
The Record Society
of
Lancashire and Cheshire



Official Newsletter

No. 4 2023

Welcome from the RSLC

Thank you for reading the fourth *Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire Newsletter*, and for your interest in our Society. The RSLC – established in 1878 – is a registered charity which aims to promote understanding of, and public interest in, the history of Lancashire and Cheshire – including Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and Preston – through the publication of editions of historical records and other activities.

If you are a member of the Society, we are very grateful for your support. If not, you can find out more about the RSLC, including details about how to join (and receive our annual volumes in return for your £20 subscription), at <http://rslc.org.uk/>. Alternatively, you can write to Diana Dunn at East Manley Hall, Manley Lane, Manley, Frodsham, WA6 9JE or d.dunn@chester.ac.uk

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The RSLC in 2022

This year saw the publication of the society 158th volume, *Loyalty and Levy: West Derby Hundred in Lancashire seen in the Succession Act Oath Roll of 1534 and the Lay Subsidy Returns of 1545*, edited by Thomas Steel. Our focus on the reign of Henry VIII continued with a series of Facebook posts on this theme, and in April with Dr Alan Crosby's fascinating (in-person and livestreamed) Colin Phillips Memorial Lecture on 'Lancashire's Second Oldest Ghost Story', a tale which dates to the early sixteenth century.

We continue to seek ways to attract new members, in a challenging environment for societies like ours, and to reach and engage new audiences. Please do pass on news about the Record Society to anyone you think may be interested in our activities and publications.

Annual General Meeting 2023

The society's AGM will be taking place on **Wednesday 5 April**, in the Liverpool Central Library (Meeting Rooms 1-2) starting at **1.45pm**. It will be followed at **2.00pm** by the **Colin Phillips Memorial Lecture**, which will this year be given by Dr Stephen Roberts on "Welfare, Riot and Bereavement: The Great War through the Eyes of the McGuire Family of Wallasey, 1914-1919".

Stephen Roberts has written books and articles about the history of Wirral, the North-West of England and about the Great War. Until 2016, he was a history teacher, working in Kendal. His recently completed PhD focused on Wirral in the Great War. He is now living in Wirral and is engaged in several research projects, including the transcription and editing of the letters of the McGuire family of Wallasey, for the period 1914-18, for the RSLC.

ALL ARE WELCOME! Our AGM and public lecture will also be livestreamed via Zoom, for those who would like to join us online. To register for the AGM and lecture, please contact Diana Dunn (see postal and email address on page 1 of this newsletter) in advance of the meeting, providing your email address and confirming whether you would like to attend in person or online.

The Society's Annual Report and financial accounts will be made available on our website (<http://rslc.org.uk/>) in advance of the AGM.

RSLC online

In recent years, the Society has significantly enhanced our online presence. Our webpage (<http://rslc.org.uk/>) includes details of our activities and publications, as well as a blog. Many of our past editions have been digitised and are freely available to researchers on our site: <http://rslc.org.uk/publications/>

We upload onto our website documents of interest – which presently include a translation of a medieval Lancashire ghost story, and an index of the Cheshire Sacrament Certificates held in the National Archives. Our site also contains links to the web pages of other historical societies in our region, and to local and county archives.

We plan to review our website over the next twelve months, and to consider other ways to make this a useful resource for those researching the history of Lancashire and Cheshire. Please feel free to get in touch, on enquiries@rslc.org.uk, if you have any suggestions for improvements or additions to our site.

Our Facebook page can be accessed via the following link (whether or not you have, or want, a Facebook account): <https://www.facebook.com/Record-Society-of-Lancashire-and-Cheshire-103846055012201>. We publicise all our activities and publications here, and share interesting stories buried within our 150+ published volumes.



*DR JONATHAN OATES tells us about the research behind his forthcoming RSLC edition, **Prisoners of the Fifteen**. This volume details and contextualises what can be uncovered about the Jacobite prisoners taken at the battle of Preston in 1715 [TNA, KB 8/66], and subsequently held, tried and disposed of from various gaols in Lancashire and Cheshire. As well as an author and historian, Dr Oates is an archivist in the London borough of Ealing.*

What is your background and area of expertise as a researcher?

Historical research into subject of the Jacobites has been one of my major interests since 1995. I am chiefly interested in the situation in England, and especially the responses to Jacobitism, and have also tackled some of its military aspects, leading to a dozen published books and many more articles. Having said that I have also, since 2005, worked on historical crime, publishing both collections of cases and biographies of criminals; the next to be published concerns Dick Turpin.

What first drew you to this set of records?

I have been aware of the significant documentation about the Jacobite prisoners taken after the battle of Preston for some decades and began to collate their names in 2007. It seemed to me that although others such as Paul Monod and Leo Gooch had made use of these records, as had Margaret Sankey, they had not been exploited to the extent that it is possible to do.

What can these records tell us about the 1715 Jacobite uprising that is not yet widely known?

The importance of these documents is that they show the researcher the social composition of the Anglo-Scottish Jacobite army of 1715, and their fates. This was the only time that a Jacobite army surrendered and the only one to contain a significant number of Englishmen. This is the first time that a complete list of names with fates where known, has been made available in print. It is also useful for family and local historians as well as Jacobite and military historians.

What do we learn about eighteenth-century Lancashire from these records?

For both geographical and religious reasons Lancashire provided the Jacobites with their greatest number of English recruits. For historians of Lancashire we can learn which men from the county rose in support of the Jacobites, their parish of origin, their occupations and faith, as well as their fates. There is also information about the motivation of some, some of their experiences in prison, and attempts made by some of them and others to save them.

What was the biggest challenge you faced in producing this edition?

Collating the results taken from the various sources of information and making the numbers tally took many days and weeks. A friend reinforced the significance of getting this right and this helped motivate me in spending the necessary time checking and cross checking names and numbers. There is no single listing of prisoners nor their fates; some sources were manuscript, some printed. The number of men who had the same names did not help, nor the fact that there were errors in the original listings, and incomplete documentation regarding fates was also a problem; the last of which could not be wholly solved.

What is the most unexpected or exciting material you've uncovered in these records?

What perhaps shocked me the most, though perhaps it should not have done, was to come across listings of some prisoners who had been transported to Maryland and the names of the people, both men and women, who bought them as indentured servants for seven years. This really brought home the true state of human bondage. Another finding was that one of the Jacobite prisoners had, after the surrender, joined the British army and briefly served in Scotland before later yielding himself to the magistrates as a Jacobite prisoner.

How would you hope your volume will be useful for researchers in the future?

I hope that the volume will be used by historians of Jacobitism and of early modern military history, as well as by local and family historians, to shed light of the individuals, both from Scotland and England, who fought in the last battle on English soil.

Do you think the 'Fifteen' had any realistic chance of success?

Christopher Duffy once said that though counterfactualism was interesting it was more rewarding to look at what happened and why. I think it is unlikely that the Jacobites could have succeeded – with the inevitable benefit of hindsight – but there were certainly moments when the new state was understandably anxious, such as when the Jacobite army marched through Lancashire. The odds were stacked against them and a lot would have had to have gone right for them to achieve their goals. So I think, probably not.

Prisoners of the Fifteen, RSLC volume 159, will be published in the early summer. To purchase this volume for the non-members' price of £35 (+ £4 p&p), please send a cheque for £39 – payable to 'Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire' – to Dr Fiona Pogson, Department of History and Politics, Liverpool Hope University, Hope Park, Liverpool, L16 9JD. Alternatively, you can contact Dr Pogson by email (pogsonf@hope.ac.uk) for details of how to pay by bank transfer. New members joining during the first half of 2023 will receive this (2022 subscription year) volume in return for their £20 subscription.



SIMON HARRIS tells us about the rich and important [Legh of Adlington Archive](#) that he has recently completed listing for the family, and the great research opportunities that will result from the transfer of this archive to [Cheshire Archives and Local Studies \(CALs\)](#).

The Legh of Adlington Archive is one of the few remaining archives belonging to the landed gentry that has remained in the family's hands. However, this changed in December 2022 when the archive was transferred to CALS.

The Legh family has been resident at Adlington (near Macclesfield, Cheshire) since the mid-fourteenth century, when the estate descended from the Corona family to a cadet branch of the Legh of Booths family. As such the archive contains records that chart the history of the family and the administration of their estate which extended throughout a substantial part of the large ancient parish of Prestbury and further afield. The archive has been little used because of the difficulties of access in a country house that remained the home of the family, and because very little of it had been listed or catalogued. The recent completion of a thorough listing and the transfer of the archive to the CALS should help to end this neglect.

Extending from the mid-twelfth to the twentieth century and comprising some 230 boxes of material, the Legh of Adlington archive contains a very rich and diverse collection of records which can be only briefly summarised in this short account. As one would expect, the archive is particularly strong in records relating to the Legh family's descent. The transfer of the estate to the family is well documented and there are extensive records relating to the families that they married into, and to the estates which came to the Leghs by marriage. These include estates outside of Cheshire, including in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. A stray set of records relating to Ewelme (Oxon) probably came into the archive in this manner as well, but it has not yet been possible to account for its presence at Adlington. More recent marital links with the Broughton family brought records to Adlington connected with that family, such as documents which record the career of a member of the family in the Royal Navy during the American War of Independence, including service in Lake Champlain and the Hudson River and a letter from General John Burgoyne, a leading British commander during the war.

Material relating to the administration of the estate – the prime reason for the survival of the archive – is perhaps the real treasure of this collection. Rentals and accounts survive in large numbers from the seventeenth century onwards, as well as a small number of estate surveys. These provide a great deal of detail about the individual holdings of the family particularly in Adlington itself, Butley cum Newton and Prestbury, and about the families that tenanted those holdings. The surveys, mostly of the eighteenth century, provide fine maps and survey books. Numerous leases survive from the sixteenth century onwards.

The existence of records relating to other interests also extends to corporate bodies. Like many other landed families, the Leghs were great beneficiaries of the Reformation. The destruction of the monasteries gave the Leghs the opportunity to purchase from the Crown the rectory of the large ancient parish and manor of Prestbury from the estates formerly held by the abbey of St Werburgh, Chester. Not only did the family acquire ex-monastic estates and rights, but it also acquired sections of the former abbey's archive. Documents of this kind comprise some of the earliest records in the Legh archive, including letters of a cardinal, charters of the earls of Chester, and documents produced by various bishops of Coventry and Lichfield.

The acquisition of the Prestbury estates also led eventually to the production of a plethora of documents that account for a very sizeable part of the Legh archive. The Leghs acquired with the rectory of Prestbury the rights to the great tithes of the parish, but found it increasingly difficult to collect the proceeds. This led to interminable legal cases in the courts of Chancery, Exchequer, and eventually the House of Lords, dating from the late-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. Much of this material is ostensibly dull legal opinion and argument, but included amongst these records are original documents and copies of many others, often dating back to as far as the sixteenth century. In addition, there are numerous tithe rentals and accounts for the townships that made up the parish, giving the names and details of the leading tenant families and landowners. These tithe records provide an invaluable resource for local historians regarding patterns of landholding in large areas of East Cheshire, as well as detailed series of depositions in support of both plaintiffs and defendants.

The list of things of interest contained within the Legh of Adlington archive could go on and on, and I can only pass over the important collection of records relating to coal mining and stone quarrying in Adlington in the nineteenth century, and the detailed and important estate accounts that cover the period of the rebuilding of Adlington Hall and the remodelling of the park and grounds in the mid-eighteenth century. It is hoped that the transfer of the archive to Cheshire Archives and Local Studies and the arrangement and publication of the new listing will allow researchers to explore this rich collection of records and produce valuable research based upon it.



*Estate Survey Map of 1742
made by Russell Cassan for
Charles Legh, esquire.*