoft Access, superseding those using Dbase which had been in use for nine years.

2001

Members of the Council had expressed doubts for some years about the value of belonging to the Federation of Family History Societies. This was largely because of the uncertainty over what was received in return for the membership fee of £400. It was accepted that the profit to the Society from selling the publications of the Federation, the potential value of a body representing the interests of family historians and the convenience of arranging suitable insurance were sufficient benefits but that the handling of the Federation's affairs could be improved. At the beginning of 2001 it was agreed that the Society should take a more active interest and Mr Baxter's name was put forward for election to the Federation's Council. It was thought that representation from the north of England was inadequate. He was elected to the Council at the April meeting of the Federation.

A change in the management of the library at the beginning of 2001 led to Miss Auty being co-opted to the Council. She and Mrs King were elected members of the council at the AGM in May. Mr Clements did not seek re-election and Mr Wood continued membership but as the representative of the Oldham branch. Six Fellows were elected—Miss Forsyth, Mr Hulley, Mrs Lynch, Mr R Smith, Mr Snowdon and Mrs Thurston. The new Council agreed to meet every two months and one of its first actions was to re-activate the committee to plan for a conference to be held in August 2002 at the time of the Commonwealth Games in Manchester. It was agreed that Mr Snowdon should take charge of the arrangements. The decision was taken that there should be sessions at Clayton House throughout the two weeks with a number of speakers and that the library should be open to members and visitors at other times. The general theme of the conference was to celebrate Manchester's diverse heritage under the title, 'Roots around Manchester'. A lot of hard work went into organising and publicising what was a very successful two weeks although the numbers attending were fewer than expected.

Another major task undertaken at this time, partly in preparation for the conference but also as the general housekeeping necessary when premises have been occupied for some time, was to clear out all the unused equipment and material which had accumulated. This resulted in more space becoming available, in particular in the Seminar Room which had become too useful as a store. It had been redecorated and refurbished in August 2000. More space became available in the library as a result of opening a door from the corridor into the

bookshop and making this the entrance to the Society's rooms on the third floor. There was a gradual replacement of the shelving in the library to increase its amount and flexibility. This was completed by the spring of 2002. Much of the work in improving the facilities in the library and the bookshop in the previous five or seven years was done by Mr Clements and the Society suffered a great loss with his death after a short illness in November 2001. The Council decided to commemorate his work for the Society by designating the Seminar Room 'The Douglas Clements Seminar Room' and a brass plate was fixed to the door in July 2002. Mrs King took over as Bookshop Manager in his place.

In November 2001 the Society decided to join Genfair, a service developed in association with Leicestershire FHS but later taken over by the Federation of Family History Societies, which allowed family history societies to sell their publications over the Internet. It decided to join for one year in the first instance to gauge the extent to which it increased sales and thereby increased the income of the Society, after taking the percentage of the proceeds retained by Genfair into account. Discussion with Genfair revealed some problems and the Society did not join until the beginning of 2003. Fears that there would be no advantage to the Society proved unfounded and membership continued. It was decided, however, not to extend the facility to dealing with subscriptions which were also being dealt with through Genfair by some societies, mostly the smaller ones, which did not have credit card arrangements. .

At the same time major upgrading of the Society's website was undertaken. The site as a whole was made easier to navigate, the bookshop catalogue was brought and kept up-to-date, the application form and the newly-added renewal form were made easy to download and some tutorial notes were added. The site was highly commended in the summer of 2002 FFHS Website Awards.

2002

At the AGM in May 2002 the Chairman commented on the changes in the Society over the years, instancing the participation of members all round the world in its projects and the great increase in the amount of material held in the library, now surely one of the finest of any family history society. This change was also mentioned in the report given on the work of the mail order section with an threefold increase over ten years in the number of titles available, then numbering over a thousand. It was also reported that the financial position of the Society continued to be very sound and this made it possible to increase and improve the facilities provided in the library with the purchase of fiche and film readers and computers and to acquire more material such as the indexes to the registration of births, marriages and deaths for which members formerly had to look elsewhere. By the end of the year these indexes were in the library for the period 1837 to 1940.

As he had warned the previous year, Dr Vaughan did not seek re-election as Treasurer and he was succeeded by Mr Marsden. Mrs Sellers was elected in his place as General Secretary. Mrs Hall and Mrs Whitefield were re-elected to the Council, Mr Conway, Mr Kent and Mrs Ormston were elected Fellows and Dr Vaughan was elected a Vice-President. Mr Braid, the auditor, indicated that he was retiring from business and a local firm of accountants, Beaver & Struthers, was elected as the new auditors.

During 2002 steps were taken to publicise the work of the Society and recruit new members in the light of a slow decline in their number. Publicity packs were sent out to more than 150 local libraries and record offices. The presentation of the publications of the Society was updated and more were produced on CD, for which a good production firm was found. New banners and display boards were purchased for use at the family history fairs at which the Society was represented, locally, in the south of England and in Scotland.

The new auditors questioned the level at which the Society paid Value Added Tax on subscriptions and, after some months of negotiations with Customs and Excise, agreement was reached that it should be paid on a quarter of each subscription rather than a half. This would give the Society an annual increase in its actual income together with a refund of several years' tax already paid. The Council discussed other long-term financial matters in 2002. The increasing availability of information on the Internet on a 'pay per view' basis could lead to a reduction of direct sales of Society publications. It was agreed that indexes and transcriptions produced through the voluntary work of members might be made available on these sites. The idea of becoming a limited liability company was also raised.

2003

The Society was the host for the Annual Conference of the North West Group of Family History Societies held at Manchester Town Hall on 26 April 2003 with the title 'Creation to Cremation'. At the AGM in May 2003 Mrs de Courcy stood down as Vice-Chairman but became an elected member along with Mr Bebbington and Mrs Newman. Mr Haynes was elected Vice-Chairman. Mrs de Courcy continued as Library Manager and Projects Co-ordinator. Mrs Topham did not seek re-election and resigned from her position as Social Secretary. In recognition of their many years of voluntary work in varying capacities she and her husband were made Honorary members.

A major change in the banking arrangements took place towards the end of 2003. Since 1987 almost all cheques sent to the Society had been paid into the National Giro Bank

account to which they were sent by post. This arrangement continued after the Giro Bank was taken over by Alliance and Leicester. From time to time packets of cheques were lost, causing much inconvenience to the Society and to members. This occurred even when the packets were handed over the counter at a local Main Post Office. It was decided that the cheques should be taken each week to a nearby branch of the Royal Bank of Scotland at which the Society had a second account.

A sub-committee was set up to review the arrangements for speakers for the monthly meetings and at its suggestion, the Council agreed to depart from monthly meetings which had been attracting small audiences. Instead in 2004 there would be quarterly meetings on a general topic, each lasting a whole day, with a series of workshop sessions in the morning and a guest speaker in the afternoon. The first was arranged for 28 January 2004 on the subject of 'Wills and Probate'. The date was chosen to avoid conflict with meetings of branches, which had been suggested as a reason for the low attendance at meetings of the Society.

Another problem to receive attention in 2003 was the changes needed to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, major features of which would come into force in October 2004. Some of these would need action on the part of the landlord. The comfortable financial position of the Society allowed expenditure to buy a digital camera for use on projects, a digital projector for improved visual displays at meetings and new computers for the library and the mail order section. From the beginning of 2003 the Society had changed to a broadband internet connection. The computers belonging to the Society were gradually linked to an internal network, thus allowing wider access to the data held. It was planned to introduce a bar-code system to check the membership of visitors to the library. This became necessary because the permanent membership cards held by all members by the end of 2003 did not carry the expiry dates as did the superseded cards. Another idea thought worthy of discussion was the production of teaching aids on CD—even a short instructional course.

The Council decided not to arrange a social function to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Society on the grounds that only a small minority would be able to take part. Instead, it was thought appropriate to recognise the milestone through the pages of the *Manchester Genealogist*.

PART II

The Branches

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CHAPTER 11

The Anglo-Scottish Family History Society

Early Years

The first indication of an interest in Scottish ancestry within the Society was in 1976 when an article in two parts appeared in the Manchester Genealogist on 'Scottish Immigration into Lancashire'. This drew heavily on an article recently published in the Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society. In his editorial in the first issue of the journal of 1977 Mr Beckett said he was compiling an Index of Scottish Emigrants in England and asked members to let him have records of those born in Scotland before 1855 but who lived, married or died in England. He suggested that enough interest might be stimulated to form an Anglo-Scot Society and that similar groups might be formed in other societies. He noted that a similar project was in progress within the Northumberland and Durham Society. In subsequent issues he reported that he had had an excellent response. In the issue of July 1977 he wrote a long article on 'The Population Movement into Lancashire' of which the Scots formed only a small part. He noted that there were few Scottish surnames in the Lancashire records before 1760. In the first issue of the Members' Interests Directory published by the Society in 1976-77, only 11 out of 125 members listed ancestors from Scotland.

In the journal of April 1978 Mr Beckett published the first list from what he called a 'Dictionary of Emigrant Scots into England' and noted that he was being sent records from members all over the world. He foresaw that the Dictionary would eventually be published separately, but an alphabetical list appeared in each issue until October 1980 when it had reached the letter 'Y'. This was stated to be the end of the first series—those with a known birthplace or place of origin in Scotland who later lived or died in England. It was noted that thousands of entries remained to be published. Suggestions were given on further research into Scottish families.

1982 - 1985

There was thus a clear interest in Scottish ancestry within the Society but it was not until September 1982 that the Council discussed, and agreed to, the formation of an Anglo-Scottish group. This was proposed to cover the whole country and, if it got too big, it would be able to break away on its own. An announcement was made in the next journal which said that 'the proposed Anglo-Scot Society would be organised in conjunction with the

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Manchester & Lancs. FHS on the same basis as the Bolton Family History Society—the £5 subscription would cover membership of all three societies'. The first meeting was held at Clayton House on 28 November 1982. Fifteen members were present. Mr Beckett was appointed chairman and projects officer, Mrs Ramsbotham secretary and membership secretary, and Miss Dixon project secretary.

In her report to the AGM of the Society in May 1983 the secretary was able to report on an active five months with regular monthly meetings and the start of much work on projects. The Society had been welcomed by individuals and societies, particularly in Scotland but also elsewhere. Mr Beckett reported that, for a limited period, the group was operating within the Manchester Society. In an article in the next journal on Anglo-Scottish Research he set out the details of available records and referred to his own research on Scottish Emigrants to England and said that the scope of this could be widened with more people being involved. At the Council meeting in May 1983 he proposed the purchase of microfiche covering a surname index of Scottish registrations. This was agreed and the cost was largely met by means of a generous loan available for such capital expenditure. The secretary wrote a full account of the first 6 months in the journal of July 1983 and in the same issue there was a list of the Scots churches in England taken from a publication in Manchester Central Library but thought not to be complete.

Links were established with Scots churches in Manchester and nearby, with a view to having access to their records. An average of 25 were attending the monthly meetings and the secretary reported that there were another 30 or so members with whom she was in contact. Towards the end of 1983 the question arose of access to the Scottish material in the library. Mr Beckett thought that 'the Anglo-Scots collection should be kept private for a while longer' although the Librarian thought that this was impractical. The first issue of the Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants was ready for the printers in early 1984. It was prepared by Mr Coupe and printed by Mr and Mrs Lomas. There was also discussion on the idea of the Anglo-Scots meeting at a venue other than Clayton House. At the AGM of 1984, Mrs Ramsbotham gave an account of the full range of activities undertaken, including much research for members living away from Manchester in which she was assisted by Mrs Mason. The branch by this time had its own notepaper headed 'The Anglo-Scottish Family History Society' with, at the foot of the page in small type, 'A Section of the Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society'. It was pointed out at the Council in June that the accounts of the Society did not cover the 'Sub-sections (Anglo-Scots, Bolton, Library, Projects, Bookstall)' which did not submit balance sheets. It was agreed that, in future, they should do so. The Anglo-Scots continued to undertake a great many projects and regular reports of their activities appeared in the journal.

The Bulletin

In May 1984 the idea was raised of having a separate Bulletin published with matters of interest to the Anglo-Scottish section. Discussions continued over the next six months and in November it was agreed that a separate publication, with Mrs Mason as editor, should be prepared quarterly. The first issue, of eight closely-typed A5 pages, appeared in April 1985. The idea was that space would be released in the main journal for other items while allowing the Scots to have more news and information about their own special interests. The

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first issue was sent to all members of the Society but after that those who wanted to continue to receive it had to make this known.

The success of the idea can be judged from the fact that the second and subsequent issues had 16 pages full of news, information, reports and articles with relevance to Scottish family history. It was clear that there were many members who were undertaking research into their Scottish ancestors and were willing to write about their experiences and problems. Many of the sections were set out as in the Manchester Genealogist—Members' Interests, Help Wanted, reports of meetings and articles—but all with a Scottish background. From the issue of July 1986 Mrs Mason took over as Editor of the Manchester Genealogist and, as no editor for the Bulletin came forward, this work was taken on by the secretary of the section, Mrs Rowbotham, later assisted for a time by Miss Barlow.

Changes in the format of the Society's journal and the fact that 500 copies of the Bulletin were being sent out to members who had requested it, led to the decision to incorporate the Bulletin into the main journal. This took place from January 1987. In this issue the appearance remained as it had been as a separate publication and appeared less satisfactory when compared to the pages of the main body of the Manchester Genealogist. The typesetting and printing were changed to become the same as the rest of the journal from the next issue and this was much appreciated by the Scottish members. From this time the journal also included a definite section relating to the activities of the Bolton section rather than the scattered items which had previously appeared. From the issue of October 1987 the Members' Interests were incorporated with those of the other members in one section. The beginning and end of the 'Scottish' section was indicated with an appropriate logo—an intertwined thistle and rose.

1986 - 1989

The report of the section for 1986 presented to the AGM in May 1987 detailed the range of activities being undertaken by members. These included further work on the Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants, recording of monumental inscriptions, transcriptions of Scotch Church registers and the handling of many requests for help from members unable to visit Manchester. It also reported many links with organisations in Scotland. On 16 June 1986 the section organised a one-day Anglo-Scottish Conference held at the St Thomas' Centre, Ardwick. Over 100 attended a very successful meeting. The journal this year began to record extensive additional material relating to Scottish family history.

In April 1987 it was reported that Scottish family history societies had withdrawn from the Federation of Family History Societies to set up their own organisation. The following year (May 1988) the Council agreed that the Anglo-Scottish FHS should affiliate with this new group—the Scottish Association of Family History Societies. When this was completed the Association asked that the Anglo-Scots take responsibility for the production of the Association's Newsletter. This proposal was not accepted. It is worth noting that at that time there were only six other members of the Association. By 2000, however, there were 21 full members and 12 associate members. The second volume of the Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants appeared in the spring of 1988, in time for the second One-day Conference which was held on 19 June 1988, again at the St Thomas' Centre with over 100 attending. The general subject was 'Migrants' and there was an exhibition on the same topic. The third volume of the Dictionary appeared in the autumn of 1989, the fourth in the summer of 1991

and the fifth at the end of 1992. In 2001 the information was re-published in a single volume.

1989 - 1993

Mrs Ramsbotham did not seek election as Secretary at the annual meeting of the section in 1989 on account of her ill health and was succeeded by Miss Connor. As a result of the resignation of the General Secretary of the Society at the end of 1989, Miss Connor became one of the two Acting General Secretaries from then until the AGM in May 1990. During 1990 the number attending the monthly meetings, held on a Sunday at 2 pm, began to fall. It was thought that this was due to the restricted space available for meetings at Clayton House. Mr Beckett resigned as Chairman in November 1991 and his place was taken (in an acting capacity) by Mr Mountford. At the same time Miss Connor resigned as Secretary and was succeeded in an acting capacity by Mrs Rhodes, with Mrs Thomas taking a new position as Journal Secretary. At the AGM all these appointments were confirmed. During these years the Anglo-Scots section of the journal continued to occupy between 9 and 16 pages (10 to 15 per cent of the whole) with the usual variety of news, reports, notices and articles.

In July 1991 the Council agreed to purchase the index to the Scottish Old Parish Registers on microfiche. An appeal for donations for this was made and there was a generous response. By the end of 1992 the indexes for all counties were in the library. A party was held on 15 November 1992 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Anglo-Scots. Over 40 were present to share the birthday cake with 10 candles and other refreshments provided by members. The Anglo-Scots were represented (usually by its Secretary) at meetings of the Scottish Association of FHSs and it was felt that this contact with other Scottish societies was important. In 'Jottings' written by Mr Mountford in the second issue of the journal in 1993 he said that, unlike his predecessor, he had no knowledge of any Scottish ancestors although his wife did and both he and his wife had distant links with Lancashire. He said then that his qualification for being a member of the Anglo-Scots was through his wife but in a later article he was able to show that he had traced his line back to a distant, but distinguished, Scottish ancestor.

1994 - 1999

At the meeting of the Council in January 1994 Mr Mountford pointed out that the Anglo-Scots section should have its own Constitution within the Constitution of the Society which was then under review. The rules of the Scottish Association had been agreed to allow the Anglo-Scots to act as one of its full members. When the Constitution was finally agreed in May 1996 the Anglo-Scottish Family History Society became a branch of the Manchester & Lancashire FHS. As his annual report for 1997 said, he had little different to report from previous years. The monthly meetings were well attended, the branch's section of the journal contained much of interest and many were using the library for research in the Scottish material. In February 1997, however, Mrs Rhodes said that she wished to stand down from the post of Secretary for personal reasons. She continued to undertake the work for another year. In January 1998 the Council appointed Mrs Baptie as the Society's representative in Scotland. She lived in Edinburgh and was thus able to attend meetings of the Scottish Association more easily than members living in or near Manchester. She also provided regular news from Scottish archives and family history societies.

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At the AGM of 1998 Mr Mountford stood down and was replaced by Mr Muir. The post of Secretary was not filled. Mr Muir started two projects, one of which followed on from his work in Bolton. This was a transcription of the parts of the 1851 census of Bolton in which a member of the household was born in Scotland. This was published by the Society in the middle of 1999. He asked for volunteers to extend this to cover all of England and Wales and an advertisement was placed in *Family Tree Magazine*. By October it was reported that 150 volunteers had come forward. Members, some at a distance, were recruited to key in the data and by the end of 1999 over 12,000 names were on the database. The first publication from this project was in late 2001 when a CD was produced containing 31,000 names from over 13,000 families from many parts of the United Kingdom. A number of towns were completely covered. Records continued to be collected and these will be contained in further publications.

The second project, which was co-ordinated for a time by Mr Hendry, was to record from the family trees of any member, the details of the marriages of those born in Scotland but who married anywhere in the world. This did not get as great a response as expected after an initial surge of interest. In late 2002 an index to the available records was put as a searchable database on the Society's website. This created a lot of interest in the following year and many requests for the details of the records were received. The work involved in responding to these led to a discussion as to whether to place the data on the 'FamilyHistoryOnline' website set up by the Federation of Family History Societies where it would create income for the Society.

1999 - 2003

In the middle of 1999 Mrs Thomas left the district and also her work as Journal Secretary. Mrs Bennett organised a group of 20 to spend three days in Edinburgh in March 2000 undertaking research. This was very successful and enjoyable. From this year the branch began to have a more prominent presence at the annual meetings of the Scottish Association and at family history fairs throughout much of Scotland. Their presence was made even more prominent with a new banner which was first unfurled at the 14th Annual Conference of the Scottish Association at Dundee in April 2003. On each occasion, several members attended at a stall displaying information and selling their publications. Those representing the branch often found themselves besieged by visitors asking for help with research in England.

At this time Mr Muir was the only officer of the branch although he had assistance from others on the committee. In 2002, however, Mrs Pelham was recognised as the Secretary and in 2003 a full committee structure was elected with Mr Couper as Secretary, Mrs Bennett as Journal Secretary and three other members. The contribution of the branch to the journal reduced in size but this was in common with the other branches. To some extent this was the result of the larger articles being placed in the *Family History Research* section of the journal.

In late 2001 it was decided that the day on which the monthly meeting was held should be changed from Sunday to Saturday. The reasoning for this was that numbers were falling and some members had difficulties in getting to meetings on Sundays, including the vagaries of public transport. The first Saturday meeting was on 19 January 2002 and from then on the average attendance doubled. From time to time the meetings departed from the usual

'lecture' format with a few members each talking about one of their heirlooms or their favourite (or least favourite) ancestor. Another innovation in 2002 was a series of classes on Scottish Research. Six classes were held in March and April on Friday mornings covering various aspects of research into Scottish family history. They were held by experienced members of the Society and proved very popular.

A new project was started in 2003 and introduced a new technique to the Society's work. It was decided to transcribe the registers of the United Reform Churches held in Manchester Central Library. To do this, the registers were photographed in the library under supervision using a digital camera and the images used for the subsequent transcription. It is hoped to extend this to registers held in other archives of the Church.

CHAPTER 12

Bolton & District Family History Society

1981

At the Council meeting in November 1981 the Secretary said he had been approached by Mr Hayes about the formation of a group in Bolton linked with the Society. He said that contact had already been made with nearly 100 people who would be interested, many of them were attending WEA classes in genealogy. Concern was expressed about using the Society's name and the need to keep to its standards. An exploratory meeting had already been arranged for 24 November. In January it was reported that 88 attended this meeting and many more were known to be interested. A vote of thanks was given to Mr Hayes and Mrs Gregory who had done much of the work to get the group organised. They were both welcomed to represent the group on the Council. In the first issue of the journal in 1982 the Editor, Mr Beckett, was pleased to report the formation of a section at Bolton organised very closely within the Society's framework.

1982 - 1983

In the next issue of the journal under the heading of 'Bolton & District Family History Society' its Journal Secretary, Mr Houliston, gave an account of the first meeting in January 1982, held at the Friends' Meeting House, Silverwell Street, at which there was an enthusiastic attendance of 100. At the meeting the Project Secretary, Mrs Frost, asked for volunteers for several projects which were planned. These included indexing Bolton census returns, the transcription of Bolton wills and the recording of memorial inscriptions. The programme of talks for the remainder of 1982 was printed, together with details of a series of three workshops for beginners and one for more advanced researchers. The possibility of organising a trip to London was also mentioned. At the Council meeting in April it was reported that the projects and workshops would be self-financing but that the Society would be asked to pay the rent and secretarial expenses. It was requested that the rent be made available three months in advance. In December the Bolton section said that it had bought a microfiche reader from a high street bank for £25.00.

At a meeting of the Council held on 8 May 1983, held specially to consider proposed new arrangements for the working of the Council, Mr Hayes referred to unspecified

differences between the section and the Society and advised that the new arrangements would be an advantage. At the AGM the following week, Mr Hayes reported on the development of the group (now with 180 members), outlined the work the members had done and expressed the hope that the link with the Society would long continue. He and Mrs Gregory continued as its representatives on the Council. Miss Holding and Mrs Edmundson became the Journal Secretaries. At the next meeting of the Council the Project Co-ordinator, Mr Coupe, commented on the co-operation which had recently developed between those working at Bolton and those at Manchester. The section said it would assist with the one-day conference to be held in the North West in March 1984 and offered its display material. Mr Hayes reported that the average attendance at meetings was 72 over the year, and many recruits came from giving talks to other groups in the district. It was agreed that some enquiries should be made into the possibility of developing groups in areas to the north of Bolton.

1984 - 1987

At the AGM in May 1984 Mr Hayes reported on the continued growth of the section and on the number of projects in which most of the members were involved under the guidance of Mr Smith. He had prepared a list of 13 projects completed and an equal number still in progress and also emphasised the importance of going out to lecture to other groups. He commented on the large numbers at meetings, the running of workshops and the group's participation in local festivals. He was grateful for the acceptance by and support from the Society.

At the first meeting of the Council after the AGM the newly-appointed Treasurer, Mr King, pointed out that the accounts did not show a true and fair record of the Society's activities. The sections (he listed five including Bolton) did not submit balance sheets. Mr Hayes thought that there was an inference that matters were not in order and that a lot of work would be involved in keeping books. He was assured that this was not the case but members had a right to know the true position. The Council agreed that a simple expenditure and income account sheet should be kept by the sections for incorporation in the Society's year-end accounts. Towards the end of the meeting Mr Hayes said he could not carry on as the Bolton Secretary in view of the climate which existed, particularly in respect of the accounts. The Chairman expressed his confidence in Mr Hayes and suggested that a meeting of the Bolton section should be held so that misunderstandings could be cleared up.

The events of the next two months have already been described. In the end, Bolton decided to stay within the Society. At the first meeting of the Council after this decision had been taken it was decided that there would need to be elections for the new committee at Bolton and that the next journal should carry a report about recent events. During the next few months the Council were anxious to help the committee at Bolton to continue to arrange the usual meetings and to prepare for their annual meeting with the necessary elections. On the question of finance, it was agreed that the section would purchase its own equipment for projects and also minor equipment, with the Society paying the room rental and administrative expenses. An annual grant was agreed. The question of a Constitution was raised and the section was advised that it should closely follow that of the Society so that it would be appropriate to the Society's charitable status. For a time it would seem that the Chairman of the Society, Mr Robinson, acted as Secretary of the Bolton section. At the

meeting of the Council in April 1985 the representatives were able to report that good progress had been made in making a return to their previous activities. Elections did not take place until 1 May 1985. Nothing was said in the journal or even at the next AGM about what had happened in the previous year except that the new Chairman of Bolton, Mrs Brabbin, thanked the acting committee for carrying on after the resignation of Mr Hayes.

At the meeting of members at Bolton on 1 May 1985, in addition to Mrs Brabbin, Mrs Gregory was elected Secretary and Mr Pickup Treasurer with Mr Smith put in charge of projects. From August the Bolton Committee sent a report of its meetings and comments on the Council business to the General Secretary and this was circulated to members of the Council prior to its next meeting. The section was represented on the Council by Mrs Brabbin and Mrs Gregory but Mr Smith stood in for one or other of them from time to time. One comment the section made was on the desirability of having two auditors rather than one looking at the annual accounts of the Society. In October Mr Smith indicated his wish to stand down as Projects Secretary on grounds of ill health. The committee decided that three people would be needed to finalise all the projects then in progress. However, with the assistance of more volunteers, Mr Smith was able to carry on. Their busy programme of meetings and workshops continued as well as contributions to local fairs. At the end of the year the Society gave a set of microfiche of the International Genealogical Index to the section as Clayton House then had a more up-to-date version. It also made available a microfiche reader on loan. The section prepared a year-end list of projects completed and of the dozen which were still in progress. The results of completed projects were all on microfiche and a set of these was presented to the library at Clayton House.

Early in 1986 Mr Pickup, the Treasurer of Bolton, passed details of the section's finances for 1985 to the Treasurer of the Society for inclusion in the accounts. For the period 20 April 1985 to 31 December 1985 the expenditure at Bolton was given as £408. [The financial year had been changed and the accounts covered only part of a year.] A budget of £350 for 1986 was also presented. Mrs Hurst was appointed to take charge of the sales of all the Bolton publications. The Council agreed to allow the Bolton section a discount of 20 per cent on the Manchester publications which were sold at Bolton meetings. Miss Holding and Mrs Edmundson continued as Journal Secretaries, preparing the contributions from the section to the journal. It was agreed that the section could have up to 16 pages in the new style of journal. In May the committee agreed that a building society account should be opened with a view to saving towards the purchase of one or more microfiche readers.

At the general meeting in May 1987 Mrs Hurst was elected Secretary in place of Mrs Gregory who had indicated that she wished to retire. Mrs Hurst became one of the representatives on the Council and also continued to be responsible for the sale of publications. The section used its allotted space in the journal to cover reports of their meetings and other items of local interest. Its contributions were indicated by having its badge, an elephant and castle, on the first and last pages. These showed the many activities in which the members were involved. During the year the members were working on the surname index of the 1851 census.

1988 - 1993

In January 1988 the Council agreed with the view of the Chairman of the Society that the financial statement of the Bolton section should be shown on the Society's accounts. The

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Anglo-Scottish section was not in the same position because it held no funds. Mrs Brabbin retired as Chairman at the general meeting in May 1988 and her place was taken by Mr Bevitt. The other officers remained the same although Miss Holding became the only Journal Secretary later in the year. In June, the Council agreed that future Bolton accounts would be audited and in April 1989 it was agreed that this should be done by the Society's auditor. The journal continued to carry detailed reports of the monthly meetings and, from time to time, updates on the projects in progress. One other feature at this time was a display on family history which was put together under the direction of Miss Holding to exhibit at Samlesbury Hall in July 1985. It was set up there again twice in the next five years as well as being shown at libraries, family history classes and talks.

Mr Ashworth took over as Treasurer in 1990 but the other officers remained the same. In the autumn of that year a short course in palaeography was organised with a view to helping in the transcription of Bolton wills. The publication resulting from the transcription of wills A-M had sold well. Four members from Bolton, including Mr Smith, went to the meeting and conference of the Federation of Family History Societies at Oxford in September and Mr Smith was appointed as the representative of the Society at the meeting. He made a report to Council on his return and was then appointed the Representative of the Society to the Federation meetings for the next two years. He was also co-opted to the Council.

From the beginning of 1991 the responsibility for Bolton's publications was taken over by Mr Mather. The publications were also sold in the bookshop at Clayton House and at meetings of the Society. In February 1991 it was reported that meetings of the section were going well and that a portable microfiche reader had been bought. This was available on loan to members. Mr Sheppard took over from Miss Holding as Journal Secretary. During the year a number of projects were completed and the surname indexes for Volumes 55 and 56 of the 1851 census, covering Bolton, were published. On 27 November 1991 the section held a 10th Anniversary Dinner at the Pack Horse Hotel, Bolton with Dr Rogers as the speaker. A full account appeared in the January 1992 issue of the journal. The section was presented with £250 from the Society's funds to celebrate this anniversary. The dinner was so successful that an annual dinner became a feature in the section's programme.

From January 1992 the section held its meetings at the Walkers Leisure Club, Green Lane, Bolton which was found to be much more convenient. A new screen and a portable loop hearing system were purchased. There was a dramatic increase in the number of members attending meetings. The flexible closing time enabled an advice table to be set up and increased the sale of books. At the AGM of the Society in 1993, the Chairman of the Bolton section, Mr Bevitt, said that 1992 had been a good year with an average attendance at meetings of over 60 and much project work being done. He reported that the section was trying to build up a reserve of funds with a view to setting up a permanent centre in Bolton. He commented that relations with the main Society remained excellent. The section continued to be very active with a number of projects and a number of reports were published. In the middle of 1993, however, the section raised questions about the accounting adjustments for their publication sales and the allocation of VAT. Some disagreements arose about the order forms used for the mail order sales. The way in which the grant was paid to the section and then accounted for was also under much discussion at the time when the new Constitution was under discussion.

1994 - 1997

At the AGM of the Society in May 1994, Mr Bevitt, after reporting on another good year in 1993, said that he was standing down as Chairman and had been succeeded by Miss Holding, with Mr Hart becoming Secretary in place of Mrs Hurst. At the same meeting Mr Smith was elected Vice-Chairman of the Society. Despite the arguments which were going on over the new Constitution the section continued to have well-attended meetings and carried on with many projects during 1994.

At the general meeting of the section in May 1995, which was attended by Mrs Wood and Mr Farnell, the Chairman and Treasurer of the Society, a motion was put to members that the section should secede from the Society. After discussion it was agreed to postpone a decision for six months to allow time for further discussion. The morale of the section was so low that, although a committee was set up, no nomination was received for any of the officer posts. It was said the officers would be decided at the first meeting of the new committee. This situation was reported to the AGM of the Society a week later. There was long discussion on the Constitution at this meeting, at the end of which it was decided that the positions of the Society and the Bolton section would be set out in statements in the next journal. These appeared in the third issue of the journal in 1995.

At the meeting of the committee it was decided that Mr Sheppard would be Chairman, with Mr Marsh as Deputy Chairman, Mrs Pearce Secretary and Mr Kenyon Treasurer. Mr Marsh and Mrs Pearce would represent the section at the meetings of the Council. From September 1995 the monthly meetings were held at the Bolton & District Anglers Association Social Club, St Simon and St Jude's School, Rishton Lane, Great Lever. There was an initial drop in the number attending but this recovered when the meetings moved to the ground floor. The majority of the responses received as a result of the statements in the journal were in favour of the section remaining part of the Society. In October, however, a letter from the Charity Commission said that the Society had no power to set up branches under its existing Constitution. This view was greeted with amazement and concern. It has to be said, however, that the Commission seemed to be confused as to whether changes had been approved to the Constitution of 1983. Notice had been given of an Emergency General Meeting of the Society to be held on 8 November in order to have further discussion of the Constitution and at this, resolutions were passed to authorise the Council to set up branches and to confirm the establishment of 'Bolton and District FHS' as a branch. Mr Sheppard said he would report the new position to Bolton members and thought that agreement would now be reached on a new Constitution. The Constitution was eventually agreed at the AGM on 8 May 1996. Discussion continued for some time between representatives of the Society and the branch about the handling of financial affairs.

At the general meeting of the branch in May 1996 Mr Marsh became Chairman with Mr Sheppard as his Deputy. Mr Smith retired from his work with projects, having been persuaded to remain a year longer than he had wished. He was replaced after an interval by Mrs Owen. Mr Sheppard praised the members of the committee for their work and support during the previous troubled year. At the AGM of the Society in the same month warm appreciation was expressed for the work of long-standing members of the committee of the branch—Mr Smith, Miss Holding and Mrs Rideout—who were retiring and of Mr Sheppard for his efforts in steering the branch to a better understanding with the Society. The changed relations were shown later in the year when the Society's mail order section took over

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responsibility for dealing with material from Bolton and the Society provided the branch with an overhead projector. In his report for 1996 the Chairman commented that the branch had had a quiet but very pleasant year of settling down to a normal routine. He praised the work of Mr Timmington who had taken over the job of arranging speakers when Miss Holding retired, of Mr Jackson who dealt with publicity, of Mr Young who wrote the reports of the meetings, of Mr Goad and Mrs Marsh who looked after the bookstall and of Mrs Greenwood and Mrs Owen who worked on the advice table at the monthly meetings.

Because the Anglers Social Club was not well served by public transport, it was decided to move the monthly meetings to Bolton Cricket Club, Green Lane, Great Lever from January 1997. This new venue proved popular. As well as arranging these meetings, members took part in family history open days and fairs in Bolton. At the general meeting in 1997, Mr Whiteley was elected Vice-Chairman and Mrs Greenwood became Secretary. Mrs Pearce continued to represent the branch on the Council of the Society along with Mr Marsh. New projects started: transcription of the records of Overdale Crematorium and the monumental inscriptions in the churchyard of Little Lever Congregational Church which was about to close. A closer link was established with Bolton Archives with a view to working on projects with them.

1998 - 2003

During 1998 the branch purchased copies of the records of various Bolton cemeteries with a view to transcribing them. The stock of microfiche was increased gradually and by the end of the year two readers were equipped with attachments for viewing films. These were available on loan to members. In 1998 the arrangements for paying the grant to Bolton from the Society was changed to the transfer of £120 at the beginning of each quarter. Previously, the amount had depended on what was spent on approved items up to a maximum of £450 per year. The branch was thus given more control on its spending, which still had to be within the approved aims of the Society and ultimately be recorded in its accounts. The branch accounts for 1998 were the first to appear in the journal (1999, Vol 35 No 3 page 193)

Early in 1999 the branch was saddened by the death of Mr Young. Mrs Kearns took over his role as Journal Secretary. During the year another Open Day held at Bolton Library attracted many people and a number of them came to the next monthly meeting. The organised workshops were always very popular as a replacement for a speaker at a monthly meeting. Shorter workshops were also held after other types of meeting. Work was in progress to index the Deane Marriage Register.

As a result of a change in the Constitution of the Society in March 2000 representation of the branch on the Council was reduced to one. Previously the Chairman and Secretary were both members. For a few months the representative was Mr Marsh but from July 2000 the position was taken by Mr Timmington. At the general meeting of the branch in 2000 Mrs Owen resigned as Project Officer and was not replaced until a year later when Mrs Massey took over. The branch bought a second-hand computer which was available on loan to members so that they could access the material which was increasingly available on CDs. Help was given to those not familiar with computers. As a result of publicity, attendance at meetings continued to rise and more than 70 were at the meeting in September 2000. It was reported that, because of bad weather, 'only' 45 went to the meeting two months later. This

was about twice the number that attended meetings of the Society in Manchester and shows the thriving state of the branch.

Early in 2001 Mrs Marsh took over from Mrs Kearns as Journal Secretary. Later, at the general meeting, Mr Timmington took over as Chairman from Mr Marsh who remained on the committee dealing with the arrangements for speakers. Projects became the responsibility of Mrs Massey and Mr Haworth became Journal Secretary. The branch began to produce a newsletter giving details of fiche and other material available for hire or purchase. Work on projects continued and the increasing number of members at meetings was becoming a possible problem. In his report for the year 2001, the Chairman was able to record a very successful year with many new members. To help those new to family history, the Secretary, Mrs Greenwood, organised very popular workshops at her home. An increase in the sale of books and microfiche resulted in additional finance being available to purchase stock for the library.

These activities continued in 2002 and 2003. A decision was taken to put the results of projects on CD instead of microfiche. In November 2002 members assisted in an Open Day organised jointly with the staff of the Archives and Local Studies section of the Bolton Library. Many visitors attended the event which had a bookstall, talks and visits to the Local Studies searchroom. The success of this led to a joint project between the branch and the library to develop various aspects of genealogy. A further Open Day was held in April 2003 and others were planned. So keen were the members that they asked for a meeting in August, a month during which a meeting had not previously been held. In response to this a Computer Jamboree was held on 6 August 2003. It was very successful and the committee decided to make it a permanent feature of each year's programme. The branch was featured in the first issue of the journal in 2003 and this created much interest. The shop in Bolton Central Library, in which some of the publications of the branch were available, closed early in 2003 but a list of these publications was made available in the Local Studies area.

CHAPTER 13

Computer Branch

As with other branches, this one emerged as a result of the increasing interest of members in the subject. Computers were used by members in recording their family histories from at least the 1980s. Their expertise began to be used by the Society for administrative purposes, such as printing mailing labels, from the early years of that decade. In July 1985 the Council considered a paper from Mr Marlow which pointed out the need to regularise this assistance. The result was that it was agreed to purchase appropriate equipment to be held by Mr Marlow, thus ensuring that the facilities would continue to be available. Early the next year Mr Marlow was appointed Computer Officer with responsibility to ensure that the Society complied with the legal requirements for data protection. The increasing use of computers in family history is illustrated by the fact that on 14 May 1988 the Society hosted a Computer Conference jointly with the Society of Genealogists at St Thomas' Centre, Ardwick Green, Manchester.

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The first computer to be purchased by the Society was an Amstrad 1512 PC together with a printer, bought at a cost of over £1000, primarily for project work, in the autumn of 1988. This was very soon upgraded with the purchase of a hard disc. The Chairman told the Council in May 1990 that she had been approached by a number of members interested in using computers in family history, asking her when the Society would be forming a Computer Club. It was agreed that Mr Oldham should be consulted about this and he suggested that it should be established as the Computer section. A questionnaire was developed for circulation to members to find out who was interested and what machines and programmes they used. There is, however, no record of this information having been gathered at that time.

In June 1991 the Council was informed that Mr Houghton had agreed to set up the section and at the next monthly meeting he was co-opted to the Council to facilitate his activities. The section acted as an advisory body to the Council on the development of computing within the Society and in this capacity undertook the setting up of a computerised system to deal with the Members' Interests records. The section also advised that all work connected with members' records should be carried out within Clayton House to ensure a tighter control of all the activities of the Society. It also advised that the intention to handle the membership details together with financial matters would need a computer with a larger capacity than the one then used. This was acquired and by the beginning of 1992 the administration of the Society was dealt with in Clayton House and largely computerised. In January 1992 the Council received the last report on membership details compiled by Mr Marlow from data held on his own computer.

In the last issue of the journal in 1991 Mr Houghton wrote the first of his regular articles entitled 'Computer Talk'. In these he gave details of what the section was doing and what advice could be given to members. In his first article he highlighted the ease with which he could communicate with genealogists all over the world and pointed out that other members with a modem could do the same if they found a local Bulletin Board linked to FidoNet. In the next issue he gave the names of the six committee members who met regularly every few weeks to discuss the computer scene in genealogy. Other members were invited to attend if they had experiences to share.

In August 1992 Mr Houghton stood in at short notice to address the monthly meeting of the Society on 'Computers and Family History' when the speaker intended to talk on this subject was unable to attend. Those in the audience later sent many letters of appreciation. Members were able to get practical help on the use of computers and on 30 January 1993 the first of many seminars was held on the use of the programme 'Brother's Keeper'. This programme became the recommended standard for members so that help and tuition was easier to arrange than would be the case if many different ones were in use. The seminars were in great demand. Tuition was also available on the more general use of computers. 'Computer Talk' continued to give much advice and also details relevant to family history gathered from round the world.

In his first 'Talk' of 1995 Mr Houghton said that there were 276 registered members of the Computer Group with over 100 of them using Brother's Keeper. He had supplied nearly 500 genealogy discs of various kinds and was answering about three letters a week. More importantly and interesting for the future, he said that he was now connected to the Internet. He knew of only one other member so connected but gave his Internet address in case there

were others. He gave some enticing examples of what he had found on the Net. In the next issue he listed the addresses of ten members, including those of Mr Stringer and Mr Wood, who were to contribute much to the branch in later years. Things move quickly in computing and in the next issue (August 1995) the formation of the Internet Group was announced. Details were given on how to join the group which was organised by Mr Stringer. In the same issue Mr Houghton said that he had added a few pages about the society on the GENUKI website.

In June 1995 the Council discussed a proposal from Mr Houghton that the Society should be linked to the Internet so that members could get in touch through e-mails. It decided to take no action for the time being. In August Mr Stringer spoke at length to the Council on possible developments in computing as they might affect family history including the possibility that training might be available at the University where he held an appointment. He was co-opted to the Council so that it could have the benefit of his continuing advice. One result of this was that it was decided in January 1996 that there should be monthly meetings of the group which had previously met perhaps twice a year at seminars or, for a minority, through the exchange of e-mails. The first of these meetings was held on 23 March 1996 and they have continued on the afternoons of the fourth Saturday of most months. The numbers attending have often tested the amount of accommodation available. At the first meeting a committee of nine representatives was formed. Reports of the meetings were published in the journal alongside the usual contribution from Mr Houghton. The latter increasingly referred to exchanges between members of the e-mail group and material taken from websites around the world.

In October 1996 Mr Stringer wrote in the journal about the intention of the group to set up a development fund to enable the Society to purchase a computer to use for demonstrations at meetings. Members attending each meeting were invited to contribute £1 and contributions were invited from those unable to attend meetings. This proved very successful and many generous donations were received. As a result, a computer was purchased in the summer of 1997. This was sited in the library and all the available data was installed on it so that this could be used by members. In addition, it was used for demonstrations at Computer Group meetings. In November 1996 Mr Wood was co-opted to the Council as a representative of Overseas Members, serving to keep the Council aware of the interchanges between members on the e-mail group, which then numbered about 200. At the end of 1996 the size and success of this group led the Council to agree that the Society should be connected to the Internet. This took place in July 1997 and became an important channel of communication with members living overseas and also a valuable source of new members for the Society.

The report in the journal of February 1997 included details of how to join the e-mail group and this resulted in a large increase in the numbers taking part. The contributions of the group to each issue of the journal continued to provide members with much news and advice on an increasing important tool in family history research. The regular meetings at Clayton House were also well attended. Members of the Group played an increasing role in providing and maintaining computer-based facilities in the library and the office. They also became responsible for the development of the Society's website. Individual sessions were arranged for those members who were terrified of computers but who realised what help they could give, both in family history and in other fields.

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The Society, led by the group, planned another conference on ‘Computers in Family History’ in collaboration with the Society of Genealogists. This was held at Salford University on 24 April 1999 and was a great success thanks to the efforts of local members on the day and the work of the main organiser, Mr Marsden. At this time there were about 500 members in the e-mail group—about one in eight of the total membership of the Society. It is therefore not surprising that members, including those living overseas, took part in an increasing number of projects. The revised Constitution of 1996 allowed for the creation of special interest groups. It was recognised that the Computer Group was one such group but no formal resolution was passed by the Council. As a result of a further change in the Constitution of the Society at an Extraordinary General Meeting in March 2000, special interest groups were abolished and were re-designated as branches of the Society. The Computer branch was formally established by the Council on 15 March 2000. As a result of this change in status the branch elected Mr Stringer, previously called the co-ordinator of the group, as its Chairman.

There was no change in the number attending the informative and instructional meetings held at Clayton House nor in the wealth of detail in the contributions to the journal. Mr Houghton wrote his last ‘Computer Talk’ in May 2001 but he was ably followed by others, particularly Mr Marsden and Mr Stringer. The emphasis became focused on particular topics rather than the wide sweep of material to be found on the web and the contributions of members to the e-mail group. This was perhaps a result of the efforts of the branch to encourage the use of computers and the ability of many members to access the material for themselves. Even those without a home computer or without Internet access at home could use the facilities at Clayton House to obtain information from the web. In March 2003 a special ‘Census Day’ was presented instead of the usual talk. The same programme was given twice in the day to cater for the large number interested. After a short talk there were demonstrations and hands-on experience of using indexes and returns, both on CD and on the Internet.

In addition to his work for our Society, Mr Stringer, in partnership with Mr Brian Randell, established and developed the Genealogy UK & Ireland Internet site (GENUKI). For this work they were awarded the Julian Bickersteth Memorial Medal by the Institute of Heraldic & Genealogical Studies in 2001. This prestigious award was established in 1964 in memory of the man who was the inspiration and sponsor of the Institute. GENUKI is the UK’s premier genealogical information source and gateway and thus used by researchers in family history all over the world. Another award came in 2002 when the Society was Highly Commended in the Website Awards of the Federation of Family History Societies. This resulted from the work put into the site largely by Mr Marsden.

Members of the branch were in the library on Tuesdays to help members in all matters relating to computers—how to use the ever-expanding range of CDs, identifying what information was available on the Web and how to access it or, simply, how to get started in computing. Two advances, recommended and acted upon by Mr Marsden, who had been elected Treasurer of the Society, were the registration of the Society’s own domain on the Internet and the change to a broadband connection to the Internet in 2003. There was an increase in the number of computers available for different purposes in Clayton House and an extensive network was developed within the Society’s accommodation.

As a sign of the times, members of the branch were taking a major part in the projects being undertaken by the Society either as a whole or through one of its other branches. Data collected were almost always recorded, analysed and prepared for publication using computers. Many, perhaps most, of the publications were no longer in printed form or on fiche but on CDs. One project in which the branch played a leading role was the development of the LancashireBMD website. This followed the example of Cheshire in developing an index of births, marriages and deaths from the records of all the Registrars in the county. The Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society, and latterly the Liverpool and South West Lancashire FHS also agreed to take part. The index is gradually being put on the Internet, where it is freely available to all. Once users identify the required entries, the appropriate certificates can be then ordered and paid for directly from the Registrars. The first parts of the index to be made available were marriages in Salford, Trafford and Oldham, but coverage is now rapidly expanding across the county.

CHAPTER 14

Irish Ancestry Branch

The first article on Irish ancestry appeared in volume 5 of the *Manchester Genealogist* at the end of 1969. Its title was 'Does your Mother come from Ireland?'. It was written by the Chairman of the Society, Mr Denyer, and was one of a series called 'Beginners' Corner' designed to help those starting out on their research. A small number of other articles appeared in the following years and in 1979 there were two detailed articles on 'Sources of Irish Ancestral Research' by Mr Anderson. Another instructional article appeared in April 1983 detailing what could be done on a trip to Dublin and how to do it. Two years later there was an article based on a talk given by Mrs Mason to the Anglo-Scottish Society on Scottish/Irish movement which gives an historical account of the movement of population between the countries and the reasons for it.

In April 1989 the editor of the journal, Mrs Mason, indicated that she was planning to devote a section of each journal to Irish and Anglo-Irish Research and invited contributions. These were forthcoming and appeared in a separate section which, from the last issue of that year, carried the title 'Irish Roots'. This title was used until the first issue of 1994 when it was changed as a result of developments within the Society. In the autumn of 1993 a notice appeared in the journal from Mrs Thurston asking any members who were interested in forming an Irish Ancestry Group to get in touch with her. A meeting of those who responded was held at Clayton House on 11 October 1993. The meeting was attended by the General Secretary of the Society and those present, numbering about 25, unanimously agreed to form a group within the Society and to hold meetings on the first Monday afternoon of each month at Clayton House. This was reported to the Council in January 1994 and it agreed to co-opt Mrs Thornton to represent the group. The Irish section of the journal subsequently appeared under the title of 'Irish Ancestry Group'.

At its inaugural meeting the group decided that it would start a project to extract the details of all Irish-born individuals in the 1861 census. This work expanded and occupied members for many years. (See Chapter 18). Speakers were arranged for the monthly

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meetings and these always attracted an enthusiastic audience. Mrs Thurston became responsible for the project work and in August 1994 Mr Clements replaced Mrs Thornton as the group's representative on the Council. Mr Conway looked after the enquiries from members and Mrs Best represented Irish interests in the library. The Irish section of the journal contained many articles, sound advice and regular news of interest to those with Irish interests. The group was to be seen regularly at family history fairs in the region, where it attracted much interest from visitors. In the middle of 1996 it adopted as its logo in the journal and elsewhere a Celtic cross.

In 1996 Mrs Thurston stood down as the leader of the group and in accordance with the new Constitution of the Society, the group elected Mr Clements as its Chairman. He continued to represent the group on the Council. Mrs McGivern became the Secretary, while Mrs Thurston continued to look after projects and Mr Conway the enquiries. Three other members were elected to the committee but these did not include Mrs Best who resigned on leaving the Manchester area. In October 1996 Mr Clements was replaced as Chairman by Miss Gill and the group was represented on the Council by Mrs Casciani. Miss Gill was undertaking the transcription of the baptism registers of St Ann's Catholic Church in Ancoats. Mr Broadhurst looked after another venture of the group—the preparation of an index of Irish Strays. In August 1997 he took over from Mrs Casciani as representative of the group on the Council. From time to time substantial articles appeared in the Irish section of the journal and in 1997 one of these, 'Clan Costello' by Mrs Thornton won first prize in the Earwaker Prize competition for the best article of the year.

In 1998 the first volume of the 'Irish in Manchester, 1861—Ancoats' was published, the first fruits of the decision made at the inaugural meeting of the group. The second issue of the journal in 1999 contained an account by Mr Donlan of a walk with commentary led by another member, Mr Busted, round parts of Manchester particularly associated with the Irish in the city. At the general meeting of the group in 1999 Miss Gill was replaced as Chairman by Mr Broadhurst and Mrs Bentham took over responsibility for projects from Mrs Thurston. Later that year the second volume of the work on the 1861 census was published, covering Ardwick, Beswick, Bradford & Newton and Cheetham.

In February 2000 the group changed the day of its regular meetings to the second Monday of each month to avoid Monday Bank Holidays. Work began on transcribing the index of Manchester policemen which was in the Police Museum. At the EGM on 15 March the Constitution was amended and what were previously special interest groups became branches of the Society. Thus the group became the Irish Ancestry branch. Mrs McGivern resigned as Secretary at the AGM and was replaced by Mr Donlan. The third volume of the Irish in the 1861 census, covering Deansgate, was published during the year. The contributions to each issue of the journal from members of the branch, collected and presented by Mr Donlan, a former journalist, became noticeably more comprehensive and informative.

The fourth volume of the Irish in Manchester in 1861 (covering the southern suburbs) was published in 2001. Numbers attending branch meetings, especially those devoted to workshops, gradually increased and almost became too great for the space available. At the AGM Mrs Thurston was elected a Fellow of the Society in recognition of her work related to Irish ancestry. In November of 2002 the branch suffered a great loss in the death of Mr

Clements, its former Chairman. He had played a major role in developing the branch and in its many activities.

In 2002 the Society recognised the work of another member of the branch by electing Mr Conway as a Fellow. He had worked on enquiries related to Irish ancestry for many years. In 2003 the branch started another project, the transcription of the registers of St Wilfred's, Hulme, a very large parish of particular importance.

CHAPTER 15

Oldham & District Branch

The Society was involved in Oldham as early as 1966 when a week-long festival of leisure activities was held in October that year. The Society had a stall which was manned each day during the week. It attracted a considerable interest including a visit from one of the local Members of Parliament, Mr Charles Mapp. It is not known how many new members joined as a result. In January 1967 members of the Oldham Historical Society were invited to the monthly meeting of the Society to give an illustrated talk on some of the old buildings in Oldham and other smaller local towns.

There is no record of any other meetings in the town until 1982 when the General Secretary was approached by a group of family historians in Oldham who wanted help (including financial help) in setting up a group in Oldham. They were not interested in using the Society's name and if it was unable to help they said they would develop a group on their own. The Council decided in July 1982 that it was unable to help at that time and if the Society did help it would be on the basis that it would carry its name and be an affiliated group in the same way as the Bolton section which had been established the year before. No more was heard from the group but later in the year the Council expressed concern at the way in which neighbouring societies were encroaching into territory which had been regarded as 'belonging' to the Manchester & Lancashire Society. In particular, it was noted that the Rossendale Society (later to be known as Lancashire) was creeping into Oldham where several groups were known to be gathering. Similar problems were noted in the south with societies in Cheshire and in the west with societies in Liverpool. It was decided that there was a need to meet the Rossendale Society to discuss the problem. This did not happen, however, until the summer of 1986. A map showing the boundaries was then agreed and this placed Oldham (but not Middleton) on the Manchester side of the line.

No further move to establish a branch in Oldham occurred until May 1995 when the Council discussed a letter from the staff of Oldham Library Service which indicated that there would be support for a branch in Oldham and that this would be welcomed by the library. A decision to establish a branch was immediately taken and arrangements made to publicise this in the journal, in local newspapers and in the library. Further discussion proved necessary and it was not until 27 March 1996 that the meeting took place. It was attended by the Chairman of the Society, Mrs Wood; the General Secretary, Mrs de Courcy and a member of the Council, Mrs Lynch, as representatives of the Society. About 70 attended, many of them existing members of the Society and it was agreed by those present that they would become the Oldham & District branch of the Society. Mrs Pendlebury

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became the Organiser and Mrs Gledhill the Secretary of the branch with another six members making up the committee. The Council resolved to establish the branch at its meeting on 17 April 1996.

The first regular meeting took place on 27 June 1996 at The One World Centre at the Unitarian Chapel, King Street and meetings have been held in eleven months each year since then. These meetings have always been well attended with 50 or more present to hear speakers on a wide variety of topics. In addition to the talk, a help desk, a bookstall and a small library were available at each meeting. There has always been a close link between the branch and Oldham Local Studies and Archives. From the summer of 1997 a member has attended the Local Studies Library each week to be available to give advice on family history to members of the public attending the library. A similar session has been undertaken since August 2002 at Middleton Library. In the spring of 1997 a six-session course was provided by Mr Norris and other members of the committee to help beginners. This was run in response to local demand and 22 attended. It was repeated the following year when 18 attended.

A number of projects were undertaken in the first year under the direction of Mr Wood—an updating of the list of marriages of Oldham people at Prestwich Church, building a database of all places of worship in Oldham and creating a surname index of the 1891 census for Middleton. To these was later added the publication of a transcript of the 1841 census of Saddleworth. At Easter 1998 Mrs Pendlebury started what was to become an Oldham tradition—a research trip to London. That year twenty members went down by train for a visit lasting three days, staying in a university hall of residence. They were able to visit whatever research centres or archives were appropriate for their research. The mix of experienced researchers and beginners led to some unexpected discoveries. It is not surprising that the trip became an annual event and more and more popular. In 2000 an invitation was given to members living in the London area, but having interests in Oldham, to join the group for one evening of its stay. During the trip that year a small party was able to have an unexpected and wonderful experience through a visit to the House of Lords Record Office. This was described in an article in the journal. (*Manchester Genealogist*, 2000, Volume 36 Number 3, Page 237) In 2003 the group numbered 60 and travelled to London in a double-decker coach. Enthusiastic accounts of these trips have been published in the Society's journal.

By 1998, the branch was well established with its own Treasurer, Mr Tongue, and a bank account. The meetings were always well attended, thanks, perhaps, to the excellent publicity given to the branch each month in the local evening paper with which it has maintained very good relations. That year the branch decided to take part in the National Burials project organised by the Federation of Family History Societies. This aimed to transcribe the burial registers for each parish in the country as a complement to the records of births and marriages contained in the International Genealogical Index (IGI). It was the first section of the Society to take part in the project and provided almost all the entries for Lancashire when the First Edition was published in April 2001. Members in Oldham, and some elsewhere, have finished work on all the available registers of the Oldham district. The results are now available locally and will be included in future editions of the National Burial Index.

Part II — The Branches

In addition to this major project, surname indexes were prepared for the censuses of Middleton in 1871 and 1861. In 2001 members began to assist the staff of the local Registrar in compiling computer indexes of birth registrations which were later published on the LancashireBMD website. The pages devoted to the Oldham branch in the Society's journal have always provided a good mix of short articles, news, reports of meetings, advice on Oldham research and details of future events together with many interesting records and stories from Oldham's past. The first issue of the journal in 2003 contained a contribution from the Archives Officer of Oldham Local Studies and Archives. This gave details of some of their relevant holdings and news of recent activities and acquisitions and was another example of the links which the branch has developed in the local area.

The committee changed its membership over the years but the main officers remained unchanged until 2003 when Mrs Pendlebury decided to stand down as Chairman (or Organiser as she had been called) although she remained on the Committee. Mr McEwan was elected in her place Mrs Gledhill became Projects Officer in place of Mr Wood and Mrs Sankey became Secretary.

PART III

The Activities

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CHAPTER 16

The Library

The early years

One of the officers of the foundation Council was the Librarian—Mr Randall Jones. He wrote very early in the life of the Society to a number of sources with a view to establishing a library for the use of members. Booksellers, particularly those specialising in second-hand books, were asked for their lists of relevant books and other items for sale. Libraries were asked for their holdings covering genealogy, family and local history. He wrote to the Manchester Evening News asking readers if they had appropriate books which they would be prepared to donate to the young society. Members of the Society were asked in the second issue of the journal if they had books they were prepared to donate or loan to the Society for the benefit of fellow members.

What resulted from these appeals is not known, but at the first AGM in May 1965 the Librarian referred to ‘the sorry plight of our library’. He mentioned a card index system which was being compiled and the third issue of the journal contains details of 43 items in the possession of the Librarian on 1 June 1965. At the AGM in 1966 Mr Jones became Secretary and the work of Librarian was taken on by another founder member, Mr Wild. From December 1966 onwards, each issue of the journal contained a regular list of accessions to the library and a note that if members wished to borrow a book they should make this known to Mr Wild at the monthly meetings or by letter to his home address.

The minutes of the Council meeting held in October 1967 have a note that there was a need to re-organise the library. There is a reference in the following month to books which had been bought for the Society. The journal of Winter 1968 (Volume 4 No 4) contains a full list of the holdings—52 books and 31 guides and pamphlets. The donation and purchase of books were mentioned in the Council minutes of January and March 1970. In the Summer issue of 1971, the journal contained a note that the library had been static for some time and suggested that each member should contribute 25 pence for the purchase of new material.

1971 - 1981

Sometime in the year 1971-1972 the library, previously held at the Librarian’s house, was transferred to Salford Central Library, Peel Park from which items could be borrowed by members at any time. In 1973 Mrs Seddon took over as Librarian and the journal of Spring 1974 (Vol 10 No 1) contains a list of books belonging to the Society held in Salford

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Library but available for reference only. At the AGM of 1974 Mrs Seddon was elected as Secretary and in September of that year Mr Hidden took over as Librarian. He removed the library to his house and from November began to take many of the library books to the monthly meetings at which they could be borrowed by members for a month against a deposit of 50 pence. A fine was imposed if a book was kept for more than a month. This arrangement of deposits and fines lasted for only a year before it was abolished. Mrs Seddon proposed that the library should be gradually increased by the purchase of new books and it was agreed by the Council that Mr Hidden should seek suggestions of appropriate books and be responsible for buying some from time to time. The accounts for the year ending April 1975 showed that £2.58 had been spent on the purchase of books for the library. This rose in the following year to £10.81.

In the autumn of 1975 it was agreed that a steel cabinet should be purchased to hold the library collection and kept (with the agreement of the landlord) at 3 St Ann's Churchyard where the monthly meetings were then held. This relieved the Librarian, Mr Hidden, who was then also acting as Treasurer, from having to transport part of the stock to the meetings each month. From the autumn of 1975 the journal began to list details of what was described as 'an extensive mine of genealogical information' which had accumulated in the previous 11 years. The material consisted mainly of brief family records, census returns, churchyard memorials, newspaper cuttings and family bible records from a number of sources. They were indexed under the main surnames. Another item which began to appear regularly in the journal was a list of the books added to the library and for a time there was also a list of the journals which were received from other societies in exchange for a copy of *The Manchester Genealogist*.

Mr and Mrs Cresswell were co-opted to the Council in March 1976 and after the AGM of that year became joint Librarians. They put forward ideas to raise money to pay for an increase in the library holdings. One of these was a Christmas Fair which they reported at the AGM in 1977 was quite successful in spite of bad weather. In 1978 moves were made to acquire a microfilm reader to be able to look at filmed census returns (particularly that for 1851) and a microfiche reader to use with the Computer File Index produced by the Mormons—the forerunner of the International Genealogical Index (IGI). This latter was obtained first at a cost of £225 and placed at the home of Mrs Seddon where members could make appointments to use it.

At the beginning of 1979 the increasing numbers attending the monthly meetings meant that these had to be moved back to the Methodist Central Hall. The library was moved there after being taken first to the Cresswells' home to be indexed. This was completed by April. It was agreed that £50 should be available to the Librarians to buy additional books. At this time Mr Cresswell was acting also as Social Secretary and was appointed Chairman of a Development Council set up to raise funds for a duplicator and for premises which it was hoped could be found in central Manchester. It was planned that this would provide a base for the Society and house the library so that members could consult the holdings between the monthly meetings. By April it was reported that £120 had been collected. The records of monumental inscriptions were held at the home of Mrs Simpson and made available to members. Mrs Cresswell became sole Librarian in 1981.

Early in 1980 accommodation was found at Clayton House and the Development Committee (the name Council seems to have been quietly dropped) was put in charge of the

transition of the rooms to something fit to house the library and other activities. This work took more time and money than expected and it was not until 8 May 1982 that the library at Clayton House was opened to members.

On the 24 May 1980 Mr Graham Lewis was killed in a motor cycle accident. He had for some years been Research Co-ordinator for the Society and had himself done much research work. A fund was set up in his memory and by the time of the Council meeting in July it was reported that about £100 had been collected. Discussion took place as to how this should be used. In July 1981 it was reported that some of Mr Lewis's papers and copies of some of his pedigrees would have dedication labels inserted and be housed separately in the library. The appeal would close on 1 January 1982. There was debate and perhaps heated argument about what books, indeed what kind of book, should be bought but by the time of the AGM in 1982 the Librarian was able to comment on the increase in the number of items in the library including those purchased using the money from the fund. A bookcase bought in his memory was in place by September 1982 and a suitable commemorative plate was awaited. At this time there was £157 in the fund. The Librarian was able to report in September 1983 that all the books purchased had been placed in the library. It is not clear what was purchased. The bookcase no longer exists but the commemorative plate survives.

1982 - 1985

At the AGM of 1982 it was reported that the books had been catalogued by Miss Forsyth and Mrs Brett. The accounts then showed that £143 had been spent on books for the library in the year ending April 1982. The 1981 version of the IGI became available in 1982 and donations were sought to cover the cost of about £400. When the fiche were placed in the library at the end of the year those who had donated were allowed 15 hours of free access, others paid 50 pence per hour. The older version remained with Mrs Seddon for research purposes. A new library list running to 32 pages was produced. Discussion naturally took place about how the limited funds available to the library should be used. It was agreed that priority would be given to items which were not held in libraries or the record office in the Manchester area.

In May 1983 the new Librarian, Miss Forsyth, asked Council for clarification of her responsibilities. She was told that she was in control with the assistance of the volunteers, who then numbered 19. Between them they should be able to agree that a sufficient number were available whenever the library was open. The Chairman said he would appeal for more volunteers at the monthly meetings. Proposals to purchase additional books were to be made to Council. An important responsibility was accounting for the money received for the use of the microfiche, the sale of books and members' interests and the current library charge. This is the first reference to a charge for the use of the library and it does not appear in the notice published in the journal about the library until July 1986 when a fee of 20 pence is mentioned.

At the same time it was agreed that a Scottish Index prepared by the Mormons, separate from the IGI, should be purchased, starting with the larger towns. A new library list was prepared for publication and it was suggested that the updating of this would be easier if it were put on a word processor. The number of members using the library showed a steady increase but some of the times were not as popular as others and it was proposed to adjust opening times accordingly. The Librarian told Council that there was a need for someone to

look after general housekeeping tasks which she did not think should fall to the Librarian. It was agreed that there should be a 'house committee' to look after all the Society's rooms in Clayton House.

There was an increasing problem of dealing with postal enquiries and it was agreed that these should go to the Secretary who would pass them on, if appropriate, to Mrs Pollard who might need to have a small team of volunteers to help her. If the Librarian had the time, however, there was no reason why some enquiries could not be answered from the library.

Early in 1985 a microfiche copier was purchased at a cost of nearly £2000. This produced much extra work in the library in dealing with requests from those in the library and orders coming by post. The postal service was first made known to members in the journal of July 1985. In the middle of 1986 the latest (1984) version of the IGI was obtained and this initiated a further rush of orders for copies. Such was the continued demand for this service that by the beginning of 1987 a team of volunteers led by Mrs Ormston was formed which was dedicated to this work. A limit of 100 was put on the number of sheets which could be printed for one name. This rule still stood in 2003. In February 1987 the request for donations from those using the IGI in the library was dropped.

1986 - 1991

At the beginning of 1986, along with the rest of the Society, the library had to move into different rooms on the 5th floor of Clayton House. A 'No Smoking' rule was introduced at this time. The holdings of the library were steadily increased from a number of sources—copies of the Society's own project reports, purchase of books and the acquisition of projects, indexes and transcriptions from neighbouring societies. New issues of the library catalogue were made at regular intervals. In October 1986 it was reported that a number of printed transcriptions of parish registers were missing from the library and a rule was introduced that all cases and bags had to be left with the library staff.

Steady progress with the development of the library continued in 1987. The holdings increased to such an extent that it proved impossible to produce an up-to-date catalogue. What equipment, such as microfiche readers, was in the library is not known for certain. Some readers were acquired from organisations such as banks which were moving on to more modern methods of record handling.

However, towards the end of 1987, the Librarian acquired a word processor and the details of all the items were transferred to disc. A new catalogue was produced in 1989. The hours of opening increased and this required more volunteer hours to staff all the sessions. Travel expenses began to be paid to regular library helpers. Problems frequently occurred on Sundays before meetings of the Anglo-Scots. Although the library opened at 11 a.m. most did not arrive until 1 p.m. and this caused congestion. It was particularly difficult when the meeting was a 'Research Meeting' because members expected to continue their own research when the meeting was in progress. The Librarian decided to close the library at 2 p.m. and the Council supported this line of action.

The IGI for England was obtained in 1988 and it was agreed that the Society should purchase the IGI for the whole world. The 1984 edition was loaned to the Bolton section. In October 1988 Mr Lambert said he could not continue as Library Steward because of pressure of business and Mr Arnold took over the position. The Council agreed that, if the Librarian and other helpers were in the library at times when it was not open to members, they should

not be distracted by phone calls and people at the door. The provision of an answerphone dealt with one problem and it was agreed that the door should be kept locked and not answered. The times of opening were clearly displayed.

In 1989 the Librarian suggested that the Society should purchase the Griffiths Valuation of Ireland on microfiche at a cost of nearly £1000. It was agreed that members should be asked in the journal for donations towards this. One member soon came forward with a donation covering half the cost and the purchase was made. The details of what was happening in the library at this time are not entirely clear because the Librarian was no longer a member of the Council to which regular reports were previously made. Miss Forsyth was, however, co-opted as a member of the Council on 14 August 1990. She immediately pointed out that more space was needed to house the material that was held. It was agreed that more shelving should be put up and that an additional room, in Clayton House or nearby, should be sought but doubts were expressed on the financial aspects of such an extension. It was suggested that the viewing room was larger than was required and some alterations could be made. Shelving was put up and a room in nearby St Margaret's Chambers was rented and used primarily for storing records relating to the work on the 1881 census, thereby releasing space in Clayton House. Unwanted material in the library was identified and offered for sale. At the AGM in May 1991 Miss Forsyth was again elected a member of the Council. Stricter security was introduced and members were asked to book in and out at each visit

1992 - 2003

At the beginning of 1992 the library moved into the new accommodation on the third floor of Clayton House. This gave more space and enabled a separation to be made between the volunteers who worked in the library and those working in the shop or the office, although some flexibility was expected. Once again there was a need for more volunteers and appeals were made in the journal and at the monthly meetings. Miss Forsyth did not stand for election to the Council in May 1992 but continued to assist in the library although not identified as the Librarian. Supervision of the library and its staffing were taken over by the General Secretary, Mrs de Courcy, until a Librarian could be found. When no one came forward to take this position Mrs de Courcy was given the additional role of Library Manager at the head of a team of volunteers. The Library Committee looked at the question of postal research for members and the role of Helpline in this field. A register of members with what were described as 'useful skills' was started by means of a notice in the journal. In practice, this does not seem to have been used for very long, if at all.

By the end of 1992 the library had acquired the full set of the indexes to the Scottish Old Parish Registers on microfiche, thanks in large part to an excellent response to an appeal for donations to cover the cost. A set of fiche of the IGI (1992) was purchased with the older one being transferred to the Bolton branch. A new machine (NP 580) was purchased to provide better printed copies from microfiche. In April 1993 it was decided to discontinue the issue of Pedigree Charts to members. The charts completed by members had previously been indexed and stored in the library. Indexing had stopped in 1989 and it was felt that the purpose of the charts was met by successive issues of the Members' Interests Directory and its supplements. At the AGM in 1993 it was suggested that the value of the library holdings

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were overvalued at £10,000 and the value should be the resale value. It was agreed to look at this but the Council later decided not to change the stated value.

It was decided to purchase the 1891 census for Manchester and Salford on microfiche and some of the films of the 1841 census for Manchester. After the regular stocktaking in 1994 the Library Management Committee arranged that each helper should have a section of the library to keep under control and check regularly. The Society entered into a contract with Micrographic Engineering Services for the maintenance of the 12 fiche and 4 film readers in the library. In the summer of 1994 another room on the third floor was leased which allowed the bookshop to be set up there by October that year, thus releasing space for the use of the library. At the same time some of the fixtures in the library had been made mobile to allow them to be moved aside, thus leaving space for meetings which were too large for the Seminar Room on the fourth floor. From the beginning of 1995 the monthly meetings of the Society were held here. Stacking chairs and tables were bought to make it more suitable for such meetings.

The fiche covering the last county (Lancashire) to be issued from the transcription of the 1881 census arrived in September 1996 and naturally meant an increase in the number using the library. At a time of some financial difficulty for the Society in the autumn of 1996 the Council decided to make a charge of 50 pence for using the fiche readers but this was so very unpopular with the volunteers in the library that it was not implemented. The fiche copier (NP 580) began to give trouble at this time and early in 1997 it was agreed that a new one should be leased. The new digital computer-based printer began to be used on 1 July and the quality of the prints was greatly improved. A computer-based library catalogue was started in 1997 and the printed version was discontinued. In June 1997 it was decided to earmark the donations, given by those using the library, for the purchase of the General Register Office indexes of death registrations on microfiche. A noticeable increase in donations followed and the first years, covering 1866 to 1881, were bought in August. These proved very popular and the years and types of record were gradually extended so that by the middle of 1999 deaths and marriages were covered from 1837 to 1900, and by 2003 indexes to births, marriages and deaths were held for 1837 to 1955.

Each issue of the journal carried a list of additions to the library holdings. Most of these were on paper but more and more were on CD. To accommodate those who wanted to consult this type of record, one wall of the bookshop was fitted with a worktop by Mr Clements and three computers and a printer were set up there in October 1999. A little later it was possible for members to access the Internet there as well. Three months later the library started to receive a facelift. Old shelves were removed and, in stages, replaced with custom-made steel library shelving giving more shelf room and greater flexibility. The seating area was rearranged and a programme to replace old microfiche and microfilm readers started. New blinds replaced the old ones which had had to be augmented with black curtains when slides were shown at meetings. Mr Clements undertook much of this transformation assisted by Mr Marsden with the electrical and computer work.

The library was normally closed to visitors on Wednesday and this allowed volunteers, mainly Miss Auty, Miss Downham and Mrs B Gregory to undertake what can be called maintenance work. This covered the recording of the new acquisitions, giving them the appropriate number, recording them on the computer data base before putting them on the shelves. They played a big part in deciding on the nature of the new shelving which was

installed. Inevitably, there was a need to repair the wear and tear of normal use and to provide some of the documents with protective covers and better identification to make them more easily available to members. Other volunteers came forward in 2000 to assist the Library Manager in answering the queries which came in by letter and e-mail.

The gradual improvements in the library continued through 2000 and 2001—the new shelving was completed by March 2002, fiche and film readers were replaced, additional computers purchased and the range of indexes of birth, marriage and death registrations extended. There was also an organisational change in 2001. Three teams of volunteers were identified. One was made up of those who were present when the library was open to members to give help and advice. Some of them also undertook the printing from fiche of the IGI or censuses requested by mail order. This team was led by Mrs Hall. A second, smaller, team looked after the library stock. This was led by Miss Auty who also became the co-ordinator of all the teams and designated Library Manager. In February 2001 she was co-opted to the Council and at the next AGM became an elected member. The third team, led by Mr Marsden, became responsible for the increasingly important task of maintaining the equipment. Later in 2001, the changes to the entrance to the rooms on the third floor allowed the reception area to be improved and more space to be made available.

During 2002 developments in the library were limited to putting the finer touches to the recent changes when day-to-day activity showed how things could be better. The library, however, was anything but quiet as more and more members took advantage of what was there. At times it was thought that a system of booking would have to be reintroduced but this did not become necessary. At the end of the year two long-term volunteers, Miss Auty and Mrs Ormston, left the area and were sorely missed. Mrs de Courcy took over once again as Library Co-ordinator and a number of new volunteers came forward. The next year saw perhaps more material than ever being provided, particularly that based on CD. This became a popular way of publishing research findings and much came from the efforts of members of the Society. At the end of 2003, the printout of the library catalogue, held on computer, ran to 267 A4 pages. The library then had 14 microfiche readers, 5 microfilm readers and 7 computers. These were on a network and several were connected to the Internet through a broadband connection.

Library opening hours at Clayton House

When the library first opened at Clayton House appointments to use the library had to be made with Mrs Rayner. To start with it was open on Mondays from 7.00 to 9.30 p.m., Saturdays from 2.00 to 5.00 p.m. and prior to the monthly meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month between 5.00 and 7.00 p.m. At the beginning of 1985 the hours were extended. It was open on the first and third Mondays in the month from 7 to 9 p.m., on the first and third Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on the fourth Wednesday from 2 to 4.30 p.m. and on Thursdays before the meetings from 5 to 7 p.m. In 1986 the Monday openings were reduced to the second one in each month and a trial opening on the fourth Sunday was started. In 1987 Sunday opening became a regular feature from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

From 1988 the library was also open on each weekday morning, except Thursdays, from 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon and no prior booking was required for these sessions. This was possible because of the appointment of Mr Lambert as Library Steward and he was there each morning. The other opening hours remained the same and booking for these was now made

by phoning Clayton House, where a phone had been installed, during library opening hours. An offer by another member to staff the library on Thursdays and each afternoon was opposed by the Librarian who said that the library volunteers need time to undertake work untroubled by other members.

In the early 1990's the library was open without appointment to members on 4 mornings each week and also during each month by prior appointment on one Monday evening, one Wednesday afternoon, on the Thursday evening before the Society meeting and for 5 or 6 hours on each of two Saturdays and one Sunday. In 1992 it was opened for 6 hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays but on only one Saturday in a month. In the next year, when meetings were changed to Wednesday afternoons, the library was open on that morning. This pattern continued but the opening on Monday evenings ceased at the end of 1997 and the Sunday opening ended in 2001 when the Anglo-Scottish branch changed the day of its meetings from Sunday to Saturday. These changes resulted from a lack of demand from members at particular times linked to the increasing reluctance of members to travel to central Manchester in the evenings and weekends. The number of hours during which the library was available to members had reduced from about 90 per month in 1990 to about 70 in 2003.

CHAPTER 17

The Manchester Genealogist

1964 - 1967

The first issue of *The Manchester Genealogist* appeared in the spring of 1964—the first journal of a provincial family history society even though the Society was formed a year after the Birmingham and Midland Society. It was a duplicated newsletter of 12 octavo-sized pages. After a welcome to members from the Council it contained details of the meetings already held and those to come, a record of the work already in progress on the recording of monumental inscriptions and advice on how to do this, addresses of local libraries, a note on the links the Society had with societies abroad and a note of a publication on genealogical terms which had been prepared for members and was available for sale, priced one shilling.

The next issue of 2 quarto sheets (noted to be a supplement to the first) continued in the same way to advise on what was available at local (and some not so local) libraries and useful books which were available. It asked for contributions from members for the journal and also for the library which was being developed. It started a section labelled 'Queries' in which members could ask for advice on particular names or other instances of names being researched.

The issue of Spring 1965 followed the same pattern but started a series of articles on various aspects of researching and recording a family tree. The next issue, of 4 pages, contained a report of the first Annual General Meeting with reports from the officers and the results of elections to the Council. This was followed by the second of the articles for beginners and a list of books already in the library in June 1965. Many of the items on the

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list were guides to historic places and lists of library holdings but there were also reference books and genealogical handbooks.

It is not clear who was responsible for these first issues, but it was probably Mr Randall Jones, the Librarian and Public Relations Officer. He certainly wrote the articles for beginners. In the autumn of 1965 the Council discussed the content of future journals and put forward ideas of the kind of item which could be included. The fruits of these discussions were seen in future issues. It was agreed that the material should be forwarded to the Secretary, Mr Chorlton, who would collate and type it.

The next issue, labelled 'Volume 2 New Series', was dated December 1965 and had more of the appearance of a present-day journal. It had a plain cream cover carrying only the typescript words: "The Manchester Genealogist the Journal of the Manchester Genealogical Society" and had 25 pages. The pages were again quarto, a size to be followed for many years. After a list of the contents, the names of the members of the Council, an editorial written by the Chairman, Mr Burling, and a page from the Secretary, Mr Chorlton. There followed a mixture of items which formed the pattern of the journal for many years. There were reports of meetings, details of library holdings, histories of churches and old houses, details from family bibles and parish registers and lists of entries from a number of sources. Some of these lists were continued over a series of issues. A short report of one meeting in 1965 is of some interest. Members met Mr G H Fudge, Manager of the Research and Development Division of the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City. They learnt 'some remarkable facts about the use of computers in Genealogy'. Mr Fudge left a copy of a parish register which had been printed on a computer. This illustrates what was happening in the United States at the time and also the international connections of the founding secretary, Mr Chorlton, which were soon to be lost to the Society. The issue also contained the first lists of Members' Interests—those family names which were being researched by members.

Journals at this time were typed on to stencils, duplicated, collated and stapled by a few members of the Council either themselves or through access to the necessary equipment at their employment. As early as October 1965 there had been discussion about the purchase of a duplicator and a second-hand one had been bought for £8-10-0 by April 1966. In January 1967 a typewriter was obtained. A new type of cover had been professionally printed for the issue of March 1966. The wording was the same but was accompanied by the Manchester civic badge. Permission had been obtained from Manchester City Council for the use of this badge. The cover was no longer typescript but had been professionally printed. The colour of the cover was changed to gold for the issue of March 1967 (Vol 3 No 1). This remained the colour until the end of 2003. The design described continued in use until the summer of 1970. The first two issues of 1966 contained 25 pages each but the third and last had only eleven. These followed the same pattern. Only one issue, of 14 pages, published in March, appeared in 1967 and this reflects the difficulties experienced by the Society at this time. In addition, Mr Randall Jones reported to the Council that the typewriter was defective.

1968 - 1973

A 24-page journal came out in March 1968 and appears to have been edited by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Miss McLachlan and Miss Pendleton. Production difficulties surrounding the journal continued to be a problem for many years. At the AGM of 1968 a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman were elected. The Chairman, Mr Shepherd, took over as

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editor of the journal. This is the first time that an editor is named although there had previously been editorials over the name of the Chairman. Mr Shepherd introduced some alterations to the layout and new features, such as a 'Beginners Corner', a section for letters from members and a greater opportunity for members to seek help. For the first time grateful mention was made of those mainly responsible for the production of the journal—Miss McLachlan for the typing and layout and Mr Wild and Mr Wright for the running off and assembling. It was noted at the Council in November 1968 that there were 48 paying members of the Society and that finances were lower than in the previous year because there had been 4 issues of the journal. A member was thanked for gifting a considerable supply of paper.

After the AGM of 1969 Miss Pendleton was elected to edit the journal with Messrs Wild and Wright responsible for printing and distribution. A modified layout of the journal was agreed by the Council although the content remained much the same. In the prolonged absence of Miss McLachlan, who usually undertook the typing, it was agreed that Miss Pendleton would prepare the script and pass it to the new Chairman, Mr Denyer, who would arrange for the preparation of stencils which he would send to Messrs Wild and Wright. It was agreed that the latter two members would prepare a Handbook for members which would be issued instead of a journal one quarter. This would include a list of members, the Library List, Society rules, a dictionary of genealogical terms and other items of value to members. If this Handbook was prepared, no copy has survived in the files. During the previous two or three years the average size of the issues had been between 18 and 20 pages. In January 1970 the Council agreed that the issue about to appear (Vol 5 No 4) should be for two quarters—Winter 1969 and Spring 1970. This decision was presumably made because publication had been running late all year. It was an unusually large issue, with 26 pages.

As a result, there were only three issues in 1970. From this year the volume number and the issue were not printed in the journal, but they were identified by the year and the season. The numbering was re-started for the second issue in 1975, which was, fortunately, called Volume 11 Number 2, thus maintaining the correct numbering. The journal from this time began to contain articles on genealogy in Ireland, showing the many links between that country and the members resident in Lancashire. The content of the journal continued to contain the same variety of items and had the same number of pages—about twenty. The design of the cover changed with the issue of Winter 1970, but the wording was the same as before. It was noted in the next issue that members had received the Winter issue late because of a postal strike and a delay in the production of the new covers.

Mr Trunkfield, the Secretary, took over the editorship of the journal from the issue of Summer 1971. The contents of the next few issues are a somewhat haphazard collection of lists of names extracted by anonymous persons from a variety of sources. There were few contributions from members and only a few enquiries from members appeared from time to time. Features such as a list of contents and the names and addresses of the officers and members of the Council were missing.

Mr Beckett took over as Editor from the Winter issue of 1972 and held this position until the middle of 1986. From 1973 to 1980 he was also Chairman of the Society. The first sentence of his first editorial was an appeal to members for contributions to the journal. Within a year he was able to thank those who had responded but appealed for more. Although admitting that members expressed great interest in the innumerable surnames

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occurring in previous issues, he thought that at least ten pages (about half the usual size of each issue at that time) should consist of articles preferably giving insight into everyday life in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In July 1973 the name of the Society was changed to The Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society. This required a change in the cover which occurred in the Autumn issue of 1973 (Vol 9 No 2). The title was still *The Manchester Genealogist* and the cover on gold paper, but the Civic Badge of Manchester was replaced with a line drawing of a kneeling couple and their children. It was not until two issues later that thanks were expressed to Mrs Seddon, then Librarian but soon to become also the Secretary, for the design of this new cover. At no time during the two years that this cover was used did the journal have a note about the origin of the drawing, which is of a brass dated 1515 of Ralph Caterall in armour with nine sons standing behind him. Facing him is his wife Elizabeth Baker, with eleven daughters standing behind her. The Cateralls lived at Mitton and the brass is now fixed to the wall of Whalley Church, Lancashire near the Mitton Chapel.

1974 - 1980

In the 10th anniversary issue in Spring 1974 (Vol 10 No 1) the editorial thanked a number of members who had helped in the publication of a successful and regular publication—Mrs Miller for the exacting work involved with the typing, Mr Wild for the duplicating and binding and Mr Denyer, the Treasurer, for the distribution. Mr Beckett had hoped that the issue would be bigger than usual and so it was, with 30 pages, but this size was maintained. The section on Members' Interests became an increasingly prominent feature of the journal. In the autumn of 1974 the Council began to discuss the method of printing the journal. The duplicator which had been in use was thought to be about 40 years old and was found to be beyond repair. Three issues of the journal had to be run off by Mr Hidden, presumably at his place of work. It was agreed that a fund should be set up towards the purchase of a duplicator. By the beginning of 1976, this appeal had raised £40. There was much debate about whether this should be new or second-hand. Quotations were obtained for duplicating 150 copies by a printer. This, presumably, was the number of copies needed for each issue. The discussions on this topic dominate the minutes of the Council for six months, which shows the importance given to the maintenance of the journal. Eventually, a reconditioned machine was bought at a subsidised price of £75 and kept at the home of Mr Abernethy.

Another problem facing the production of the journal was that paper sizes were about to change in the United Kingdom. The page size used would have to become A4, which was somewhat larger, and this would mean a further change in the cover and possibly an increase in the costs. It was agreed that the Vice-Chairman, Mr Jenyon, the Secretary, Mrs Seddon and Mr Abernethy should consider the design of the new cover. The change to A4 took place with the issue of April 1976 (Vol 12 No 2). The cover design, still on gold paper, was changed for each issue after that. This allowed the date and issue number to appear on the cover with the centre of the page occupied by a drawing which was changed for each issue. Many of these were of scenes of old Manchester and Lancashire, and from 1977 were by Mrs Cresswell, the Librarian. Volume 12 was the first in which the page numbering was continued through the whole volume whereas previously each issue had started at page 1. The number of pages in each issue remained about the same.

The contents of each issue from this time onwards had the same basic layout. The first page listed the contents, followed by the names, addresses and telephone numbers of Council members and officers. This was followed by an editorial which was a mixture of an editorial and a communication from Mr Beckett in his role as Chairman about the work of the Society and its members. This kept members in touch with what was going on. The journal continued to carry lists of names from various sources and, to fulfil the hope of the editor for ten pages of articles from members, he contributed an article of some length in each of the issues of 1977. They were several pages in length and covered a range of subjects in such a way as to be helpful in the researches being undertaken by members.

At the AGM of 1976 it was reported that a complete set of the previous journals had been assembled, thanks to the generosity of older members. It was agreed that these should be bound and this was eventually done in two volumes, one for 1964 to 1972 and the other covering 1973 to 1977. The binding was arranged by Mr Hidden and the bound volumes were presented to the Council at its meeting on 24 April 1978. Unfortunately, it is clear that some copies had to be obtained from members in order to complete the set and some have

been re-bound with the wrong covers. Curiously, some of the bound issues are not identical with loose issues which survive. After the AGM of 1977 Mr Jenyon, having resigned as Vice-Chairman, took responsibility for the distribution of the journal. This continued when he became Secretary of the Society in 1978 but then he, Mr Abernethy and Mr Wheaton formed a Journal Publication and Distribution team which worked, with other volunteers, in a room above Mr Abernethy's chemist shop in Irlam.

The years from 1978 showed steady development of the journal. It contained more articles, short and long, from members. There were helpful suggestions both for the newer members and for the more experienced. At the request of members living at a distance from Manchester, short summaries of the monthly meetings were started in 1978. The number of Members' Interests printed in each issue increased substantially. These were in addition to the continuing extracts from parish registers, monumental inscriptions and other sources of information such as Protestation Returns. Regular features were made of articles and listings relating to Scottish families and, from 1979, papers on research into Irish families were also published. To celebrate the 50th issue in July 1979 the editor looked back at the progress which had been made since the first modest publication.

Many of the editorials and other items in these years pointed out the difficulties which faced researchers in family history through the restrictions they faced in record offices and libraries. Government restrictions on spending by public bodies, including local authorities, had the effect of cutting the number of staff employed in what were seen as less essential departments. Those in charge of records began to be concerned, quite reasonably, at the possible wear and tear on them from the increasing number who consulted them in the course of researching their ancestors. After a visit to North America Mr Beckett described the difficulties present in some, but not all, parts of the US and Canada. In his editorial in January 1981 he was able to welcome the views of a spokesman of the Federation of Family History Societies that the number one priority should be the duplication and preservation of our parish registers. However, he reminded his readers that it was not enough to preserve records if access to them was denied or unduly restricted.

In 1980 the Society received a grant from the Greater Manchester Council lottery which allowed it to buy a superior typewriter, the use of which improved the clarity of the journal pages without having to enlist expensive outside assistance. An offset litho machine had been obtained on loan but this proved troublesome to operate. At the AGM of that year Mr Beckett stood down as Chairman of the Society and was elected President while continuing to edit the journal. Responsibility for its distribution was taken over by Mr Lomas but this reverted to Mr Jenyon after a year. The issue of July 1980 carried an advertisement listing a small number of books being sold by the Society and available from Mr Lomas. Most of these were likely to be helpful to newcomers to family history.

1981 - 1986

Early in 1981 at the Council and at the AGM that year concern was expressed at the delay and the standard of printing in recent journals. The Council decided to hold a special meeting on the subject but there is no record of one being held. One of the problems was the difficulty of finding suitable typists. Three teams were formed to cover the main sections of production/printing, collating and distribution. About 1000 copies were being prepared each quarter. At the same time, other publications such as the Members' Interests Directory were

being produced. However, letters were received in the autumn from members praising the layout and printing of the July issue (the cover of which, incidentally, commemorated the wedding of the Prince of Wales). This was attributed to the excellent work of the new typist Mrs Rayner. A second-hand collating machine was acquired from the Co-operative Wholesale Society and when Clayton House became available in the summer of 1982, all the machines involved in the production of the journal and other publications were moved there.

After the AGM of 1982 Mr Berrell offered to act as Journal Secretary but would distribute the journals from his home. One of his first actions was to ask for members who would be prepared to deliver journals to other members living near them to reduce postal costs. Until then, all copies, including those for members overseas, had been sent through Royal Mail. This appeal was unsuccessful but a small number of members each put 500 journals into envelopes each quarter. After that labels and stamps had to be added by hand.

The issue of January 1983 was notable for a number of reasons. It was the first to say it was the journal of The Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society (Incorporating the Bolton & District Family History Society) and contained two pages from the Secretary of Bolton, Mr Hayes, outlining what had been done in its first year. It was also the first issue to be printed by outside printers—Richard Boyes & Co Ltd of Stalybridge. There was subsequent comment on the improved standard of production. The Anglo-Scottish FHS had also been formed, as announced in the previous issue, and the editor as its Chairman listed a number of publications which would be of help to its members. The third issue of the year contained a report from the Secretary of the Anglo-Scots, Mrs Ramsbotham, outlining the work done in its first six months. The last issue of the journal that year said the main Society also incorporated the Anglo-Scottish Family History Society. Subsequent issues contained an increasing amount of material from both the new societies. In the minutes of the Council for June 1984 there is a reference to a Journal Committee consisting of the editor, the journal distributor and the typist who worked with them. This was presumably set up after the reorganisation of the work of the Council at the AGM of 1983.

Throughout 1984 the journal maintained the same internal appearance and the contents were along the same lines of the previous few years. It is noticeable, however, that there is more information on the activities of members (of course there were more members) and the research they had completed. The progress of projects undertaken by members of the Society, working in groups, is regularly reported and more volunteers are sought. From the issue of July 1984, however, the cover had a markedly different appearance. The title was in large, thick, plain lettering instead of the much thinner script which had been used since 1973. Instead of the line drawings, there were reproductions of old photographs and drawings mostly held by Manchester Polytechnic or by Manchester Central Library. This format, with minor changes, continued until the page size was reduced in 1987.

An interesting letter from Mr Watson appears in the issue of October 1984. He owned a computer and among other work for the Society maintained the name and address file of members. From this he produced the address labels for the journal distribution. As an aside he said that his computer had 128Kb of memory and two floppy disc drives. The membership file was held on Dbase-2 and the cost of the system was about £2,500. In July 1985 it was reported to the Council that Mr Watson was no longer able to provide these labels. It considered a report from Mr Marlow (a member) setting out plans for the Society to have its own computing facilities. He pointed out the problems of members providing

occasional facilities at their places of work. These could be withdrawn at short notice. If the Society had its own, they could be used for many purposes which Mr Marlow outlined. The Council agreed to purchase equipment which could be operated by Mr Marlow at his home linked to his BBC computer. During the year there were articles on the use of home computers to assist family history research.

At the beginning of 1985 the Anglo-Scottish FHS decided to publish its own Bulletin. It was of A5 size and edited by Mrs Mason. It was enclosed each quarter with the Manchester Genealogist to those members who indicated that they wanted to have it. It usually consisted of 16 pages of information of interest to members with Scottish ancestors. There were a few articles, details from Scottish records, details of books with Scottish interest added to the library, notes on library holdings and, of course, Members' Interests. Mrs Mason continued as Editor until early in 1986 when she took over as Editor of the Manchester Genealogist. The Bulletin continued to appear with the Secretary of the Anglo-Scottish FHS, Mrs Rowbotham, acting as Editor until it was incorporated in the main journal in January 1987. At the same time, the contributions from the Bolton & District FHS were placed in a distinct section of the journal, each of these two sections being headed by a list of its officers. In September 1985 it was agreed to try a private carrier instead of Royal Mail for the dispatch of journals to members overseas.

As a result of a breakdown of the typewriter used to prepare material for the journal early in 1986, this had to be typeset by the printers for the April issue. The cost was the same but the improved appearance of the contents was dramatic. The constraints of a typewriter were removed and flexible use of fonts and layout added to the high standard of the material. For the first time it was possible to incorporate illustrations into the text.

In July 1986 the new Editor, Mrs Mason, proposed to the Council that changes be made to the journal. The size should change to A5, which was a size that many other family history societies were using. This would allow more content to be printed on the same amount of paper, thus saving cost on both the printing and on the postage. The Anglo-Scots Bulletin would be incorporated and Bolton FHS could have its own section. Those who worried about the ease of reading the reduced size of print were assured that experience elsewhere was that this was not a problem. The Council agreed that the change should be made, starting with the first issue of 1987. It also asked that the design of the cover be reviewed because the existing one was unpopular with members. The new design was provided by Mr R Antonie. It was one which continued in use until 2000. The title of the journal was in the same style as in the immediately preceding version, the centre of the cover was taken up by an illustration changed each quarter and at the foot, along with the details of the issue, there appeared the Society badge.

1987 - 1993

The four issues in 1987 had on average 83 pages, which was well over twice the number in the recent journals published on A4 paper. The Bolton and Anglo-Scottish Societies each contributed about 15 pages to each issue. Members must have felt that there was much more material for them to read each quarter. The Members' Interests section was presented in a different style which made it easier for members to identify those who had interests in the same surnames. The covers were of substantial card instead of the paper which had previously been used. The new style received a warm welcome from members.

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The issue of April 1987 contained the first references to 'Helpline'. This scheme depended on a knowledge of those members living in different parts of the country who were prepared to help and advise fellow members. Mostly, this meant visiting libraries and record offices to undertake short searches but other problems were covered. The start of this scheme is shrouded in some mystery, but it seems to have evolved from an idea suggested by Mrs Flynn in response to a request for ideas contained in a membership renewal form. She was quickly contacted by the General Secretary, Mr Berrell, provided with stationery and a list of volunteers who had offered research help and left to set up the system. Mrs Flynn continued to organise the scheme and did this from her home over 100 miles from Manchester. A steady stream of requests came from all over the world and a big problem was to keep researchers in as many locations as possible and replace those who were no longer able to take part. Regular publicity in the journal has kept the arrangement going. The number of requests has fallen off in recent years, presumably as a result of increasing use of e-mails and the Internet.

From the second issue of the year, the inside of the back cover carried a plan of central Manchester showing Clayton House and other buildings which were likely to be visited by members, together with prominent landmarks to help guide those not familiar with the city. Curiously, it did not show Newton Street, near the corner of which Clayton House is situated. The plan was amended later in 1987 to change the name of the Midland Hotel to Holiday Inn and in November 1994 to show the track of the Metro tram, but Newton Street was not added until February 1995 when, at the same time, the Greater Manchester Record Office was shown with greater precision. Further amendment in November 1995 showed the John Rylands Library more clearly and the new location of the Manchester Register Office. The plan moved to the outside of the back cover for four years from November 1996, after once it once again appeared on the inside after a new cover design was adopted.

In October 1987 it was noted that 'a recent edition of the journal was given a special mention by the judges in the Elizabeth Simpson Award'. This award is made annually by the Federation of Family History Societies to the journal judged to have made the best contribution to family history in the previous 12 months. It was awarded the First Prize when the award was next made in 1988 and highly commended about 10 years later.

Unfortunately, the printers which had been used since 1983 had problems with the new format. There were many faulty copies and the April issue was 5 weeks late. It was agreed that the printers should be changed and that the account should not be paid in full. The July issue was printed by Shorrock & Davies Limited of Manchester and this firm continued to print the journal until the end of 1993. The journal was typeset by a number of different firms during these years and there were particular problems at the end of 1989. These were considered by the Council and it was said that the use of a computer by the editor would help to avoid delays. Continued errors and delays together with high costs led the Council in August 1990 to agree to buy a laser printer so that the typesetting could be done by the Society.

The Editor, Mrs Mason, was co-opted to the Council in August 1989 and later that year Mr McAlpine was appointed Assistant Editor. Mrs Mason was elected Chairman of the Society at the AGM in 1990 and her place as Editor was taken by Mr Kent. Mr McAlpine continued to assist him and had been elected to the Council in 1990. Mrs Mason undertook the work of typesetting and it was agreed that she should receive an honorarium for this

work. The first journal to benefit from these new arrangements appeared in January 1991. During the 1990s the appearance and contents of the journal showed little change. There were articles of varying length contributed by members, news about developments in the Society from the officers together with regular entries of Members' Interests and enquiries and contributions from the branches. The usual size was 80 to 90 pages in each issue but sometimes there were more than 100.

At the beginning of the decade each of the two branches contributed about twelve pages to each issue, consisting of articles, news and information appropriate to those who had a special interest in the two areas. Each of these sections was clearly recognisable with a box containing a logo, a list of the officers of the branch and a separate list of the contents of the section. The sections became smaller as the years passed and, of course, were joined by contributions from the other branches as they were formed. The policy developed of restricting them to news and reports of meetings of the branches and placing the larger articles elsewhere in the journal.

In 1990 the Council, on the suggestion of Mr McAlpine, agreed to award an annual prize, to be known as the Earwaker Prize, to the author of the article judged to be the best published in the journal in the previous twelve months. The first award was made in April 1991. A section devoted to Irish Roots first appeared on July 1990 although contributions on Irish family history had appeared for many years. The first contribution on Computer Talk by Mr Houghton was published in October 1991 following the formation of the Computer Section of the Society. This often included information on how the section was advising on the use of computers in the administration of the Society as well as their use in recording the results of family history research. Fairly regular contributions also appeared from the Local Studies Unit of Manchester Central Library and the Greater Manchester Record Office. These gave news about such matters as their holdings and changes in opening hours.

Each issue contained information about the Society's library—new acquisitions, opening hours, availability of the mail order service of copies from such holdings as the IGI and regular appeals for more volunteers to help. There were also items about new publications available in the bookshop and by mail order together with selected reviews. Information about projects being undertaken also regularly appeared with appeals for volunteers to help, particularly the progress and lack of progress in transcribing the 1881 census. In July 1992 the journal contained the Annual Report for 1991 given by the Chairman at the AGM. This was the first time this was made available to the large proportion of the membership who cannot be present at the meeting. In subsequent years, more detailed reports from officers and the branches appeared together with the accounts. This was partly the result of changes in the law which required charities to inform all concerned of its affairs.

In the autumn of 1993 Mr McAlpine ceased to be the Assistant Editor and was succeeded by Mrs Moore. All through 1993 there had been dissatisfaction with the printers of the journal. Delays resulted in the late dispatch of most issues. This led to the month of publication being omitted from the covers, leaving issues to be identified by the year, volume number and issue number only. Search for a new printer eventually led to the selection of Deanprint of Stockport. Their performance proved to be very satisfactory and the firm continues to undertake the work of printing the journal and also other publications. One small problem, easily corrected, was that the first issue printed by them, Volume 29 Number 4, appeared with a lemon yellow cover instead of the regular old gold. From Volume 30 the

dates of publication were changed from the last days of January, April, July and October to the last days of February, May, August and November. This was done to take the times of preparation and posting of the journal away from peak holiday times.

1994 - 2003

In the first issue of 1994 the title of the journal indicated that the Society now incorporated the Irish Ancestry group following the recognition of the group within the Society and in the second issue of that year the section previously headed 'Irish Roots' was renamed 'Irish Ancestry Group'. This section soon ran to 5 pages or more. In the middle of 1994 the Assistant Editor, Mrs Moore, left to undertake other work in journalism and was succeeded by Mrs Hartley. In the third issue of 1994 an index of the surnames and forenames occurring in the issue was provided and this has continued for each issue. From the same issue an index of place names was also provided but this was discontinued after three issues.

The first journal of 1995 said that the Society now incorporated the Computer group although at that time the Group did not meet except through the Internet. The second issue of that year contained the e-mail addresses of ten members with an invitation to others to make theirs known. It was said that 276 members had registered with the Group. In the third issue of 1995 Mr Houghton informed members of the web page for the Society which was now available and about the e-mail group which had been formed through the good offices of one of the members, Mr Stringer, at Manchester University. This was the beginning of what could be seen as a parallel journal. Not surprisingly, the next step for the group was to hold meetings at Clayton House and these were reported in the journal. The 'Computer Talk', written by Mr Houghton, still appeared but came under the general heading of the Computer group.

In the last issue of 1995, in addition to reviews of new books which had been a regular feature of the section devoted to the bookshop, there appeared an item headed 'Browser in the bookshop'. This short item, which was unsigned, highlighted books on the shelves which were not new but which seemed to deserve to be brought to the attention of the readers. The item became a regular feature and the browser was revealed to be Mr Bee, former Chairman of the Society and now a Vice-President.

March 1996 saw the formation of a branch of the Society in Oldham and its activities were subsequently reported in the journal alongside those of the other two branches and the two special interest groups as they came to be called. The Bulletin of the Anglo-Scottish branch carried a logo (a thistle and a rose) from its first issue and this was continued when it was incorporated in the main journal in 1987. The section relating to the Bolton branch was identified at the same time through the use of an elephant and castle, taken from the coat of arms of the town of Bolton. The report of the Computer Group had its identifying logo (naturally a computer) since its inception (as 'Computer Talk') in 1991. From the third issue of 1996 the report of the Irish Ancestry group sported a Celtic cross and that of the newly formed Oldham branch an owl. Initially, these logos appeared at the beginning of the report only, but from the third issue of 2000 small logos appeared throughout the report to aid identification.

From the appearance in A5 format there had been a gradual change in the arrangement of the material. The names of the members of the Council continued to appear inside the

front cover, followed by a table of contents. This table was expanded to give a better picture of all the contents. Details of future meetings of the Society and its branches were brought from the back to the front along with details of the opening times of the library and the services provided there. The editorial was then followed by the articles on family history. News and announcements relating to the Society, including the bookshop and mail order sections followed next and then the items from the branches. Towards the end were the enquiries from members and the advertisements of research services. The Members' Interests list, of surnames with which members, mostly new members, have connections, appeared in the middle so that the pages could easily be pulled out and retained for future consultation. The average number of pages in each issue, excluding those devoted to Members' Interests, was about 80, of which more than a quarter were taken up with the reports from the branches. Most of these changes were developed by the typesetter, Mrs Mason.

Since 1996 the size of the journal has gradually increased partly as a result of more and longer articles on family history, but also from the inclusion of more news and information items. This developed from the policy of keeping members who were unable to get to Clayton House better informed about the affairs of the Society and its branches. Thus, there were longer reports on the meetings, many of these appearing as short articles. The volunteers who worked in Clayton House to provide the services essential for the running of the Society were featured in several issues. From the second issue of 1997, colour-coded membership renewal forms were included in the middle to remind members when subscriptions were due—these being spread increasingly over each month of the year.

The first change in the appearance of the journal since it appeared in A5 size in 1987 occurred in 2001. The cover was laminated and the illustration on the cover was expanded to appear on both front and back, the only other features being the titling and the Society's badge. In 2002, the words 'Genealogy in Greater Manchester' were added to make clear that the Society covered more than the City of Manchester. This change meant that the map of central Manchester appeared once again inside the back cover and from the second issue of 2001 the list of the Council members inside the front cover was replaced by a short description of the illustration and its background. The new style of cover was designed by Mr Marsden.

At the beginning of 2001 Mrs Hartley retired as Assistant Editor and was succeeded by Mrs Hobson. A further change in 2002 was the retirement of the Editor, Mr Kent, who had been in post since 1990. His service to the Society was recognised with the award of its Fellowship. Mrs Hobson took over as Editor and Dr Vaughan became Assistant Editor, but at the end of 2002 the Council decided that the editors should be known as Joint Editors in recognition of the fact that they took responsibility for alternate issues. The third issue of 2002 was awarded second place in the competition for the Elizabeth Simpson Award run by the Federation of Family History Societies. The four issues of 2003 had special features relating to branches of the Society—Bolton, Irish Ancestry, Anglo-Scottish and Oldham. In each case an appropriate illustration was carried on the cover. The Computer branch was due to be featured in 2004.

Plans were in hand for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Society in 2004 through the pages of the Manchester Genealogist. This was thought to be more appropriate than an event in Manchester which might be attended by only a small minority of the

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Society's members. Even the cover would be changed from its traditional black print on 'Old Gold' background, to be in full colour for the first time. This would be Volume 40, the numbering resulting from the fact that the first three issues (Spring 1964, Winter 1964/5 and Spring 1965) were numbered simply 1, 1(a) and 2. The volume numbers did not start until the issue of December 1965 which was designated as 'Volume 2 New Series'.

CHAPTER 18

Projects

Early Years

The second paragraph of the first Constitution of the Society said that the objects shall be ‘....the preservation and publication of associated records.’ These or similar words have remained in subsequent revisions. The early journals contain lists of transcriptions submitted by members, many of which were made before the Society was formed. For several years, however, there is no reference to projects, which can be defined as work undertaken collectively or in an organised way by groups of members. In October 1969 the Council agreed to set up a sub-committee to organise transcriptions. This was announced in the journal and members were invited to get in touch with its chairman, Mr Beckett. At the next meeting of the Council Mr Beckett reported on his transcriptions and at the AGM the following year the Chairman referred to the transcriptions of Lancashire Parish Registers done by Mr Beckett. There is no record of whether a sub-committee was actually set up or whether members volunteered.

In the spring of 1975, however, there was a report in the journal, and at the AGM, that work was in progress, in conjunction with the Cheshire Family History Society, to prepare a card index from the film of the marriage registers of Stockport, St Mary. More volunteers were required. At the Council in June 1975 the Chairman referred to the transcription of monumental inscriptions at Ashworth and Haslingden. At the AGM of 1976 the Chairman reported that the indexing of Stockport for the years 1799 to 1837 had been completed in three months but that restrictions placed on the registers meant that the work had stopped. Attention was transferred to the formidable task of indexing the marriage registers of Manchester Collegiate Church. Other transcriptions done at this time were the marriage registers of Eccles and the monumental inscriptions of St Clement’s, Chorlton-cum-Hardy and St Luke’s, Cheetham Hill, where the sad state of the graveyard had previously been noted.

1977 - 1984

A major step forward was made at the AGM of 1977 with the appointment of Mr Lewis as Research Co-ordinator for the Society although this move had been announced in the journal a few months earlier. A project started at this time was the compilation of an Index of Scottish Emigrants in England which resulted over the years in a series of publications. The Council agreed to start on the transcription of monumental inscriptions at the Methodist Church, Barton on Irwell and this was almost completed in three months by a small team of members. The transcriptions were placed in the library and indexing of these was undertaken.

At the AGM of 1979 Mrs Simpson was elected Research Co-ordinator but there is no record of additional work being undertaken during this year. In his editorial in the journal for January 1980, however, Mr Beckett, the Chairman and Editor, referred to the plans to index the 1851 census for Manchester. He emphasised the difficulties this major project posed—the large number of entries, a proportion of which were unreadable, the availability of only

one microfilm reader and the need to keep everything under strict control. It was planned to use a scheme of complete transcription which had been developed by a member working on the census for the Cadishead and Irlam area. There is no record of this major project having been discussed by the Council until May 1980. In the same editorial there was an appeal for volunteers to work on the registers of Eccles and the Bishop's Transcripts of Warrington.

When Council considered the census project in May 1980, it set up a Project Subcommittee to oversee all projects but particularly this major one. The Society suffered a great loss at this time through the death of Mr Lewis in a motor cycle accident on 24 May 1980. He had undertaken much work, particularly in transcribing monumental inscriptions and had been Research Co-ordinator between 1977 and 1979. Work was undertaken on the graveyards at Dukinfield, Monton, Tyldesley and, in co-operation with the library at Tameside, on the records held for churches in that area. The first meeting of the project sub-committee took place on 30 October 1980 with Mr Ruscoe as Chairman and Mr Walmsley as Vice-Chairman. The Chairman of the sub-committee was to be co-opted to the Council. As a result of an article in the Manchester Evening News it was found that parts of the 1851 census were being transcribed by members of a family history course. Information about other activity was collected by the committee. In January 1981 the Council was informed that Mrs Simpson would be the co-ordinator of work on projects.

At its meeting in March 1981 the Council received a long report on the projects which were being undertaken or had been completed. In addition to the transcription of the census and monumental inscriptions, work was in progress on Lancashire wills and on preparing a card index of the holdings of the local libraries relating to family history. A publicity display had been taken to a number of events in the surrounding areas. It was reported that one of the twelve reels of the 1851 census had been transcribed and there was discussion on the publication of the results. Publicity in the journal had resulted in more volunteers but it became clear that there was a need for more typists to prepare the work for publication. It was reported to the Council in September that a great deal of work other than that on the census was being done. In his editorial in the October journal Mr Beckett reported on this activity and commented on similar work being done in other parts of the country. He reported that an excellent microfilm reader had been donated to the Society and this enabled recording of the census to be greatly increased. About 100,000 inhabitants had been recorded in less than two years—far in excess of expectations. He also suggested another project which would be of great value—an index of soldiers.

Work continued during 1981 and 1982 but seemingly at a lesser pace and a shortage of volunteers was noted. At the AGM of 1982 the Secretary reported on the completion of the largest project the Society had undertaken—the transcription of the monumental inscriptions in the graveyard (which extended to 10 acres) of St Paul's, Stalybridge. At the same AGM Mrs Hulme became the chairman of the project committee. In the journal of January 1983 a report on the first year of the Bolton section revealed a great deal of work on projects. Most of these were on monumental inscriptions in the Bolton area but there were also transcriptions of early censuses of the area and an index of Bolton wills. There was great enthusiasm among the members under the leadership of Mrs Frost and Mr Smith. At the AGM of 1983, with the re-organisation of the work of the Council, Mr Coupe became Project Section Co-ordinator and working with him were Mrs Simpson (census), Mrs Ramsbotham (strays), Mrs Pollard (membership research) and Mrs D King (pedigree charts

and members' interests). In May 1983 Mr Coupe gave a long report to the Council on all the projects known to be under way and a discussion took place on how the results would be published. He said that work on the 1851 census was nearing completion except for Salford, Hulme and the missing sections and that there was now co-operation with the groups working on projects in Bolton.

The work of Mr Coupe at this time not only ensured that the momentum was maintained but that there was knowledge of what was in progress in all branches of the Society. The project team took on the responsibility for binding the results of the work before it was deposited in the library. New volunteers were encouraged to come forward and suitable introductions to the work were organised. Librarians and archivists were made aware of the serious nature of the work done so that their co-operation would be forthcoming. Mr Coupe emphasised the importance of having the use of appropriate equipment, such as a photocopier, numbering machine, guillotine and, later, a computer. Regular reports appeared in the journal so that members could be aware of the activity and possibly be stimulated to take part.

The spring of 1984 saw the publication of the first two reports from all this work on projects—the first volume of the Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants into England & Wales and the first volume of the index to the 1851 census. Mr Coupe had informed the Council in January 1984 that a full transcript was not possible and only a surname index would be published. The first volume was for the districts of Newton, Beswick and Bradford. By January 1985 Mr Coupe was able to report that work on the 1851 census was complete for all but two districts where there were special problems.

As a result of the amount of support from members who volunteered to work on the 1851 census, it was possible to extend the indexing to areas outside Manchester. This brought out the need to agree with neighbouring societies which districts each would cover so that duplication of work was avoided. Particular difficulty was met in relation to the Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society. (The former Rossendale Society for Genealogy and Heraldry changed its name on 1 January 1985.) By the end of 1986 the last of the 12 original reels of the 1851 census had been indexed and publication of the printed volumes was being prepared. Some volumes were so popular that the first impression was quickly sold and re-printing was necessary. Unfortunately, some errors were found in the original filming of the records and revision of the indexes was required.

At the AGM of 1984 Mr Coupe reported that 35 projects had been started in the year and 25 completed. In addition, the Bolton and Anglo-Scottish branches reported on other projects which had been undertaken. In the months following, further reports were published, including one prepared by Mr Coupe—*A Guide to the Registration Districts of Manchester*.

1985 -1989

Work continued on other projects, particularly two co-ordinated by Mr Beckett—more records of Scottish emigrants and the Index of Soldiers. The reduction of activity on the 1851 census (except in Bolton where work had only recently started) meant that volunteers could return to work which had been partly suspended—on the 1641 Protestation Returns for the Hundred of Salford and on monumental inscriptions. At the AGM of 1986 the beginnings of two other important projects were reported—indexing the parish registers held in

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Manchester Central Library (which resulted in the 'Pink Book') and indexing the parts of the 1861 census of districts where the record for 1851 was not available.

In early 1986 Bolton decided that the material produced from the projects undertaken by their members would be published on microfiche. The annual report for 1987 praised the work on projects done by the members in Bolton. It was described as out of all proportion to the size of the branch. In 1988 the Society bought an Amstrad 1512 computer and printer specifically to handle the work of projects. A press release to 84 local newspapers in the autumn of that year generated a lot of interest and many enquiries were made of the Society regarding its published projects.

1990 - 1997

In May 1990 Mr Coupe suggested that another post be created to take charge of the recording of monumental inscriptions which had been neglected as a result of the time devoted to the work on the 1851 census. It was agreed in July 1990 that a new computer should be bought for project work and the existing one used at Clayton House to handle matters related to membership, accounts, members' interests and the library. At the end of 1990 it was decided that no major projects would be started until work on the 1881 census, started in 1988, had been completed. This was to take another four years. Ongoing work, particularly in Bolton, continued. In July 1991 a small Publications Committee was set up with a view to publishing material already held in Clayton House. It was also felt that members might wish to undertake small new projects and that a co-ordinator would be needed.

In a report to the Council in June 1992, Mr Coupe said that the projects he knew about were the work related to the 1851 census being done in London, the index of the Court Rolls of Salford Hundred being produced by Miss Barlow, work on the 1861 census of Manchester and a revision of the Pink Book. He asked for a laser printer to help with project work and at the beginning of 1993 one was purchased for Clayton House so that the old one could be available for his work. By the middle of 1994, with the end of the 1881 census project, it was suggested that monumental inscriptions from Manchester graveyards should be tackled. Experience in Bolton showed that it was advantageous to use a tape recorder on site for this. In October 1994 Mr Coupe resigned as Project Co-ordinator.

After the AGM of 1995, the newly elected Vice-Chairman, Mr Snowdon, took charge of the Projects Committee and its work. The next major project was the transcription of the names of patients in Prestwich Asylum for the years 1851 to 1901. The records for years up to 1891 were held at Lancashire Record Office in Preston which made it time consuming for volunteers living in Manchester to work on them. The later records were at the hospital but were transferred to Greater Manchester Record Office in 1997 before the hospital was pulled down. Access to these is restricted by the 100 year rule. The work was completed and the results were published on CD in 2003. It is now possible to be reasonably sure of the identity of many of the patients recorded in the censuses taken in the second half of the nineteenth century with initials only. [Further details of this project are given in the article by Mr Snowdon in the Manchester Genealogist, 2002, Volume 38 Number 2, pages 136-145.]

Part III — The Activities

A combined surname index for the 1851 census was prepared, starting in 1997, primarily for use as a library tool. The Project Committee considered whether early Manchester baptisms and marriages and early Prestwich marriages should be put on CD.

1998 - 2003

In 1998 there was a plan to prepare a National Burial Index to supplement the baptisms and marriages available on the IGI. The Council decided that to commit the Society to this project for the whole of Manchester and parts of Lancashire would take up too many of its resources. The Oldham branch, however, decided that it would cover the Oldham and district registers and contributed most of the entries for Lancashire in the first issue of the Index. The results of this work have been gradually published over the years. It was also agreed, however, that knowledge of the Manchester burial grounds and their records needed to be consolidated.

A new project was started in the middle of 1998—transcribing the entries on the Police Gazette List of Army Deserters of 1828 to 1840. This gave much information about the men involved which was published, firstly, in three sections on fiche early in 2000 and then as a combined index on CD in May 2002. Consideration began to be given to the idea of producing the results of projects on fiche and later on CD. These media were obviously less bulky than the previous printed versions and were easier to update when this became necessary. When stocks of printed material became exhausted their replacement was often done in other ways. It was agreed that the Seminar Room could be used for work on projects, but in practice this rarely happened.

In the middle of 1997 it was agreed that activity on projects should concentrate on indexing the 1891 census, starting with the centre of Manchester and working outwards. Members could be encouraged to purchase a fiche and transcribe it. Computer programmes had been developed for the output from this census and for the transcripts of the 1851 census so as to ensure uniformity. Although work started on surname and street indexes for the 1891 census in 1997 it was not until 1999 under the supervision of Mr Schofield that it made real progress. Appeals for volunteers were first made through the Society's e-mail group but were later extended through the pages of the journal. As a result, several of the volunteers lived a long way from Manchester, some of them overseas. This scattering produced problems and consequent delays. The project was taken over in 2001 by Mr Moore. A name and street index of the 1891 census of Bolton and surrounding districts appeared on CD at the end of 2002. Similar indexes for Salford and Manchester were published, also on CD, in 2003.

In 2000, the Society agreed to start what was seen as a very long-term project—the indexing of burials in Manchester. A start was made with those of Manchester Cathedral. A shorter, but parallel, project was identified for 2001—the transcription of the memorials to those cremated at Manchester Crematorium between its opening in 1892 and 1940. This was undertaken in association with the Board of the Crematorium and was designed to replace as far as possible the records which were destroyed in the Second World War. The result of this work appeared on CD in 2002. In the same year, the Society published a printed street index of the popular Alan Godfrey maps of Manchester 1889-1905 covering the Southern Suburbs.

Some projects deserve to be described in more detail.

Unfilmed 1851 Census

Mr Coupe had been in touch with Mr Partington in London who reported that there was little difference between the original census returns and the films but that some material had not been filmed due to water damage. He suggested an approach to the PRO about this. Mr Partington began to copy the original returns which had not been filmed, but in June 1986 it was reported that the PRO had prevented access. The journal for April 1985 carried a report from a Mr Whitfield on the damaged portions of the 1851 census. He wondered whether the use of ultra-violet light would enable more to be read. In October 1989 the first volume produced by examining the original records (London Road, Volume 53) had been published.

Mr Coupe went to the PRO in 1990 to see if it would be possible to start a project to transcribe the unfiled sections of that census. He found that staff there were anxious to start to look at the books, many of which were in a very poor condition. Regular visits on one day a week were likely to give the best results and Mr Coupe said he would try to get a team together. An appeal for volunteers living in the London area appeared in the journal in July 1991 and letters to some 200 members in that area resulted in 20 working at the PRO on a regular basis by the next January. Working with a magnifying glass in good natural light and with much patience, they made steady progress. Over the years the individuals changed but throughout they were under the leadership of Mr Hulley, and of course the general supervision of the staff of the PRO. As the transcription of each batch was completed, it was sent to Clayton House for entry on to a computer database and then published as microfiche. Unlike the previous work on the 1851 census, this was a transcript of the readable entries and not merely a surname index, as the original records are not available to the public. The first fiche with the results of this project became available in the spring of 1995. This was for Deansgate and contained few readable entries when compared with what was published later for other districts.

In December 1996 the PRO closed down the census rooms at Chancery Lane and concentrated its work at Kew. This move to west London resulted in some different volunteers undertaking the work. The move also brought an improvement in the facilities available. The work was transferred to the Conservation Department. The use of ultra-violet light had previously not been of much help, but the machines at Kew allowed more entries to be transcribed, so much so that it was decided to return to the records which had been the first to be examined. This work continues. It was decided in 2003 to issue the transcriptions of all returns which had been transcribed using ultra-violet light on CD.

The 'Pink Book'

The first mention of the work of members to index the parish registers held in Manchester Central Library was in the report of the General Secretary for 1985 given to the AGM in 1986. It is curious that there is no other reference to the work which must have gone into the production of this book in either the journal or the minutes of the Council. Much of the original recording of the details of the registers held was done by Mrs Hulme. The date of the first publication of the book entitled 'Parish and Non-conformist Registers in Manchester Local History Library and Diocesan Record Office' is given in later editions as October 1985. The first mention of it in the journal was in the list of publications available from the Society in January 1986, price £2.50. It was revised in the issue of October 1986. It

was subsequently amended in October 1987 and September 1989. In October 1992 it was again amended and published under the title 'Registers in the Local Studies Unit of Manchester Central Library'. It became known as the 'Pink Book' from the colour of its cover. A further update with a re-design of the contents took place in 1997. This edition was published by the printing section of the University of Manchester. The index was transferred to a database by volunteers and a further revised and updated edition was published in 2002.

1881 Census

In March 1988 the Council was told of the plan put forward by the Federation of Family History Societies and the Genealogical Society of Utah to transcribe the 1881 census of England and Wales. The intention was that each family history society should undertake the work related to its own area. The work could be done at home using a film or paper photocopies. The Council agreed to take part and noted that, as Lancashire had the largest population of any county in the 1881 census, it would be a mammoth undertaking. A notice in the October journal and again in 1989 asked for volunteers. Concern began to be expressed in 1989 at the expense of this project and at the storage space required to house the large amount of paper being generated. Most transcribing was done from paper copies and was done twice to ensure accuracy. Co-ordination of the work was being done by Mrs E Smith but she said that she could no longer store all the paper at her home and at the end of 1989 she handed this work over to Mr Snowdon. In October 1990 the Council agreed to rent a room at St Margaret's Chambers, Newton Street, round the corner from Clayton House, to store the increasing number of records from this project and other sources. The cost was about £850 per year and it was occupied from the spring of 1991 to the spring of 1994.

In July 1990 the Council felt that the work was dissipating the energies of the Society and careful consideration would have to be given to taking part in any project like it in the future. It was pointed out that there was no financial gain from the project but that the Society could not withdraw at that stage. There were 56 transcribers and 6 checkers (September 1990) but more were needed. Annual expenditure was about £120. The matter was discussed again at a later meeting of the Council and two letters were sent by members of the Council to Family Tree Magazine which had published an article on the subject. These letters questioned the value of the work. When details of the output from the project were circulated it was agreed, after discussion, that a copy of the fiche relating to each county should be purchased as they became available. The Society was assured that copies could be made from the fiche provided that no profit was made.

Work continued steadily and by the middle of 1992 Mr Snowdon was able to report that half had been completed. At this time the first (small) county had been completed and the fiche purchased for the library. Members could see what the completed work would look like and appreciate the value which it would be for their research. Regular appeals for volunteers in the journal resulted in more coming forward and steady progress was made under the careful control of Mr Snowdon, now assisted by Mrs Lynch. The original idea of transcribing the originals twice for checking purposes had to be abandoned by the larger counties because of the time it was taking the limited number of volunteers. However, by January 1995 the work was completed. Members of the Society had transcribed and checked 1702 batches totalling 1.3 million entries—the second largest number by any group.

There was, however, more work to be done by those in Utah who had the job of putting the material onto fiche. The county of Lancashire was the last to be published. A copy for the library arrived in the autumn of 1996. Members had already prepared a street index for those parts of the county which had been transcribed by the volunteers. The end result of all this work was, however, much appreciated when the transcribed census for the whole of England and Wales was available. The value was even greater and the accessibility increased when the work, along with the comparable transcription of the census in Scotland, was published on a set of CDs in 1999.

Members' Interests

This is not a project in the usual sense of the term, but it is included here because it has occupied a considerable amount of time from volunteers over the years, and at the AGM of 1976 it was described as an enormous task and a tremendously important project. From the early days of the Society the journal carried information from members indicating the surnames which were connected with their family trees. Members were encouraged to prepare copies of their trees and lodge them in the library so that they could be consulted by other members. In fact, in the early days this was seen as almost obligatory. From the names submitted, a card index was prepared and made available for consultation. Members not able to come to meetings could seek information by post.

The increase in the number of members gave rise to the idea of publishing the available information and at the AGM of 1975 Mr Charles (a member living in Lincolnshire) accepted the position of 'Pedigree Referral Officer'. Working from material sent to him by the Secretary, Mr Charles prepared the 'Directory of Members' Interests' which was published in January 1976. This contained entries from 108 members submitted in 1974 and 1975. Part II of the Directory appeared in January 1977, containing additions and amendment to the first part and new details from a further 15 members. It had been intended to combine the two volumes in one publication in 1977, but this did not appear.

There was no similar publication in the next few years although entries appeared in each issue of the journal. In 1980 the idea of a Directory of Members' Interests covering the societies in the whole of the North West of England was mooted by the Rossendale Society but the Council decided against taking part that year for a number of reasons. One of these was that it was planning to produce its own and expected this to be produced more quickly than could be the case with a large joint volume. It was stated at the AGM in 1981 that it was nearly complete, but difficulties arose and in early 1982 it was decided that the costs of publication would be too great. The entries would be available for consultation at Clayton House. It was, however, agreed that the Society would participate in the production of a Directory for the North West which was planned for publication in 1983. This did not appear and the next move was the suggestion that the Society should be responsible for producing an issue of the NW Directory planned for 1985. This did not appear either.

Under the reorganisation of the work of the Council in 1983, Mrs D King took responsibility for pedigree charts and members' interests under the general guidance of the Project Co-ordinator, Mr Coupe. In 1985 they were taken over by Mrs Simpson, in addition to her work as Census Research Secretary (dealing mainly with work on the 1851 census). The way in which the interests were presented in the journal had been in a narrative style related to each member, but from the October issue of 1985 a tabular form was adopted

although some entries also had a narrative asking specific questions. With the change in the size of the journal to A5 in 1987, the presentation of the entries was again changed, with the names and addresses of members separated from the table of names (in alphabetical order), dates and areas being researched. The interests of members of the Anglo-Scottish branch appeared separately until they were incorporated in the main list from October 1987.

In September 1986 Mr Griffiths offered to put the members' interests data on a computer but this proved more difficult than at first thought and it was not until the early 1990s that this step was taken. Until then the information was kept on cards from which the list for each issue of the journal was prepared. In 1988 Mrs Wood took over responsibility for this work.

When the number of members increased the effort of keeping this system up-to-date and accessible was formidable and it was natural to try to find another way of making the information available to the membership. In 1991 it was decided to re-start the system and to hold the details on a computerised database. Members were invited to submit up to 20 names by the end of February 1992. These names were then to be published in a Directory which could be purchased for a 'modest fee'. Subsequent interests would be printed, as before, as supplements to the Directory in each journal. Entry onto the database started immediately, supervised by Mr Houghton, but by October that year concern was expressed by the Council at the apparently slow progress. The time taken for data entry had been underestimated and it was not until the end of 1993 that this was completed and a printout could be sent to each contributor. This was two years after the entries had been submitted and it was not surprising that many amendments were returned. By August 1994 the volume, containing 22,000 entries, was ready to go to the printers. In fact, it contained all entries received from members up to the end of September 1994. The last issue of the journal in that year contained the first supplement to the Directory.

Supplements appeared in each journal. In 1998 and again in 2000 consolidated lists containing amendments to the book were published on microfiche. These were provided with copies of the Directory. Stocks of this book were coming to an end in 2001 and a second edition was planned. Forms were distributed to members for return by the end of June 2002. It is an indication of how things change that this edition appeared before the end of 2002 on CD, but it contained just over half the number of entries in the first edition. Quarterly supplements continue to appear in the journal.

Police Records

In 1984 an article appeared in the journal (Volume 20 Number 2 Page 31) drawing attention to the rich source of information on Manchester policemen in the records dating from 1858 held at the Greater Manchester Police Museum, situated a few hundred yards from Clayton House. The curator of the Museum gave a talk to the Society on 'Police Records' in June 1990 and said he would see if transcribing of the records could be undertaken, but it was not until he gave another talk on Victorian Crime to the members of the Irish Ancestry branch in March 1999 that work really got under way after obtaining the permission of the Chief Constable. Members of that branch undertook the work under the leadership of Mr Clements. After his untimely death in 2001 it continued under Mrs Greenhalgh. The transcription was completed and the results published on CD in the summer of 2003.

CHAPTER 19

Mail Order and the Bookshop

Early Years

The first item to be offered to members of the Society by mail order appeared in the first newsletter of the Society in the Spring of 1964. It was a 'Vocabulary of Genealogical Terms and Abbreviations', available at 1/- per copy, post free or 9d per copy at the monthly meetings.

The first issue of the Directory of Members' Interests was issued free to members in early 1976 and was subsequently available at the price of 40 pence plus postage. A supplementary list was issued in January 1977. In July 1976 it was stated in the journal that copies of the issues of the journal before the Autumn of 1973 were sold out but more recent issues were available at 25 pence plus postage. This was increased to 35 pence in 1979. In October 1976 it was announced that a publication "Selected Reprints from Journals—No 1" was available, containing the most popular articles from issues prior to 1975, priced at 25 pence plus postage. By October 1978 this was sold out and a reprint planned. A second selection of reprints was, however, available. A third volume was issued later.

In the issues of the journal for July and October 1980 the journal distributor, Mr Lomas, said that he had copies of seven handy volumes for sale. The list included 'Directory of Members' Interests 78' but this had not been mentioned previously in the journal. It probably contained a consolidated list from the original two issues which had been mentioned as a possible future publication in the issue of 1977. This advertisement appeared only twice.

1983 - 1989

The next advertisement to appear was in January 1983 when the journal distributor, then Mr Berrell, listed the back numbers which were still for sale. It was said that Volume 2 of the series of reprints was out of print but small numbers of the other two were still available. Mr Berrell continued this list in each issue of the journal and in July 1984 he added that a list was available giving the contents of the library (price £1 including UK postage). This gave members the details of what was then available for consultation at the rooms recently opened at Clayton House.

At the end of 1984 three of the Society's own publications were added. These were 'A Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants into England and Wales', and the first two volumes of the surname index to the 1851 census. This can be regarded as the start of the Society's mail order service. In the issue of April 1985 another type of book was advertised. Two years previously, Mr Bee had begun to take a small selection of books related to family and local history to the monthly meetings of the Society for sale to members. In 1985 he made these available by post to those unable to attend the meetings. By the beginning of 1986 his list covered 40 books. Both Mr Berrell and Mr Bee provided this service from their own homes and each of the lists became longer as the years went by.

1990 - 1994

From January 1990 both types of publication were available from Clayton House where the stock was kept. They were also sold to those who visited the library and a small selection was taken to the monthly meetings. At the same time Mrs Dean took over the organisation of the sale of books from Mr Bee. In October 1991 the Council decided that a small area within the library, to be set up in the accommodation on the third floor of Clayton House into which the Society was moving, should be set aside as a bookshop. Mr Farnell and Mr Bebbington were to be responsible for this and also mail order sales. The first issue of the "Publications: Mail Order Catalogue" was issued free to members in January 1992. New editions of this, later called the "Bookshop & Mail Order Catalogue", appeared regularly. Within ten years it doubled in size. It was given free to new members and available to others for £1.

The bookshop was opened in June 1992 and the journal of April that year carried the first issue of 'Bookshop News'. This gave, and continues to give, news of new publications (often with a review attached), changes in prices, details of bargains and, from time to time, appeals for volunteers to help in the work. The stock of books, previously held in a number of locations including members' homes, was centralised at Clayton House. The bookshop was sited in a small area near the entrance to the library and was looked after by the volunteers there. A till was installed which dealt not only with the sale of books but also with the payments for copies from microfiche and with donations. The stock of books was kept on newly-installed shelves in a secluded area at the far end of the library. It was here that mail orders were dealt with.

By 1993 all the titles in stock had been given numbers. This was to serve two purposes: the ready identification of the items on orders and to facilitate the entry of sales through the till. The second was never fully established, largely because of the problem of keeping the details up-to-date. This was largely the work of Mr Vinson who had begun to assist in the mail order section during 1992. The third edition of the Catalogue came out in January 1994 and by this time the section was taking publications for sale to various family history fairs and other events in the Manchester area. These activities made a valuable contribution to the income of the Society. Sadly, Mr Vinson died suddenly on 5 January 1995. He had been a member of the Council since May 1993. In July 1994 the Council agreed to rent a room adjacent to the library for use as the bookshop, book store and the mail order department. Thanks to much work by Mr Bebbington and Mr Thorpe the area was transformed to enable it to be in use from September that year. The entrance was changed so that it was accessible from the library and not from the outside corridor. This arrangement also benefited the library which also gained much-needed space.

1995 - 1997

The year 1995 saw the beginning of a trend which became much more pronounced. In previous years more material was published on microfiche which was seen as more convenient and less expensive. Now, as stocks of the booklets of surname indexes of the 1851 census ran out, they were replaced by sets of microfiche. The last issue of the journal for 1995 carried the first short article from 'Browser in the Bookshop' (Mr Bee) in which attention was drawn to books whose usefulness and interest to family historians might be overlooked. These continue as a regular feature.

By 1996 the journal carried several pages in each issue with much news of the new (though not necessarily newly published) books which were available for sale. One book which appeared in 1996 was the 4th edition of the Society's Handbook edited by Mrs Mason and Mr Berrell, a mine of information for members about how to set about research and the local sources available. A sign of the importance of the bookshop and the mail order business to the Society was the proposal of the Treasurer, Mr Farnell, that a separate bank account should be set up for it. Preliminary work was done, but Mr Farnell did not seek re-election that year and the proposal was subsequently dropped. The Bolton branch had, from its early days, produced its own publications, many on microfiche, and sold these at its meetings and by mail order. From about the beginning of 1996, the Society's mail order section took over the work of dealing with the Bolton items which were ordered by post.

At the end of 1996 concern was expressed at the stock being carried, not only at the money tied up but the space occupied. Big efforts were made to sell off packs of bargain books containing those which were not selling in the expected numbers. Old copies of the journal were, perhaps, the largest stock of items concerned. Associated with this was the need for a new catalogue, and for the first time a computerised list was prepared so that it could be updated more easily. This work took some time and the new edition did not appear until the beginning of 1998. The final printing was undertaken by the printing section of the University of Manchester. This was the result of an introduction by Mr Stringer and was the start of a fruitful and convenient collaboration. The section was prepared to print a comparatively small number of copies at a reasonable price. It was not, though, until 2002 that an annually updated catalogue was properly established.

1998 - 1999

In early 1998 Mr Hulley, who lived in the Home Counties, was appointed the Society's representative in the south of England, primarily to attend meetings of the Federation of Family History Societies. He suggested that he should take a stall at family history fairs in that area and sell the Society's publications as well as providing publicity for the Society and explaining what it could offer to those attending who had family links to the north west. This was readily agreed and over the years this activity expanded both in the range of publications sold and in the venues attended. Mrs Pendlebury took a selection of publications to meetings of the Oldham branch and this also resulted in further sales.

The beginning of 1998 saw mail order business expand after the catalogue was put on the Society's website. This was available to non-members as well as members and many of the additional orders came by fax or e-mail. Later in 1998 it was decided that the mail order section should be separated from the bookshop in view of the amount of work involved in each of them. This was achieved in the summer by moving the mail order section, along with its stock, into the old office on the 4th floor of Clayton House which had become available after additional accommodation had been leased on that floor in 1997 for use as the office of the Society. The space vacated on the third floor was extensively re-fitted entirely as a bookshop thanks largely to work done by Mr Clements.

Mr Bebbington had not had an assistant since the death of Mr Vinson at the beginning of 1995, although a number of volunteers were working in the bookshop when it was open to members. When the mail order section was situated in the same area as the shop it was possible for Mr Bebbington to keep an eye on both activities. When the mail order section

moved out onto another floor of Clayton House, this became impossible. The journal of August 1998 carried an appeal for an Assistant Bookshop Manager and other volunteers to work in the bookshop. No one, however, came forward to take the main job and at the Council in March 1999 Mr Bebbington proposed that the section be split and that he would remain looking after the mail order work and the stock with another person taking responsibility as Bookshop Manager. This was accepted. Mr Bebbington had for seven years worked at Clayton House for four days a week and, in addition to his main work, he was the general handyman to whom others turned when machines broke down, fittings became loose or bulbs failed. He also franked the outgoing mail on these four days and took it to the nearby Post Office.

Mail Order 1999 - 2003

The accounts at this time showed that the mail order section was responsible for two thirds of all the sales and this proportion tended to increase in the following years. It included the sales at fairs held locally, in the south of England and, increasingly, in Scotland. In 1998 Mrs Whitefield started working in the mail order section and was soon also working four days a week. The volume of work continued to increase and the additional titles in stock required regular updating of the catalogue. At the AGM in 2002 Mr Bebbington reported that when the bookshop started in 1992 there had been 428 titles in the catalogue but the number had risen to 1,165. Many of the newly-added titles were not books but microfiche, CDs and even videos. Publications resulting from projects involving the members of the Society accounted for many of these. One project undertaken by Mr Bebbington and Mrs Whitefield was the indexing of the popular series of Alan Godfrey large scale maps of Manchester and Salford for 1848 and for the years around 1890-1910 and these indexes were published.

More sales were generated when the Society joined the Internet bookshop run by the Federation of Family History Societies in early 2003. This increased the range of advertising, although receipts for items sold in this way were reduced owing to the percentage payable to the scheme.

Bookshop 1999 - 2003

The redesigned bookshop attracted favourable comments from visitors to Clayton House. It was easier to browse through the stock. Volunteers came forward to staff the area while the library was open. Payments for services provided in the library, such as copies from microfiche, had to be made in the bookshop. However, it was soon felt that the space available was inappropriate in view of the congestion often experienced in the library and it was decided that the computers used by members in the library should be re-located along one wall of the bookshop. This was done in the middle of 1999. There were two consequences. One was obvious, the reduction of space for the display of books but the more important one was the need for the volunteers working in the bookshop to have some knowledge of computers and the increasing range of material for which they could be used.

More thought could be given to the development of the bookshop when Mr Clements took up the role of Manager in May 2000. At this time the entrance to the Society's rooms was changed so that everybody passed through the bookshop. More computers were placed in the bookshop and access to the Internet was provided at a small charge from July 2000.

This charge was dropped in 2003. Mr Clements undertook the alterations needed to accommodate these. Sadly, he was in the post for only 18 months before his unexpected death in the autumn of 2001. It was fortunate that Mrs S. King was prepared to take over as the Bookshop Manager, thus avoiding another long gap.

CHAPTER 20

Educational Activities

The early years

Education in its widest sense was seen as an important aspect of the Society from its earliest days. At the meeting of the Council on 26 October 1964 it was suggested that, if there were sufficient interest from the members, the Workers Educational Association might be approached with a view to putting on an evening course. Nothing seems to have developed from this. In the early journals several articles appeared written specially for those beginning family history research. At the Council meeting on 12 May 1965 it was agreed that the last 30 minutes of each monthly meeting would be devoted to answering questions from members. It is clear, however, that in the following years this worthy aim was not always met. In December 1966 it was emphasised that members needed to feel that they were getting the help necessary to keep their interest. It was proposed that the monthly meeting should take the form of practical demonstrations rather than a long talk. A year later it was noted that the meetings were poorly attended.

In 1969 Mr (later Dr) Rogers gave a series of three talks at the monthly meetings and in the Summer issue of the journal that year there was a notice about his evening classes on Genealogy at North Hulme Education Centre. It was reported that 34 students attended these classes although not all would be members of the Society. Two new members were recruited from the class. The Council returned to the dissatisfaction of members in May 1974 and it was agreed that every second meeting should take the form of a workshop rather than having a talk. It is not certain that this change was followed because the subjects of the monthly meetings were at this time rarely publicised in the journal. No mention was made of the attempt to meet the needs of members and the Chairman and Editor again bemoaned the low attendance at meetings in 1975. Workshops were, however, listed for July 1975 and April 1976 but there is no record of their purpose.

It was noted at the AGM of 1977 that attendance had improved, so much so that at some meetings there were not enough seats. In July 1977 the journal carried notices about three centres in the Manchester area where evening classes in family history were to be held. An attempt was made to hold a series of classes for beginners in April 1980. Arrangements were made by Mr Cresswell for experienced members to give the talks, but few members were interested. It was said that past attempts to hold such classes in the evenings in central Manchester had also failed.

Education in family history research was thus largely a matter of self-help. The journal was able to point members towards the relevant sources in libraries and elsewhere and also from time to time publish instructive articles. There were opportunities at the monthly

meetings for discussion with others and, no doubt, arrangements were made for more personal meetings at other times. The organised trips to London also provided time to discuss problems on train or coach. Despite the complaints which were voiced, the Society grew greatly between 1970 and 1980.

1982 - 2003

The position changed with the opening of Clayton House in 1982. The library was open, even if only by prior appointment, in early evenings and on Saturdays. The hours increased over time and members were sure of finding assistance with their problems. In 1987 a series of surgeries was organised by Mr Beckett to which members could bring their problems and in February 1988 the Librarian, Miss Forsyth, organised three classes for beginners which 14 attended. This was followed by a series of seminars on more advanced subjects.

In March 1992, in response to advice from the Federation of Family History Societies, it was agreed to appoint an Education Officer and in June Mrs Hawkes took up this post. She arranged a series of 10 meetings in the autumn of that year for which a fee of £10 was charged. This was quickly booked up and the course was repeated in the spring of 1993. So many applied to join this course that two sessions were held each day, thus doubling the numbers. Mrs Hawkes was supported by two other members—Mrs D King and Mrs Newman. Courses were held in the autumn, when 23 attended, and another in the spring of 1994. In the autumn of 1993 a 'Further Course' was held, covering more advanced work and 17 attended. In 1994 five members passed the level A assessment set by the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies.

In April 1995 twenty members spent two days at the Public Record Office with Mrs Hawkes and Mrs Y Mason, staying at University of London halls of residence. Another course for beginners started in May 1995 with 19 attending and an intermediate course starting in September 1995 was fully booked. Another course for beginners and a trip to London were organised in the spring of 1996. On this occasion 21 members spent three days visiting a number of libraries and archives in the capital.

In September 1996 Mrs Newman replaced Mrs Hawkes as Education Officer. She continued the same twice-yearly classes for beginners held in the spring and autumn. These each ran for 6 weeks and the Council decided that the charge should be increased to £15. They were usually well supported but the class in January 1999 had to be cancelled through lack of support. In addition, two revision days were held in 1999 but these were not popular and so not repeated.

These formal sessions were not the only educational activities which took place. The branches also held classes for beginners and some had regular workshop sessions to help beginners (and others). New members were always able to get help while visiting the library. This came not only from the experienced volunteers but from informal discussion with other members, perhaps over their sandwiches at lunch time. Many of the monthly meetings were designed to help members in their own researches and were another place for informal discussion. Reports of these meetings in the journal could help those unable to get to them.

PART IV

Facts & Figures

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CHAPTER 21 The Constitution

1964

There was much discussion at meetings of the Society in its first six months relating to a Constitution. Eventually a meeting in August adopted the following Constitution.

THE MANCHESTER GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY CONSTITUTION & RULES

1. The Society shall be called “The Manchester Genealogical Society”.
2. The objects of the Society shall be the furtherance of the study of Genealogy, and the allied subjects of Heraldry, Local History and the preservation and publication of associated records.
3. The meetings shall be as frequent as determined by the members and Council. The Council meetings shall be fortnightly providing at least fifty percent of the council agree.
4. The affairs of the Society shall be governed and regulated by a Council consisting of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian and eight other members. The Council to be elected at the AGM in accordance with Rule 19.
5. Six Council members shall form a quorum.
6. Candidates for the Council shall be members of the Society for not less than six months and in good financial standing.
7. The Officers of the Council shall be elected by the full Council in committee.
8. The subscription of members of the Society shall be one guinea per annum. This subscription to entitle the member to the information issued by the Society, to participate in any activities and meetings organised by the Society and to the full use of the library and records of the Society.
9. All memberships to be from the date of joining.
10. Junior & Student & OAP memberships to be at the discretion of the Council. These memberships to carry no voting rights.
11. Provision to be made for admittance to the Society of Institutional Members (Libraries etc.) at a fee of two guineas per annum. These memberships to carry no voting rights.
12. Honorary Membership of the Society may be granted by the Council to persons deemed worthy or for services rendered.

Forty Years with Family History

13. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held in May each year after due notice has been sent to each member. At the AGM a report on the work of the Society shall be given. A full list of the members and financial report shall be published.
14. The Treasurer's report shall be audited by two members neither of whom shall be members of the Council. The auditors to be elected at the AGM.
15. The Society shall be non-profit making in respect to individuals and all monies received shall be applied to the aims and objects of the Society.
16. All books, records, machinery, monies etc. to belong to the Society and may not be disposed of without the consent of the full Council.
17. There shall be no alteration to these rules without a submission first in writing to the Secretary and then a discussion by the Council. Proposed alterations to be in the hands of the Secretary at least one calendar month before discussion. The Rules will only be altered at an AGM or at an Extraordinary meeting convened for the purpose. Any member shall be entitled to call an Extraordinary Meeting providing that not less than ten members signify their agreement in writing.
18. The Council shall have the power to approve or reject an application for membership.
19. Fifty percent of the Council must retire after twelve months but may offer themselves for re-election.
20. The Council shall [have] the power to allow organisations whose objects conform to or are allied to those of the Society, to be affiliated on a reciprocal basis in order to be of mutual advantage.
21. A member's wife or husband may attend meetings & functions of the Society but shall have no voting powers.
22. The Society's year for all purposes shall be from 1 April to 31 March.
23. All publications of the Society shall be protected by copyright of the Society.
24. The interpretation of these Rules shall rest with the Council whose decision shall be final and binding.

27 August 1964

It is not obvious from this Constitution that Members were elected to the Council at an AGM and then, at the first meeting of the new Council, those present decided who should occupy the various offices. Nor was the number of Officers laid down. In the next three years they may have included the Librarian and, for two of these years, the Minutes Secretary. At no time in the next few years did the number on the Council reach that laid down by the Constitution. For the year before the AGM in 1965, the Council appears to have consisted of the Founder Members who in July 1964 co-opted Miss Etheridge. In 1965 eleven members were elected to the Council.

1968

At a meeting of the Council in February 1968 the Chairman, Miss McLachlan, put forward a list of 'changes to the rules' for consideration. They were not incorporated in the minutes but were discussed at two further meetings of the Council before the proposed Constitution was put to the AGM on 2 May 1968. This was substantially different from the original and probably brought it into line with the way the Society had developed.

Part IV — Facts and Figures

1. The name of the Society shall be “THE MANCHESTER GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY”
2. The objects of the Society shall be:
 - (a) To promote, maintain and encourage the practice and dissemination of information on Genealogy, Heraldry and Local History.
 - (b) To assist members in their personal research by discussion and meetings and by suggesting methods of obtaining information.
 - (c) To collaborate with similar societies and with such bodies as churches, libraries and record offices and to build up its own information service and library in order that the studies of members may be facilitated.
 - (d) To promote the transcription of original sources.
 - (e) To arrange for talks, visits and other activities connected with subjects of interest to the Society.
3. Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons who are interested in the subjects for which the Society exists.
4. There shall be two classes of members:
 - (a) Full Members, who shall be entitled to vote at all general meetings of the Society.
 - (b) Associate Members, who shall be entitled to state their opinion but shall not be entitled to vote at general meetings
5. All subscriptions shall be paid in advance and shall date from April.
6. The rates of subscription shall be as follows:-
 - (a) Full Members£1. 1s. Od. per annum
 - (b) Associate Members...£1. 10s. Od. per annum.
7. The privileges of Full Membership shall be (subject to the limitations and conditions prescribed from time to time by the Committee).
 - (a) To attend such meetings as are held by the Society, and to introduce visitors to such meetings.
 - (b) To join in visits organised by the Society and to be accompanied by friends.
 - (c) To receive a copy of each of such publications as the Society may issue.
 - (d) To enjoy such library privileges as the Council may arrange. Associate Members shall be entitled to all the privileges of Full Members except that of voting at general meetings.
8. The Council may suspend, without being called upon to give reasons, from Membership of the Society any Member whose activities in their opinion are likely to be detrimental to the Society.
9. The Society shall be administered by a Council consisting of the Officers and nine other Members, who shall be elected for one year. The Officers shall include the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer; any five of whom shall form a quorum. The Council shall have power to co-opt any members to the Council.
10. The term of the Officers and Members of the Council shall begin immediately after the declaration of the results of the election at the Annual General Meeting. All Members of the Committee shall be normally elected by Full Members of the Society whose subscriptions are fully paid and who are present and voting at the Annual General Meetings. Nominations may be submitted in writing beforehand or may be given from the floor of the meeting. Casual vacancies may be filled by co-option by the Committee.

Forty Years with Family History

All members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election on completion of their term of office.

11. An Annual General Meeting shall be held during the month of [May] in each year when the Honorary Secretary shall present a report and the Honorary Treasurer shall submit the financial statement for approval.
12. The Constitution of the Society and any alterations or additions thereto shall be submitted to members in general meeting.
13. The Society shall be non-profit making and all income shall be applied to furthering the objects of the Society.
14. Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called on request signed by Members by sending a notice stating the objects of the Meeting at least three weeks before the proposed Meeting is to take place.
15. The Council shall have powers to enact bye-laws for the working of the Society and any scheme in connection with the Society which may from time to time be approved. Such bye laws shall have the full power of rules immediately after their enactment but shall be brought up for confirmation at the ensuing AGM.

2 May 1968

In paragraph 11, the month of the AGM was left blank in the copy attached to the minutes of the AGM at which this Constitution was adopted. 'May' has been inserted because this has always been the month during which the AGM has been held.

1969

The agenda for the AGM published in the journal includes three proposals to amend the Constitution only one of which, relating to subscriptions for American members, had previously appeared in minutes of the Council. These were:

Rule 1.—Amendment as follows—The name of the Society shall be 'THE MANCHESTER GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY'.

Rule 6.—Amendment as follows—(c) American Members \$5 per annum.

Rule 9.—Amendment as follows—The Society shall be administered by a Council consisting of the Officers and four other Members, who shall be elected for one year. The Officers shall include the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer; any four of whom shall form a quorum. The Council shall have power to co-opt any members to the Council.

The minutes of this meeting have not been found, but in the next issue of the journal it was reported that 'The proposed Amendments to Rules Nos. 1,6 and 9 were discussed and resolved and new Council members elected.' Whatever may have been resolved, the proposed new name was not used on any paper, document or publication of the Society.

1970

At the AGM in 1970, a change was made to Rule 5 which then read:

Part IV — Facts and Figures

5. All subscriptions shall be due in advance and payable from the date of admission to the Society.

1971

The agenda for the AGM of 1971 included a proposal to change Rule 6 to increase the subscription for Full Members to £2.50 and Associates to £3.00. At the meeting, however, it was agreed, after discussion, that the subscription be £2.00 forthwith but the Council be authorised to refund half this for senior citizens, if they so request. Overseas membership was to be 10 US Dollars. It was also agreed that each person at meetings should contribute 10p towards the cost of room and refreshments.

1973

At an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 5 July 1973 it was agreed that the name of the Society be The Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society. It was argued that the inclusion of Lancashire would indicate that the Society was not concerned only with the comparatively small area of Manchester and the title of Family History Society was one which was being used by many other similar societies.

1974

The minutes say that amendments were made to Rules 4, 7 and 9. The precise wording of these amendments is not recorded but they relate to the election of each officer by members at each AGM.

1975

Amendments were made to Rule 6. The subscription for Full Members to be £2.50, Senior Citizens and Students (under 21) £1.25 and Overseas Members 10 US Dollars. In May 1975 the Treasurer proposed to the Council that all subscriptions should be paid on the first of January each year and it was agreed to put this to an Extraordinary General Meeting. This was held on 5 September 1975 and Rule 5 was amended to -

5. All subscriptions shall be payable in advance annually and shall be due on the 1st of January.

A proposal from a member at the AGM of 1976 to reduce the subscription for Overseas Members to £4.00 was not agreed.

1977

The report in the journal of the AGM of 1977 said 'After considerable debate several alterations and modifications were made to the Constitution.' The only amendment recorded in the minutes was to Rule 5 -

5. All subscriptions shall be payable on 1st January each year. The Council shall decide the rate of subscription.

It would appear from a print of the Constitution in 1980 that the Council took this to mean that it had the power to alter Rule 6 (dealing with the levels of

subscriptions payable) without seeking the approval of the members at a General meeting.

1980 - 1989

At the AGM in 1980 an addition was approved to Rule 6 -

- 6(a) A President, who shall be a member of the Council, may be elected at a General Meeting of members who may elect the President as a Life President.

Discussions were started in 1980 with a view to obtaining registration as a charity. It was said that changes to the Constitution would be needed to make it acceptable to the Charity Commission. The experience of the Birmingham and Midland Society, which had recently become a charity, was drawn upon. An Extraordinary General Meeting was held on 13 November 1980 to obtain the approval of the members to some changes. It is not clear what was agreed because no version can be identified for this date. The Council did not discuss the Constitution again until, in March 1982, it decided that a copy should be placed in the next journal. It did not appear as part of the journal. There was no discussion about charity status either until it was reported in April 1982 that a submission had been made to the Commission.

At the AGM in May 1983 the Chairman said that the Commission had written to say that some changes were required before the Constitution would be acceptable. These covered what was to be provided to the public by the Society and the need for a financial statement to be prepared and approved at the AGM. Appropriate changes were agreed.

Constitution

1. Name:

The name of the Society shall be,—“The Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society”.

2. Objectives:

The objects of the Society shall be to promote the advancement of public education in the study of Genealogy, Heraldry and Local History.

And in furtherance of these objects, but not further or otherwise the Society shall have the following powers:-

- i) To assist in personal research by discussion and meetings and by suggesting methods of obtaining information.
- ii) To collaborate with similar organizations and with such bodies as churches, libraries, record offices and universities and to build up its own information service and library in order that the studies of members may be facilitated.
- iii) To promote the preservation by transcription of original sources.
- iv) To arrange talks, visits and other activities connected with subjects of interest to the Society's members.
- v) To publish a quarterly journal, and literature including transcripts of ancient records and monumental inscriptions.

3. Membership

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Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons who are interested in the objects for which the Society exists.

Applications for membership shall be made in writing on a prescribed form.

All subscriptions shall be payable on the 1st of January. The Council will periodically review and decide the rate of subscription payable.

4.- Suspension from Membership

The Council may suspend, without being called upon to give reasons, from membership of the Society, any member whose activities are likely to be detrimental to the Society in their opinion.

5. Meetings

An Annual General Meeting shall be held during the month of May, when Officers shall present their reports, and the Society's Treasurer will present the Society's audited Annual Financial Statement of Accounts and Annual Balance Sheet, for approval.

An "Extraordinary General Meeting" can only be called following a written request to the Secretary by six or more members, providing that twenty-eight days is given.

6. Council

The Society shall be administered by a Council consisting of the Officers, comprising: The President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and six other members who shall be elected for one year, A quorum shall consist of four members of the Council, one of whom must be an Officer. The Council shall have the power to co-opt any members to the Council.

6a- A President, who shall be a member of the Council, may be elected at a general meeting of members who may elect the President as a Life President.

7. Election and Nominations

Officers and members of the Council shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting only by fully paid-up members who are present. The term of office shall begin immediately after the declaration of the results. Nominations may be submitted in writing beforehand, or may be given from the floor of the Meeting.

8. Constitution

Except for Rule 3, (Annual Subscription) the rules may be amended by the Society at its Annual General Meeting by members who are fully paid-up members on 1st January immediately preceding the Annual General Meeting, who attend to vote. Notice of the Meeting shall be given to all members who are members as at 1st January, but no omission to notify a member shall invalidate the Annual General Meeting. The rules shall only be amended if three-quarters of those attending and voting, vote for such alteration. Rule '3' may be amended at an Annual General Meeting, in the same way as the other rules, save that the vote of one-half of those attending shall be sufficient for such alteration. The Chairman of the meeting shall in this instance have a casting vote or second vote. Voting shall be by way of a show of hands.

No alteration or amendment shall be made to this Constitution, however, which would cause the Society to cease to be a Charity at Law.

9. Income

The Society shall be non-profit making and all income shall be applied to furthering the objectives of the Society.

10. Rules

Part IV — Facts and Figures

The Council shall have powers to enact rules for the working of the Society and any scheme in connection with the Society.

11. Dissolution

The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than three-quarters of those members present with voting rights at either an Annual or Special General Meeting, called for the purpose, of which twenty-eight days prior notice has been given in writing. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by the charity after all debts and liabilities have been paid, the balance left to be transferred to some other charitable institution, or institutions having objects similar to those of the Society.

12. Trustees

The Council may appoint not less than three persons, (and not more than six persons), to hold any property held by or in trust for the Society.

AGM May 1983

In January 1984 the Council noted that the Federation of Family History Societies had issued a model Constitution and four months later the Anglo-Scottish section were concerned that it would need to have a separate Constitution if it were to be accepted as a society in its own right. Similar concerns were expressed by the Bolton section in March 1985. In September 1985 the Council decided that the Annual Report and the Financial Accounts should relate to years ending on 31 December and not 31 March as was previously the case. This date was included in the original Constitution but was not part of subsequent versions.

1990 - 1996

In May 1990 the Chairman, Mr Robinson, said that the Constitution was in need of review as more officers were needed to undertake the work of the Council. Mr King, recently the Treasurer, was asked to look at this. In October the representative at meetings of the Federation, Mr Smith, reported that it was looking at a new model Constitution for member societies and it was decided to await the outcome of this. It was received in June 1991 and it was reported that it had been sent to the Charity Commission from which it was expected to get general approval. The Federation was to meet again in September to discuss the document.

The Council discussed the model Constitution in detail at its meeting in July and at a special meeting in September. It suggested several changes that Mr Smith took to the Federation meeting. There was particular concern in the Bolton section at the way finances were to be treated. This resulted from the expected requirements of the new Charities Act coming into force in 1992. Mr Smith, who was a member of the Bolton section, prepared draft Rules for the Running of a Branch. Discussions took place between the Society and Bolton in an attempt to resolve the differences and the Chairman said at the Council meeting in January 1992 that, although she had hoped to submit to the AGM in May, this could not be done until agreement had been reached. At this AGM the Treasurer commented that the new Act would require clear and precise accounting in order to demonstrate the greater accountability expected. During the meeting the chairman of Bolton, Mr Bevitt, said he was 'happy to report that the relationship between the parent body and the Bolton Society remains excellent.'

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For several months the representative of Bolton on the Council said that discussions were still in progress among their members but in March 1993 he was able to say that several clauses had been agreed which would cover the problem of their assets. This had always been the heart of the dispute. Bolton had assets, mainly cash in the bank, which they claimed had been accumulated as a result of their own efforts, without help from the Society. They came largely from the sale of publications related to the large number of projects they had undertaken. In their view these assets should not be regarded as belonging to the Society. They were regarded as a reserve for the permanent centre which it was hoped to have in Bolton in the future. At the Council in August 1993 the newly-appointed Treasurer of the Society, Mr Farnell, pointed out all the requirements of the new Charities Act and a meeting was arranged for October to discuss all the implications. No minute was kept of this meeting. In January 1994 it was thought that a final version of the Constitution would be available to be considered at the next AGM, but this was not so. At the AGM the Chairman said it was hoped to have it ready by the following year.

Discussions continued throughout 1994 without agreement on fundamental points. It was arranged, however, that the proposed Constitution should be printed in the first issue of the journal in 1995 and this was done. Differences became even more acute and at the AGM in May only two amendments were passed. One related to the payment of subscriptions 12 months after acceptance as a member instead of on 1 January and the other laid down rules for the running of future branches. The process was not helped by delay on the part of the Charity Commission in replying to letters and also apparent confusion on its part. One point made was that the Society had no power to establish branches and so, at an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 8 November 1995, two motions were passed. One gave powers to the Council to establish branches which would operate under the rules agreed at the previous AGM, and the other formally established two branches—the Anglo-Scottish and the Bolton. The AGM on 8 May 1996 agreed the new Constitution as printed in the journal in early 1995 with subsequent amendments and textual clarification. These latter changes were quite substantial and the agreed Constitution was printed in the third issue of the journal in 1996. This contained powers to set up Special Interest Groups as well as branches.

1999 - 2000

In July 1999 a number of changes to the Constitution were thought desirable. Experience had shown that the distinction between branches and Special Interest Groups made in 1996 was artificial and all should be branches. Reports from other societies had shown possible deficiencies in the existing arrangements for dealing with the behaviour of members and that a Code of Conduct was desirable. The examination of the Annual Accounts had, in accordance with the Constitution, to be carried out by an Auditor. It was thought right to extend this, as accepted by the Charity Commission for a charity of its size, to include an Independent Examiner. The position of Fellow was established to honour those who had made long term contributions to the work of the Society. These amendments, and a few other changes of wording, were unanimously agreed at an Extraordinary General Meeting on 15 March 2000.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MANCHESTER AND LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

(As revised by EGM on 15 March 2000)

1. NAME

The name of the Society shall be The Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society hereinafter called the Society.

2. AIMS

- a) The Aims of the Society shall be:-
- i) To promote and encourage the public study of British family history, genealogy, heraldry and local history.
 - ii) To promote the preservation, security and accessibility of archival material.
- b) In the furtherance of the above aims, but not further or otherwise, the Society shall have the following powers:-
- i) To promote and engage in educational activities including the issue of a regular Journal and the publication and sale of other appropriate material;
 - ii) To hold lectures and discussions and organise research visits for members and interested members of the general public;
 - iii) To hold and maintain a library of printed and other works for the use of members and others;
 - iv) To preserve and transcribe or publish original source materials including documents and monumental inscriptions;
 - v) To collaborate with similar established supportive bodies such as churches, libraries, record offices and educational establishments;
 - vi) To support where possible the activities of the Federation of Family History Societies in its pursuit of these and similar aims.
- c) The Council, set up as in clause 5a, shall have the power to establish Branches for the furtherance of the Society's aims. Each Branch so established shall comply with and be subject to the following regulations:-
- i) Any Branch so established shall act in pursuance with the said aims and policy of the Society and shall be subject to such conditions as shall from time to time be laid down by the Society's Council.
 - ii) The Branches shall be deemed to have adopted the rules for Branches as prescribed from time to time by the Society's Council, unless it has with the prior consent of the said Council adopted other rules.
 - iii) Representation of Branches on the Society's Council shall be as determined in clause 5a(iii) below.
 - iv) The Society may provide funds to a Branch appropriate to its size and activities connected with its regular meetings and running expenses. No Branch may levy its own Branch membership subscription.
 - v) A Branch may, with the prior agreement of the Council, open a bank account which shall be run in accordance with the Policy laid down by the Society. Any monies in the Branch bank account which remain from the above funds after the above expenses have been met shall remain at all times the monies of the Society. The Branch shall keep accounts in such a form as shall be laid down by the

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- Society's Council and shall be subject to annual audit or independent examination.
- vi) All material, either printed or stored on microform or electronically, and any other assets purchased by the Branch shall be assets of the Society. In the event of disbandment of a Branch, where any assets of the Branch are currently held for inspection by their members at a location other than the Society Headquarters, then the Society's Council will endeavour to administer such assets in their current location pending any possible re-establishment of the Branch.
 - vii) A Branch may be suspended at any time by Council and closed by a vote at an Extraordinary General Meeting called by a resolution of the Council of the Society. Upon suspension the monies and assets of the Branch shall be treated in accordance with the provisions laid out above.

3. AFFILIATION

The Society shall have the option of becoming a member of The Federation of Family History Societies and shall have the power to affiliate with other charitable organisations whose aims are deemed compatible and mutually supportive. If any of these organisations shall be or become a Company Limited by Guarantee the Society's Council may guarantee such an amount or amounts as required providing that such an amount does not exceed £1 for any such company.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons showing a genuine interest in support of the Society's aims.
- b) Classes of membership and voting rights shall be determined by the Council of the Society. Classes include such categories as Single, Family, Overseas and such other categories as Council may consider appropriate.
- c) Subscriptions appropriate to each class of membership shall be payable at the time and rate determined by the Council of the Society.
- d) The Council may, subject to a unanimous vote of the members present, refuse an application for membership, refuse an application to renew membership or suspend from membership any person whose activities or behaviour, in its opinion, are prejudicial to the Society or in contravention of the Society's Code of Conduct. Suspended Members shall have the right to present their case directly to the Council in writing or in person, accompanied by a friend, and shall have the right of final appeal at an Extraordinary General Meeting convened by the Council in accordance with the procedure outlined in clause 6b below.

5. ADMINISTRATION

- a) The Officers of the Society, who shall be fully paid-up members of the Society, shall be the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer
The Society shall be administered by a Council with the following membership:-
 - i) The Officers
 - ii) 9 Members of Council who shall be fully paid-up members of the Society.
 - iii) One member of the committee of each Branch set up under the provisions in clause 2c above, chosen by the Branch committee to serve as a Branch Representative to represent the interests of the Branch members on Council
- b) There shall be a quorum when at least one third of the Members of the Council for the time being or three Members of the Council, whichever is the greater, are present at a meeting. One of those present shall be an officer who will chair the meeting.
- c) The Officers of Council shall be elected annually by those members present at the Annual General Meeting and their terms of office shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting.
- d) The Members of Council shall be elected for a three-year term of office by those members present at the Annual General Meeting and their terms of office shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting.
- e) Nominations for Officers and Members of Council should be submitted in writing not less than 28 days before the first day of the month in which the Annual General

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Meeting is to take place. If insufficient nominations have been received to fill the vacancies, the chairman of the meeting may at his/her discretion, take nominations from the floor.

- f) Officers and Members of Council shall, on completion of their terms of office, be eligible for re-election subject to the following conditions:
 - i) No Officer of Council shall serve more than seven consecutive years in one capacity with the exception of the Treasurer whose eligibility for re-election may be extended at the discretion of the Council. Previous service as an Officer in an acting capacity shall not be counted towards service for the purpose of this requirement.
 - ii) Members of Council and Branch Representative may serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms. Previous service on Council as a co-opted member as described in clause 5g below shall not be counted towards service for the purposes of this requirement.
 - iii) If a Member of Council or Branch Representative is subsequently elected as an Officer of Council, his/her previous service as a Member shall not be counted as a part of the seven-year term described in (i) above.
 - iv) An Officer, Member of Council or Branch Representative who has stood down under the terms of (i) or (ii) above will not be eligible for re-election or to be co-opted as described in 5g below until at least one year following his/her standing down.
- g) The Council shall have the power to co-opt a paid up Society member to serve as a Member of the Council to fill a casual vacancy or for any other purpose, but the selected individual shall be subject to any restriction specified in clause 5f above. No one may be co-opted as a Member of Council if, as a result, more than one third of the Members of Council would be co-opted Members. A Member of Council co-opted shall remain in this position only until the next Annual General Meeting.
- h) The Council shall have the power to nominate such person as it shall think fit to be President and up to ten persons to be Vice-Presidents. Such persons who consent to their nomination shall be recommended by Council to Society members for election at a General Meeting. These positions shall be honorary and shall be held for life. The President and Vice-Presidents shall not be eligible to stand as Officers or Members of Council.
- i) The Society may create an unlimited number of Fellowships. Nominations for Fellowship will be made by the Society's Council and awards will be subject to confirmation by a vote at the next Annual General Meeting following nomination. Fellowships will be bestowed upon any member of the Society who in the opinion of the Council has made a substantial contribution to the advancement of the Society and its aims. Fellows shall be entitled to receive such benefits as the Council shall from time to time determine.
- j) Trustees are persons having the general control, responsibility and management of the administration of the Society. The Officers and all Members of the Council are the Trustees of the Society.

6. GENERAL MEETINGS

Part IV — Facts and Figures

- a) An Annual General Meeting shall be held during the month of May, when officers shall present their reports. Notification of this meeting will be given to members at least 28 days prior to the event.
- b) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened at the request of the Council or at the request of 20 or more paid-up members of the Society or at the request of a member subject to suspension as described in clause 4d above. Written notice of the meeting, setting out the business to be discussed, shall be sent to members at least 28 days prior to the meeting.
- c) A quorum at any General Meeting shall consist of not less than 30 paid-up members.
- d) Only paid-up members of the Society present at General Meetings shall be entitled to vote. Proxy or postal votes shall not be acceptable.
- e) Each member of the Society shall be entitled to a single vote. Family memberships shall only be entitled to a single vote.
- f) Voting for the election of Officers and Members of Council at Annual General Meetings shall be by secret ballot. In the event of equality of votes, the election shall be decided by drawing lots.
- g) Voting on resolutions at General Meetings shall be by show of hands. At the discretion of the Chairman voting may be conducted by secret ballot. If there is no majority, the Chairman of the meeting shall have the casting vote. Decisions shall be by simple majority except in the case of amendments to the Constitution set out in clause 7 or dissolution as set out in clause 9 below.
- h) One or more Auditors or Independent Examiners shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting to carry out the duties referred to in clause 8c below.

7. CONSTITUTION

This Constitution can only be amended or altered at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting for which proper notice has been given and then only if the proposed alteration or amendment receives at least two thirds of the votes of those members present and eligible to vote at the meeting under clause 4b. No such alteration or amendment shall cause the Society to cease to be a Charity at law. In particular, no alteration may be made to clause 2a (i) and (ii) which define the aims of the Society or to clause 9 which relates to dissolution of the Society without the approval of the Charity Commissioners. Proposals for amendments to this Constitution must be submitted to the Council at least 56 days prior to the first day of the month in which the Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting is to be held.

8. FINANCE

- a) All income and property of the Society shall be applied solely towards the promotion and execution of the aims of the Society as defined in clause 2 above. No portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly to any Member of the Council. Nothing herein, however, shall prevent the reimbursement of reasonable and proper out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Society.
- b) The Society shall cause proper books and accounts to be kept with respect to all sums of money received and expended by the Society and the matters in respect of which those receipts and expenditures take place.

- c) The Society's accounts shall be prepared annually and shall be subject to Audit or Independent Examination. A copy of the accounts, appropriately certified, shall be presented to all paid-up members of the Society. A copy shall also be sent to the Charity Commissioners in compliance with charity legislation.

9. DISSOLUTION

The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than three quarters of members with voting rights present at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for the purpose and for which 28 days notice has been given in writing. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets or monies held by the Society after all debts and liabilities have been met, the balance left being transferred to some other charitable institution having the same or similar aims to those of the Society.

CHAPTER 22

Members and Subscriptions

Nine members were regarded as Foundation Members when the Society started in January or February 1964, but in a few months the membership was said to be 'over 50', and by the end of the year to be 53 plus 1 student. The number of members was not regularly recorded but in November 1968 the Treasurer reported that there were 45 paying members. The Financial Statement for the year ending April 1969 showed the payment of only 31 subscriptions—19 renewals and 12 new members. A difficulty in identifying the number of members is that the membership numbers given to members were changed at least once, some say twice. A member who joined in November 1969 had an original number of 128. This, presumably, is the total who had joined by that date but only a quarter remained members. Sometime in the next six years the membership numbers were changed. At the AGM in 1975 it was stated that the membership was approaching 100. These two points are in line with the fact that the list of members with entries in the first Directory of Members' Interests published in 1976 shows that numbers 1 to 78 are in alphabetical order of surname followed by numbers 79 to 108 in random order.

At the AGM in 1977 it was said that there were about 170 members and the Treasurer said that about one third lived overseas. Two years later, at the AGM in 1979, the number had doubled. This increase was attributed to a general increased interest in genealogy and, in particular, the influence of television programmes such as the BBC series 'Family History' presented by a former news reader Gordon Honeycombe. This obviously put strain on the organisation of the Society, but within a year the rate of increase had slowed. Nevertheless, at the AGM in 1980 the membership was said to be 530 with the proportion living overseas down to about a quarter. The number continued to rise, reported at the AGM in 1981 to be 650 on 31 March 1981 of whom 500 lived in the UK, and 683 in 1982 but the proportion overseas had fallen to about one sixth. Increases were attributed in some degree to further programmes on television. In 1984 the number was reported as 1,200 but slightly less than this the following year. In 1986 it was over 1,600, in 1987 2,300, in 1988 2,900, in 1989

Part IV — Facts and Figures

3,300, in 1990 3,600 and in 1991 3,800. The basis of these reports were the records kept by the Membership Secretary and certainly in 1991 contained 130 relating to libraries and to societies with whom journals were exchanged. The details were kept on computer from which the labels were printed for the journals. The last report from this source was in January 1992 when the members were said to number 3793.

At this stage the membership records were centralised at Clayton House. After careful checking in the next twelve months, the paid membership in April 1993 was said to be 3257. In January 1994 it was reported that 539 members had joined in 1993 and that the membership was over 4000. This seems a little exaggerated because a year later the new members in 1994 were put at 595 and the membership at 'about 4000'. The membership changed daily as new ones joined but there was always a problem with members whose renewal payments were overdue. When should they cease to be regarded as members? Before 1993, when all subscriptions were due on the 1st of January each year, there is evidence that it was not until May, June or even July that they ceased to be counted as members.

For the next six years the number joining each year rose fairly steadily to a peak of 911 in 2000 after which it fell off slightly. It is not clear why there was this increased interest in genealogy at that time but one suggestion was that it was connected to the Millennium celebrations. About a third of the new members stayed for only one year and after two years only about half renewed their memberships. This had been the experience over many years. At the AGM in 1999 the Treasurer said that on that day there were 4,531 members.

The following table sets out the membership details at the end of 2003.

Single	3107
Family	893
Europe	28
Overseas	469
TOTAL	4497

Analysis of the postcode areas of residence shows that 2035, or just over half of the members living in the UK, lived within about 20 miles of Clayton House. Of these, more than one third (721) lived in Manchester or in towns to the east, north and west, including 251 in the City of Manchester, 55 in Sale, 46 in Middleton and 29 in Salford. The Bolton area had 269 (including Bolton 190 and Bury 67); the Oldham area 264 (Oldham 150 and Ashton under Lyne 29); the large Stockport residential area extending well into Cheshire 509 (Stockport 252, Cheadle 77; Macclesfield 44 and Wilmslow 33); Warrington 157 (Altrincham 55, Warrington 42 and Knutsford 24); Crewe, covering a large part of south Cheshire 86 and Wigan and Leigh 29. The overseas members were mainly in the United States of America 171, Australia 139, Canada 112 and New Zealand 44.

During the five years before this the UK total rose by about 750 but those overseas fell by over 100. The total number had fallen slightly from an all-time peak in the middle of 2002. The growth of interest in genealogy can be measured by the time taken to reach various membership numbers. At the time of the 20th anniversary the numbers given to new members had not reached 2,000. It took about 25 years to reach number 5,000, more than

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another 7 to reach 10,000 and a little less than 6 ½ to reach 15,000. The greatest proportionate increase took place around 1980.

Subscriptions

When the Society started the annual subscription was laid down in the Constitution as one guinea (i.e. £1.05) per annum and memberships were to run from the date of joining. Junior, Student & Old Age Pensioner memberships were at the discretion of the Council and carried no voting rights. At a major change in the Constitution at the AGM in 1968 the subscriptions became £1-1s-0d for Full Members and £1-10s-0d for Associate Members. These were payable in advance and dated from April. It is not clear how Associate Members were defined other than that they did not have a vote at General Meetings. In 1969 it was agreed that the subscription for members living in the United States of America should be \$5. At the AGM in 1970 the rule about subscriptions was again changed and they became payable from the date of admission to the Society. From 1970 it became possible to pay subscriptions by means of a Banker's Order. By 2003 over 10% of subscriptions were paid in this way.

At the AGM in 1971 the subscription was raised to £2.00 forthwith but the Council was authorised to refund half of this for senior citizens, if they so requested. The overseas rate was raised to 10 US dollars. Members were also to be asked to contribute 10 pence at each meeting they attended.

In February 1975 the Council discussed the need to increase the subscriptions because of the increased costs of paper and postal charges. It also discussed the possibility of having different types of membership. Following this, at the AGM in 1975 it was agreed to increase the subscription for Full Members to £2.50 with reduction for Senior Citizens and for Students under 21 years to £1.25. Members in the USA had to pay \$10. At an Extraordinary General Meeting in September that year the date of payment was changed to 1 January. At the Council meeting in January 1976 the Treasurer proposed that the subscription for overseas members should be reduced to £4.00 and this was agreed by a narrow majority. At the next AGM, however, the proposal did not get a sufficient majority. In the journal for April 1978 it was stated that Family Membership was £3.50. This is the first mention of this type of membership and it had not been approved either by the Council or at an AGM.

The subscriptions were next raised at the AGM of 1979 to operate from 1 January 1980. Ordinary Membership was raised to £3.00 and all Overseas Memberships to £6.00 (or \$12.00). Senior Citizens (over 65 years) were to pay £2.00. New categories were introduced: Family Membership at £4.00 and Institutional Membership at £3.00. It was noted that the increase in the membership meant that it was no longer possible to rely on the voluntary efforts of members to produce the journal and the cost of paper and postage were rising. It is possible, as evidenced by subsequent actions, that at this AGM the Council was given powers to vary the subscription rates without seeking changes in the Constitution but no minute to the effect has been found. The new Constitution agreed in May 1983 said the 'The Council will periodically review and decide the rate of subscription.'

The same rising costs caused the Council to consider the subscriptions again in September 1981. The UK rates were increased by 50 pence each—Ordinary Membership became £3.50, Family £5.00 and Senior Citizens £2.50. Overseas Membership was not changed. The new rates took effect from 1 January 1982. At the meeting of the Council in January 1982 it was agreed that members should be deemed to have left if subscriptions remained unpaid 'by the second journal'. During 1982 the Council was concerned at the additional expenditure incurred as a result of moving into Clayton House. Although no

decision to increase the subscription appears in the minutes, an announcement in the issue of the journal for October 1982 said that the rates for 1983 would be—UK Ordinary £5.00, UK Family £7.50, Overseas (Journal sent by surface mail) £7.50 and Overseas (Journal sent by air mail) £10.00. It was later stated, although not noted at the time, that the reduced rate for Senior Citizens was withdrawn in 1985 as a result of the Society becoming a Charity.

These rates continued until 1990. In July 1987 the Overseas rates were quoted in addition in US dollars—\$11.25 (surface) and \$15.00 (air). In October 1988 these were increased to \$14.00 and \$18.00. In October 1990 the Council decided to increase the rates to £7.00 for Ordinary Members, £10.00 for Family Members and £10.00 or US \$20.00 for Overseas. The option of having the journal sent by surface mail was withdrawn. In March 1991 the Council thought that the subscription rates should be reviewed every two years and that the levels at that time were too low. In September that year the Council decided, on the recommendation of its Finance Committee, to increase the rates to £10.00 for Single Membership and £12.50 for others from 1992. As was explained in the journal of October 1991 this increase was necessary to cover the additional cost of the new rooms into which the Society was moving in Clayton House. It was hoped that the new bookshop, mail order service and other revenue-raising activities would keep future rates stable.

This stability lasted for three years. In May 1995 it was decided that an increase was needed because it was expected that the rent for the rooms would be increased after a rent review due in 1996. Single Membership was increased to £11.00, European Membership (a new category) to £12.50, Family Membership to £13.50 and Overseas to £15.00. In fact the rent was not reviewed but other costs continued to rise, largely as a result of inflation. This led to the introduction in September 1996 of an Enrolment Fee of £3.00. Each new member received a large packet of literature and it was felt that this fee would offset the cost of this.

In the summer of 1997 the Society leased further accommodation in Clayton House and to cover the cost of this it was necessary to increase the income of the Society. It was decided to restrict the additional subscription to members resident in the UK, each category of which would pay an extra £1.50. Single and European membership became £12.50, Family membership increased to £15.00 and Overseas members continued to pay £15.00. Income from publications increased as had been hoped but two other changes made greater contributions. Changes in UK tax laws in 2000 made it easier for taxpayers to offset their subscriptions to the Society as a Charity against their income tax. Income from this source increased from just over £1,000 to around £8,000. Another change was a negotiated reduction in the Society's liability to Value Added Tax. This allowed the Society to retain about £1800 per year which previously had been paid to Customs and Excise.

The subscriptions have risen over the years by amounts well short of the levels of inflation in the UK. This has resulted from the basic costs of the Society, while rising, being shared among a larger number of members. Even the cost of printing the journal does not rise in proportion to the number of copies or even the size of the journal.

CHAPTER 23

People and Places

A. OFFICE HOLDERS of the SOCIETY

PATRON

1984 - 1995 Sir Guy Holland Bart.
1995 - Lord Mayor of Manchester

PRESIDENT

1980 - 2003 Mr James D Beckett

VICE PRESIDENT

1990 - Mr Walter Bee; Mrs Joan M George; Mrs L Marjorie Pollard;
Mr Hugh Robinson
1991 - Mr Hubert King
1993 - Mr Michael F Griffiths
1997 - Mr John A Coupe
2000 - Mrs Margaret G Mason
2002 - Dr David H Vaughan

CHAIRMAN

1964 - 1965 Mr Clifford Wright
1965 - February 1968 Mr Douglas V Burling
February - May 1968 Miss M McLachlan
1968 - 1969 Mr Peter Shepherd
1969 - 1973 Mr Ronald L Denyer
1973 - 1980 Mr James D Beckett
1980 - 1981 Mr William B Lucas
1981 - 1985 Mr Hugh Robinson
1985 - 1988 Mr Walter Bee
1988 - 1990 Mr Hugh Robinson
1990 - 1994 Mrs Margaret G Mason
1994 - July 1997 Mrs Joan Wood
July 1997 - 2000 Mrs Margaret G Mason
2000 - Mr Dennis Baxter

VICE-CHAIRMAN

1964 - 1965 Mr Charles Saunders
1965 - 1966 Mr James D Beckett
1966 - February 1968 Miss M McLachlan
February - May 1968 Miss M Pendleton

Forty Years with Family History

1968 - 1969	Mr Clifford Wright
1969 - 1973	Mr James D Beckett
1973 - 1975	Mr Harold Anderton
1975 - 1978	Mr Barry Jenyon
1978 - 1984	Mrs F Patricia Seddon
1984 - 1985	Mr William B Lucas
1985 - 1988	Mr Eric E Crosby
1988 - 1989	Mr Jack L Lambert
1989 - 1994	Mrs Joan Wood
1994 - 1995	Mr Ronald Smith
1995 - 1997	Mr Lawrence J Snowdon
1997 - 2000	Mr Dennis Baxter
2000 - 2003	Mrs Frances de Courcy
2003 -	Mr Robert Haynes

SECRETARY [GENERAL SECRETARY from 1981]

1964 - 1966	Mr Robert G Chorlton
1966 - January 1968	Mr Alan Randall Jones
January 1968 - January 1969	Mr James D Beckett
January - May 1969	Mr Peter Shepherd [also Chairman]
May 1969 - August 1970	Miss M Mc Lachlan
August 1970 - February 1974	Mr Roger B Trunkfield
February 1974 - 1978	Mrs F Patricia Seddon
1978 - September 1982	Mr Barry Jenyon
September 1982 - 1985	Mr Eric E Crosby
1985 - December 1989	Mr A Michael Berrell
1990 - September 1991	Mrs Elizabeth Smith
September 1991 - 1999	Mrs Frances de Courcy
1999 - 2002	Mr John B Marsden
2002 -	Mrs Judith Sellers

TREASURER

1964 - 1969	Mr Jack Hampson
1969 - August 1970	Mr M H Nash
August 1969 - 1973	Mr John Manock
1973 - 1975	Mr Ronald L Denyer
1975 - 1978	Mr Nicholas J Hidden
1978 - 1981	Mr Graham Normansell
1981 - 1983	Mr Neil Walmsley
1983 - 1884	Mr John Houliston
1984 - 1990	Mr Hubert King
1990 - 1991	Mr Stanley E Arnold
1991 - 1993	Mr Michael F Griffiths
1993 - 1996	Mr Charles Farnell
August 1996 - 2002	Mr David H Vaughan

Part IV — Facts and Figures

2002 -

Mr John B Marsden

Forty Years with Family History

LIBRARIAN

1964 - 1966	Mr Alan Randall Jones
1966 - 1973	Mr Joseph Wild
1973 - September 1974	Mrs F Patricia Seddon
September 1974 - 1976	Mr Nicholas J Hidden
1976 - 1981	Mr Peter K & Mrs Enid C Cresswell
1981 - 1983	Mrs Enid C Cresswell
1983 - 1992	Miss Jean M Forsyth

LIBRARY MANAGER

1992 - 2001	Mrs Frances de Courcy
2001 - December 2002	Miss Elizabeth A Auty
December 2002 -	Mrs Frances de Courcy

EDITOR of THE MANCHESTER GENEALOGIST

1964 - 1965	Mr Alan Randall Jones
1965 - 1966	Mr Douglas V Burling
1966 - 1968	Mr Alan Randall Jones, Miss M McLacklan, Miss M. Pendleton
1968 - 1969	Mr Peter Shepherd
1969 - 1971	Miss M Pendleton
1971 - 1972	Mr Roger B Trunkfield
1972 - 1986	Mr James D Beckett
1986 - 1990	Mrs Margaret G Mason
1990 - December 2001	Mr J Stewart Kent
2002	Mrs Gail Hobson
2003 -	Mrs Gail Hobson & Dr D H Vaughan

ASSISTANT EDITOR of THE MANCHESTER GENEALOGIST

November 1989 - June 1993	Mr Ian McAlpine
June 1993 - October 1994	Mrs Irene Moore
October 1994 - December 2000	Mrs Susan Hartley
2001	Mrs Gail Hobson
May - December 2002	Dr D H Vaughan

FELLOWS

2000	Mr Stanley E Arnold; Mr A Michael Berrell; Mr Alec V Marlow
2001	Miss Jean M Forsyth; Mr Ray Hulley; Mrs Ada Lynch; Mr Ronald Smith; Mr Lawrence J Snowdon; Mrs Margaret Thurston
2002	Mr John Conway; Mr J Stewart Kent; Mrs Violet Ormston
2003	Mr Harry Bebbington

B. MEETING PLACES

Meetings of the Society

February - April 1964	The Gardeners Arms, New Moston First Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m.
May 1964 - April 1971	Central Hall, Oldham Street
May 1971 - January 1979	Fernley House, St Ann's Churchyard
February 1979 - December 1980	Central Hall, Oldham Street Second Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m.
January 1981 - May 1982	Thompson's Arms, Chorlton Street
June 1982 - December 1984	Scout & Guide Hall, Faraday Street
January 1985 - July 1993	Manchester Town Hall Second Wednesday of each month at 2.00 p.m.
August 1993 - November 1994	Manchester Town Hall
January 1995 - November 2003	Clayton House

Meetings of the Council of the Society

1964 - December 1966	The Gardener's Arms, New Moston
January 1967 - April 1971(?)	The Millstone Hotel, Thomas Street
May 1971(?) - January 1982	Fernley House, St Ann's Churchyard
February 1982 -	Clayton House

In 1969, meetings started at 8.00 p.m. In 1979 they started at 7.30 p.m. This time was maintained until April 1990 when it was brought forward to 7.00 p.m. and to 6.45 p.m. in January 1991. In August and September 1991 it was held at 6.00 p.m., after committee meetings, but in October and November it was held at 2.00 p.m. Several meetings after this were held at 6.30 p.m. but in June 1992 they went to 6.00 p.m. In 1993 the regular time became 4.30 p.m. but in June 1994 this was changed to 1.30 p.m. after committee meetings in the morning, and sometimes 1.00 p.m. The standard time became 1.30 p.m. until it was advanced to 1.15 in June 2000.

C. BRANCHES

ANGLO-SCOTTISH FHS

Chairman

1982 - November 1991	Mr James D Beckett
November 1991 - 1998	Mr Basil W Mountford
1998 -	Mr Daniel Muir

Forty Years with Family History

Secretary

1982 - 1989	Mrs Doreen F Ramsbotham
1989 - November 1991	Miss Patricia Connor
November 1991 - 1998	Mrs Mary C Rhodes
January 2002 - 2003	Mrs Katherine S Pelham
2003 -	Mr Michael J Couper

Journal Secretary

November 1991 - July 1999	Mrs Freda Thomas
2003 -	Mrs Eleanor M Bennett

All regular meetings of the branch and its committee have been held at Clayton House.

BOLTON & DISTRICT FHS

Chairman

1985 - 1988	Mrs Joan Brabbin
1988 - 1994	Mr Edward Bevitt
1994 - 1995	Miss Joan Holding
1995 - 1996	Mr William Sheppard
1996 - 2001	Mr Benjamin A Marsh
2001 -	Mr Geoffrey W Timmington

Vice Chairman

1995 - 1996	Mr Benjamin A Marsh
1996 - 1997	Mr William Sheppard
1997 -	Mr Paul Whiteley

Secretary

1981 - 1985	Mr John Hayes
1985 - 1987	Mrs Anne Gregory
1987 - 1994	Mrs Susan Hurst
1994 - 1995	Mr Clifford Hart
1995 - 1997	Mrs Jean Pearce
1997 -	Mrs Rita Greenwood

Treasurer

1985 - 1990	Mr Harry A Pickup
1990 - 1995	Mr Alfred Ashworth
1995 -	Mr Alan Kenyon

Meetings of the Branch

Regularly held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 p.m.

1982 - 1991	Friends' Meeting House, Silverwell Street
1992 - July 1995	The Walker Leisure Club, Green Lane, Great Lever
Sept. 1995 - March 1997	Bolton & District Anglers Association Social Club, Rishton Lane, Great Lever

Part IV — Facts and Figures

April 1997 - Bolton Cricket Club, Bishop's Road, Green Lane, Great
Lever

COMPUTER

Chairman

2000 - Mr Philip Stringer [previously called 'Co-ordinator']

Secretary

2000 - 2002 Mrs Judith Sellers

2002 - 2004 Mrs Ina Penneyston

All meetings of the branch and its committee were held at Clayton House.

IRISH ANCESTRY

Chairman

1993 - 1996 Mrs Margaret Thurston

May - October 1996 Mr Douglas Clements

October 1996 - May 1999 Miss Joan Gill

1999 - Mr Terence Broadhurst

Secretary

1996 - 2000 Mrs Barbara McGivern

2000 - Mr Peter Donlan

The regular meetings of the branch have been held at Clayton House. They were held at first on the first Monday of each month but from February 2000 this was changed to the second Monday. The time has always been 1.30 p.m.

OLDHAM & DISTRICT

Chairman

1996 - 2003 Mrs Mary Pendlebury [known as 'Organiser']

2003 - Mr Brian McEwan

Secretary

1996 - 2003 Mrs Thelma Gledhill

2003 - Mrs Patricia Sankey

Treasurer

1998 - Mr Eric Tongue

The initial meeting of the branch was held at the Community Centre, Union Street and all the subsequent ones at the One World Centre, Unitarian Chapel, King Street. The meetings were held on the second Thursday of each month at 2.00 p.m. Committee meetings of the branch have been held at a number of locations in Oldham—from April to August 1996 at the Dr Syntax public house, Union Street; from September 1996 to January 1998 at the Hog's Head, Union Street; from February 1998 to January 1999 at the Art Gallery in the

Forty Years with Family History

Library building, Union Street; from February 1999 to October 2000 at the Museum, Greaves Street; from November 2000 to June 2002 at Oldham People's Advocacy Ltd, Ascroft Court, Peter Street and from July 2002 at Gallery Oldham, Union Street.

CHAPTER 24

Details of Members

This list includes of those who have been members of the Council or who are mentioned in the text. It summarises their official links with the Society. The following abbreviations have been used:

A/S - Anglo-Scots; Asst - Assistant; C - Member of Council; Ch - Chairman; Co-ord - Co-ordinator; F M - Founder Member; Gen Sec - General Secretary; Hon M - Honorary Member; IA - Irish Ancestry; Sec - Secretary; V Ch - Vice-Chairman; V P - Vice-President

Abernethy, Mr William - Journal Publisher 1979 - 1982
Abson, Mrs Jane - C 1998 - 1999
Anderton, Mr Harold - V Ch 1973 - 1975
Anstey, Mrs Anne - C 1965 - 1968
Antonie, Mr Roger - Designer, Hon M
Arnold, Mr Stanley E - Treasurer 1990 - 1991, C 1991 - 1992, Fellow 2000
Ashworth, Mr Alfred - Treasurer (Bolton) 1990 - 1995
Auty, Miss Elizabeth A - C 2001 - 2002, Library Manager 2001 - 2002
Baptie, Mrs Diane - Scotland representative - 1998 -
Baxter, Mr Dennis - C 1996 - 1997, V Ch 1997 - 2000, Project Co-ord 1999 - 2002, Ch 2000-
Bebbington, Mr Harry - C 1992 - 2002, Shop Manager 1992 - 2000, Mail Order Manager 2000 -, Fellow 2003, C 2003 -
Beckett, Mr James D - V Ch 1965 - 1967, Sec 1968 - 1969, V Ch 1969 - 1973, Editor 1972 - 1986, Ch 1973 - 1980, President 1980 - 2003, Hon M 1980, Ch (A/S) 1982 - 1991
Bee, Mr Walter - C 1981 - 1983, Asst. Sec 1981 - 1985, Ch 1985 - 1988, VP 1990
Bennett, Mrs Eleanor - Journal Sec (A/S) 2003 -
Berrell, Mr A Michael - C 1982 - 1983, Journal Sec 1982 -1992 , Gen Sec 1985 - 1989, Fellow 2000
Best, Mrs Madeline, Library Representative (IA) 1993 - 1996
Bevitt, Mr Edward - C 1988 - 1994, Ch (Bolton) 1988 - 1994
Boardman, Miss Rosemary - C 1973 - 1978, Programme Organiser 1977 - 1978, Minute Sec 1979 - 1985, C 1983 -1985
Bocking, Mrs D M - C 1967 - 1968, Hon M 1982
Brabbin, Mrs Joan - C 1985 - 1988, Ch (Bolton) 1985 - 1988
Brett, Mrs Sonia - Library (Bolton) 1982 - 1984, Asst. Library 1982 - 1984
Broadhurst, Mr Terrence - C 1997 - , Ch (IA) 1999 -
Bumby, Mrs Edna - C 1966 - 1969, Minute Sec 1966 - 1968
Burling, Mr Douglas V - Ch 1965 - 1968
Carlton, Miss M - Minute Sec 1964
Charge, Mr Keith - C 1994 - 1996

Forty Years with Family History

Charles, Mr T G - C 1975 - 1981, Pedigree Organiser 1975 - 1981
Chesworth, Mr Carl - Publicity Officer 1986 - 1987
Chorlton, Mr Robert G - F M, Sec 1964 - 1966
Clements, Mr Douglas - C 1995 - 1997, (IAG) 1995 - 1997, C 1999 - 2001,
Shop Manager 2000 - 2001
Connor, Miss Patricia - C 1989 - 1992, Sec (A/S) 1989 - 1992, Acting Gen Sec 1990
Conway, Mr John - Members' Enquiries (IA) 1993 -, Fellow 2002
Coupe, Mr John A - C 1983 - 1996, Project Co-ord 1983 -1994, V P 1997
Couper, Mr Michael - Sec (A/S) 2003 -
Cresswell, Mrs Enid C - Library 1976 - 1983, Journal Publisher 1979 -
Cresswell, Mr Peter K - Library 1976 - 1981, Ch (Development Committee) 1979 - 1983
Crosby, Mr Eric E - C 1978 - 1982, Federation Sec 1979 - 1988,
Development Committee 1979 - 1983, Membership Sec 1981 - 1982,
Gen Sec 1982 - 1985, V Ch 1985 - 1988
Dean, Mrs Gillian - Bookstall 1990 - 1992
de Courcy, Mrs Frances - Minute Sec 1991 - 1992, Gen Sec 1992 - 1999, C 1999 - 2000,
Library Manager 1999 - 2001, V Ch 2000 - 2003, Project Co-ord 2002 - ,
Library Manager 2002 - , C 2003 -
Denyer, Mr Ronald L - Ch 1969 - 1973, Treasurer 1973 - 1975
Dixon, Miss Vanessa L - Project Sec (A/S) 1982 - 1998
Donlan, Mr Peter - Sec (IA) 2000 -
Downham, Miss Margaret - Library Volunteer 1996 -
Edmundson, Mrs Joyce - Journal Sec (Bolton) 1983 - 1988
Etheridge, Miss V E - C 1964 - 1965
Farnell, Mr Charles - C 1991- 1993, Treasurer 1993 - 1996
Fennell, Mr P - F M
Forsyth Miss Jean M - C 1983 - 1989, Library 1983 - 1992, C 1991 - 1992, Fellow 2001
Frost, Mrs Janice - Project Sec (Bolton) 1982 - 1983
George, Mrs Joan M - Hon M 1982, Vice-President 1990
Gill, Miss Joan - C 1997 - 1999, Ch (IA) 1997 - 1999
Gledhill, Mrs Thelma - C 1997 - 2000, Sec (Oldham) 1997 - 2003
Goad, Mr Nelson - Library (Bolton) 1996 - 1997, Bookstall (Bolton) 1997 -
Greenhalgh, Mrs Beverley - Office Volunteer 1993 - , Co-ord Police Records 2001 - 2003
Greenwood, Mrs Rita - C 1997 - 2000, Sec (Bolton) 1997 -
Gregory, Mrs Ann D - C 1983 - 1987, Asst. Sec (Bolton) 1983 - 1984,
Sec (Bolton) 1984 - 1987
Gregory, Mrs Brenda - Library Volunteer 1996 -
Gregson, Mrs Sandra - C 1984 - 1985, Appeals Co-ordinator 1984 - 1985
Griffiths, Mr Michael F - C 1990 - 1991, Treasurer 1991 - 1993, V P 1993
Hall, Mrs Bette W - C 1999 -
Hampson, Mr Jack - F M, Treasurer 1964 - 1969
Hardman, Mrs I - C 1972 - 1973
Hart, Mr Clifford - C 1994 - 1995, Sec (Bolton) 1994 - 1995
Hartley, Mrs Susan - Ass Edit 1994 - 2000
Hawkes, Mrs Dorothy - Education Officer 1992 - 1997

Part IV — Facts and Figures

Haynes, Mr Robert - V Ch 2003 -
Heyes, Mr John - C 1982 - 1984, Sec (Bolton) 1982 - 1984
Hidden, Mr Nicholas J - C 1973 - 1974, Library 1974 - 1976, Treasurer 1975 - 1978
Hobson, Mrs Gail - Asst. Editor 2001, Editor 2002, Joint Editor 2003 -
Holding, Miss Joan - Journal Sec (Bolton) 1983 - 1991, C 1994 - 1995,
Ch (Bolton) 1994 - 1995
Holland, Sir Guy, Bart - Patron 1984 - 1995
Holt, Mr A - C 1971 - 1973
Houghton, Mr Joe - C 1991 - 1996, (Comp) 1991 - 1996
Houliston, Mr John - Journal Sec (Bolton) 1982 - 1983, Treasurer 1983 - 1984
Howarth, Mr Alan H - Journal Sec (Bolton) 2001 -
Hulley, Mr Ray - Leader, 1851 Census Group (PRO) 1991 - , South Representative 1998-,
Fellow 2001
Hulme, Mrs Avril - C 1979 - 1983, Treasurer (Development Committee) 1979 - 1983,
Project Ch 1982 -1983
Hurst, Mrs Susan - C 1987 - 1994, Sec (Bolton) 1987 - 1994
Irvine, Mr Kenneth - C 1990 - 1992
Jenyon, Mr Barry - C 1974 - 1975, V Ch 1975 - 1976, Journal Distributor 1976 - 1982, Sec
1978 - 1981, Gen Sec 1881 - 1982
Jones, Mr Allan Randall - F M, Library 1964 - 1966, Sec 1966 - 1968, C 1968 - 1969
Jones, Mrs Beryl - C 1997 - 2003, Minute Sec 1997 - 2003
Kearns, Mrs Lynne - Fiche Loans (Bolton) 1998 - 2001, Journal Sec (Bolton) 1999 - 2001
Kent, Mr J Stewart - Editor 1990 - 2001, Fellow 2002
Kenyon Mr Alan - Treasurer (Bolton) 1995 -
King, Mrs Dorothy - Members' Interests 1983 - 1985
King, Mr Hubert - C 1982 - 1984, Social Sec 1982 - 1983, Appeals Co-ord 1983 - 1984,
Treasurer 1984 - 1990, C 1990 - 1991, Social Sec 1991 - 1992, V P 1991
King, Mrs Shirley - C 2001 - , Shop Manager 2001 -
Knott, Mrs Barbara - C 1975 - 1978
Lambert, Mr Jack L - C 1987 - 1988, V Ch 1988 - 1989, C 1990 - 1991
Lewis, Mr Graham R - C 1976 - 1979, Research Co-ord 1977 -1979
Lomas, Mr Ian S - C 1980 - 1981, Journal Sec 1980 - 1981
Lucas, Mr William B - C 1979 - 1980, Ch 1980 - 1981, V Ch 1984 - 1985
Lucas, Mrs W B - C 1979, Asst. Editor 1979
Lynch, Mrs Ada -Volunteer, Office 1991 - 1997, C 1993 - 1997, Fellow 2001
McAlpine, Mr Ian - Asst. Editor 1989 - 1993, C 1990 - 1993,
McEwen, Mr Brian - C 2003 - , Ch (Oldham) 2003 -
McGivern, Mrs Barbara - Sec (IA) 1996 - 2000
McKinney, Mr Thomas - C 1995 - 1999
McLachlan, Miss M - V Ch 1967 - 1968, Ch 1968, C 1968 - 1969, Sec 1969 - 1970,
C 1970 -1971
Manock, Mr John - Treasurer 1970 - 1973, C 1973 - 1974
Marlor, Mrs J - C 1974
Marlow, Mr Alec V - Computer Officer 1986, Members' database 1985 - 1992,
Computing for Projects. 1994 - ,Fellow 2000

Forty Years with Family History

Marsden, Mr John B - C 1997 -1999, Gen Sec 1999 - 2002, Treasurer 2002 -
Marsh, Mr Benjamin - Deputy Ch (Bolton) 1995 - 1996, C 1996 - 2000,
Ch (Bolton) 1996 - 2000
Marsh, Mrs Doreen - Bookstall (Bolton) 1996 - 1998
Mason, Mrs Margaret G - Editor 1986 - 1990, C 1989 - 1990, Ch 1990 - 1994, C 1994 -
1997, Social Sec 1994 - 1997, Ch 1997 - 2000, V P 2000
Mason, Mrs Yvonne - Asst. to Education Officer 1995
Massey, Mrs Sylvia - Project Sec (Bolton) 2001 -
Mather, Mr Eric - Book sales (Bolton) 1991 - 1996
Miller, Mrs Renee - C 1973 -1978, Journal Typist 1973 - 1978
Moilliet, Mr Andrew - C 1992 - 1994
Moir, Mr J - F M
Moore, Mrs Irene - Asst. Editor 1993 - 1994
Moore, Mr Peter - C 2000 - 2003
Moran, Miss Dorothy - C 1965 - 1967
Mountford, Mr Basil - C 1992 - 1998, Ch (A/S) 1992 -1998
Muir, Mr Daniel - C 1998 - , Ch (A/S) 1998 -
Nash, Mr M H - C 1968 - 1969, Treasurer 1969 - 1970
Newman, Mrs E Jean - C 1996 - 2002, Education Officer 1997 - , C 2003 -
Normansell, Mr Graham - Treasurer 1978 - 1981, C 1981 - 1982
O'Brien, Mrs Marion - C 1994 - 1996
Oldham, Mr O William - C 1990 - 1992
O'Shea, Mrs Muriel - C 1983 - 1985, Minute Sec 1983 - 1985
Ormston, Mrs Violet - Mail Order (fiche prints) 1987 - 2002, Fellow 2002
Owen, Mrs Barbara - Project Sec (Bolton) 1997 - 2000
Pearce, Mrs Jean - C 1995 - 1997, Sec (Bolton) 1995 - 1997
Pelham, Mrs Katherine S - Sec (A/S) 2002 - 2003
Pendlebury, Mrs Mary - Organiser (Oldham) 1996 - 2003
Pendleton, Miss M - V Ch 1968, C 1969 - 1971, Editor 1969 - 1971, Hon M 1982
Penneyston, Mrs Ina - C 2002 - 2003, Representative (Computer) 2002 - 2003
Perkins, Mr Harry - C 1968 - 1972
Pickup, Mr Harry A - Treasurer (Bolton) 1985 - 1990
Pinder, Mr George - C 1967 - 1969
Pollard, Mrs L Marjorie - C 1977 - 1983, Membership Sec 1977 - 1981,
Members' Research Sec 1981 - 1992, V P 1990
Prescott, Mr B E - C 1976
Rayner, Mrs Ann - Journal Typist 1981 - 1986, Library Reception 1982 - 1987
Ramsbotham, Mrs Doreen F - C 1981 - 1989, Book Sales 1981- 1982 , Sec (A/S) 1982 -
1989
Rhodes, Mrs Mary C - C 1990 - 1998, Sec (A/S) 1992 - 1998
Roberts, Mrs Marjorie - C 1968 - 1971
Robinson, Mr Hugh - Asst. Sec 1980 - 1981, Ch 1981 - 1985, Hon M 1985,
Ch 1988 - 1990, V P 1990
Ruscoe, Mr Malcolm - Projects Ch 1980 - 1982, C 1981 - 1982
Sankey, Mrs Patricia - Sec (Oldham) 2003 -

Part IV — Facts and Figures

Saunders, Mr Charles - F M, V Ch 1964 - 1965, C 1965 - 1968
Seddon, Mrs F Patricia - Library 1973- 1974, Sec 1974 - 1978, V Ch 1978 - 1984
Sellers, Mrs Judith - C 2001 - 2002, Representative (Computer) 2001 - 2002, Gen Sec 2002
-
Shepherd, Mr Peter - Ch 1968 - 1969, Editor 1968 - 1969
Sheppard, Mr William H - Journal Sec (Bolton) 1991 - 1995, C 1995 - 1996,
Ch (Bolton) 1995 - 1996, Deputy Ch (Bolton) 1996 - 1997
Simpson, Mrs Joyce - C 1978 - 1983, Project Co-ord 1979 - 1982,
Census Research Sec 1982 - 1988, C 1988 - 1989
Slater, Mr R - F M, C 1966 - 1967
Smith, Mrs Dorothy B - C 1990 - 1993, Asst. Gen Sec 1991 - 1993
Smith, Mrs Elizabeth - C 1989 - 1990, Gen Sec 1990 - 1991
Smith, Mr Ronald - Project Sec (Bolton) 1982 - 1996, C 1991 - 1994,
Federation Representative 1991 - 1995, V Ch 1994 - 1995, Fellow 2001
Snowdon, Mr Lawrence J - C 1989 - 1995, V Ch 1995 - 1997, C 1997 - 1999,
Project Co-ord 1995 - 1999, Fellow 2001
Stringer, Mr Philip - C 1996 - 2001, Representative (Computer) 1996 - 2001
Thomas, Mrs Freda - Journal Sec (A/S) 1991 - 1999, C 1992 - 1994
Thornton, Mrs Margaret - C 1994 - 1995, (IA) 1994 - 1995
Thorpe, Mr Leslie - Volunteer (Maintenance) over many years
Thurston, Mrs Margaret - Leader (IA) 1993 - 1996, Fellow 2001
Timmington, Mr Geoffrey - C 2000 - , Rep (Bolton) 2000 - 2001, Ch (Bolton) 2001 -
Tongue, Mr Eric - Treasurer (Oldham) 1998 -
Topham, Mrs Moreen - C 1995 -2002 , Social Sec 1996 - 2003, Hon M 2003
Trunkfield, Mr Roger B - Sec 1970 - 1974, Editor 1971 - 1972
Vaughan, Dr David H - C 1995 - 1996, Treasurer 1996 - 2002, V P 2002, Joint Editor 2002 -
Vinson, Mr Robert - C 1993 - 1994
Walmsley, Mrs Catherine - Membership Sec 1982 - 1983
Walmsley, Mr Neil - Treasurer 1981 - 1983
Watson, Mr Ian S - Members' data-base 1983 - 1985
Webb, Mr George - C 1979
Welland, Professor Dennis - C 1990 - 1995
Wheaton, Mr Cyril - Journal Publisher 1979 - 1983, Development Committee 1979 - 1983
Whitefield, Mrs Rita - C 1999 -
Whiteley, Mr Paul - Deputy Ch (Bolton) 1997 -
Wild, Mr Joseph - F M, Library 1966 - 1973, C 1973 - 1975, Hon M 1982
Wood, Mr Colin - C 1997 - 2003, Rep (O/S) 1997 - 2000, Rep (Oldham) 2000 - 2003
Wood, Mrs Joan - V Ch 1989 - 1994, Ch 1994 - 1997
Wright, Mr Clifford - F M, Ch 1964 - 1965, C 1965 - 1968, V Ch 1968 - 1969,
C 1969 - 1971
Yates Mr E - Development Committee 1979 - 1983
Young, Mr Russell - Journal Sec (Bolton) 1996 - 1999

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EPILOGUE

*What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from.*

T S Eliot (1942) Four Quartets: Little Gidding V

This, then, is the story of the first forty years of the Society. I have tried to avoid comparisons, criticism and interpretation and it is therefore, perhaps, an Archive rather than a History. It is one person's view and others will see things differently. There are omissions and, almost certainly, mistakes but the publication is intended as a tribute to those who have laboured to bring the Society to its present position in the hope and expectation that others will develop its activities to meet the challenges to come.