

THE MOURHOLME MAGAZINE OF
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JOAN CLARKE
1921 -2011



We learned with great sadness, just before Christmas, that Joan Clarke had died on 7th December 2011, after a short illness. Some Society members attended her funeral on 21st December at the crematorium in Lancaster. Her many family members and friends remembered her with joy and gave moving and loving tributes.

Joan Clarke contributed so much to the Society, helping with the running of the organization, writing scholarly and interesting contributions to the books and editing them with patience and good humour. We owe a great deal to her, she will be sadly missed.

Joan was writing a history of the Quaker School in Yealand, it would be a fitting memory if this could be published.

The following obituary was published in the Lancaster Guardian on 16 December 2011

CLARKE - On Wednesday, 7th December 2011 in hospital, six days before her 90th birthday JOAN Wife of the late Basil. She will be much missed by all her nephews and nieces, great nephews and nieces and great great nephews and nieces and also by the Yealand Redmayne Community, especially the Quaker friends.

JUNE 15TH 2011 – A WALK ROUND CARNFORTH.

As in 2005 we were blessed with a beautiful sunny evening for our exploration of a few of Carnforth's streets. Nineteen members and friends gathered at the bottom of Hawk Street to be issued with a few photocopied photographs before we set off, struggling to make ourselves heard above the noise of constant traffic.

At first the walk duplicated that of 2005, the comments for which as regards Hawk Street and Scotland Road can be found in Mourholme Magazine No.1 of 2005 – 2006, except that this time we walked up to the Ex-Servicemen's Club where once a field gun of WW1 vintage used to point proudly towards Warton. Unfortunately we had to use our imaginations, as the gun was removed early in the second global conflict 'for the war effort', possibly to be melted down as material for a newer gun. We also looked across to the site of the iron works ponds, now covered in concrete slabs, which gave their name to Pond Street and Pond Terrace.

From there we wandered along to the Carnforth Inn to look at the attractive coloured glass above the doorway proclaiming it to have been built in 1620 (allegedly) and rebuilt in 1904. We also took time to look at photos of the County Hotel as it was fifty years ago before extensions were added, and the parish church as it was over a hundred years ago before the addition of the tower.

We next walked down Market Street, pointing out those premises which started out as Free Trade shops in the 1880s (what did 'Free Trade' signify at that time?), and paying special attention to those which still retain their original facades. After a brief look at the rear of the war memorial, where the names of those who died later than 1918 as a result of the Great War are recorded, we walked up New Street to view the Co-op buildings of the 1880s, and wonder at the apparent neglect of its spacious hall, once a centre of social activity. A Coronation dance is known to have been held there in 1953; when did it last see such use ?

From there we walked to Lancaster Road, comparing a photo of the old Methodist chapel with its rather ugly successor, Oxford Court, then on to the old National (C. of E.) School and round the corner to Haws Hill. Fortunately Barbara Cresswell was one of our number, and she brought the evening to a fitting conclusion by telling us about the history of 'The Haws' where long ago Miss Pickford had her school, and in later years Barbara's father had his optician's business.

SILVERDALE 2011

Jenny Ager

As reported in the last Mourholme magazine, Silverdale used the Warton with Lindeth and Silverdale Inclosure Act of 1811, as a reason to celebrate 200 years of history. Events which have been taking place for a number of years included Field Day, the Art Trail, Horticultural Society shows and performances by the Village Players. These were all a great success and the many extra events which were organised for the year added to the celebrations. These included a disco, a 1940s dance night, a street party on the shore to celebrate the royal wedding, open gardens, an open air Songs of Praise outside St John's Parish Church, the church flower festival and of course Beating the Bounds of the present village.

People came in July for the History Trail weekend and had a chance to join guided walks, to view exhibitions by local societies and to climb Lindeth Tower. There was a Rock Concert and a W.I. Rural Market, the Golf Club gave guided walks around areas of the course not usually open to the public. The Bowling Club had an open day and in November there was talk about the men commemorated on the war memorial in Silverdale and the chance to see a film featuring the Silverdale Home Guard.

The people of Silverdale worked hard and had a great time celebrating their past, but enjoying the present and looking forward to the future of the village.

**MRS GASKELL AND HER FAMILY IN
SILVERDALE
Pauline Kiggins**

In this article I give a brief outline of the visits which the writer Mrs. Elizabeth Gaskell made to Silverdale. Because, during most visits, the Gaskells stayed at the Tower House at Gibraltar, we ought to say that she stayed in Lindeth, which although situated in the parish of Warton was, as the township of Warton-with-Lindeth, distinct from the township of Silverdale. However Mrs. Gaskell herself wrote of her stays in *Silverdale*.

The first visit we know of, that Mrs. Gaskell made to the area, was in 1836, when she came, not to Silverdale, but to Grange-over-Sands, under the direction of her husband's brother, Dr. Samuel Gaskell, to bring her daughter Marianne (born in September 1834) for some health-giving sea-bathing.

The first visit to Silverdale, of which we know, was in July 1843. There were now three daughters, Marianne (now 8), Margaret Emily (6), and baby Florence Elizabeth, (9 months). Mr. Gaskell came too and the visit, to Gibraltar Farm, lasted for a month. Other Manchester families stayed in the area, as Simon Williams' pamphlet, *A Morecambe Bay Tragedy*, has recounted.

There were other visits by the Gaskells between 1843 and 1850. A letter by Mrs. Gaskell, dated 1850 and written from Silverdale refers to 'our annual migration to the seaside'. They stayed for a month, returning to Manchester

on July 16th, to move into their new home at Plymouth Grove. There were four children now. Julia Bradford was born in September 1846 and would have been almost four years old in 1850.

The family came again to the Tower House in 1852, when Mrs. Gaskell wrote, 'You don't know how beautiful Silverdale is, and a tower of our own, think of that!'

In 1855 they planned to go to Silverdale on 27th/28th July, staying until September 6th.

In 1858 Mrs. Gaskell wrote to an American friend, Charles Eliot Norton, about the family's planned holiday in Silverdale, 'We shall remain for six weeks', and saying, 'One is never disappointed in coming back to Silverdale'.

In 1861 she wrote to Norton, 'We go to Silverdale in the first week of July' and noted that 'Meta [Margaret Emily] and Julia are the enthusiasts for Silverdale'. Indeed it was to be the two sisters, Meta and Julia, who after their parents' death, had their own holiday home built in Silverdale, they called it The Shieling.

There had been one occasion, in October 1857, when Mrs. Gaskell and Meta tried to stay in Silverdale, but not having pre-booked, they arrived to find that there was no available accommodation. In the end they had had to return to the railway station, where they continued on the train round the Bay, eventually staying in Seascale. The writer's account of their difficulties, as told in a letter to her eldest daughter

Marianne, reveals how things stood in Silverdale regarding visitors.

We got there at ½ past 4, left our luggage at the Station & tramped to Mrs. Thornton's, got a gentleman for the winter – to the P. O. when we met Mr. Jackson & he & Miss Rawlinson joined in saying we should get no lodgings, inn full with 6 ladies, Miss R. never offered her rooms, indeed they have a 3rd person living with them, either friend or servant, a family at the Blacksmiths going to stay a fortnight longer. Down we went to Pratts, which was dirty and damp. Mrs Bate apologized 'it had never had its summer clearing - & they were all busy in the potatoes harvest never took in anyone without a servant as she had her own little family, cows etc. ' – on learning who we were said she would see if she could manage with us – but then again when she heard it was only for a week or 10 days or a fortnight at most, she gave it up.

Then we went to Mrs. Glom who said Arnside town Farm was full & repeated what she had sent word through Tommy about every place being engaged. However we thought Papa would be better pleased if we tried for ourselves & we went back to Miss Rawlinson & asked if she would not take us in, to which she reluctantly agreed if

her rooms would do, but oh they are so small, sitting & bedrooms would leave a great space in Caroline's room if they were both put in it & *so* close – Miss Rawlinson & her sister & Meta & I all agreed that it might do for one [. . .] yet that two could never squeeze in; they could not let us have two rooms so off we went to Richmond's but they were in their house & had given up letting it – to the *old* Yew Tree butcher's No! she would not have us without a servant & if we went for one she would not be ready for two days [. . .]. By this time it was dark & we had been on our feet coaxing people to have us all the time & now we had to walk back to the station disheartened [. . .].

The letters are collected under the title *The letters of Mrs. Gaskell* edited by J.A.V. Chapple and Arthur Pollard and published in 1966 by Manchester University Press.

I have included the above excerpt from Mrs. Gaskell's letter to show how informative regarding local conditions her letters can be. Not only do they allow us to trace the movements of the family, but they also convey detail and relate speech, thus bringing the whole scene to life!

If it would be of interest, I would like to propose further articles about this famous Victorian writer (b.1810 – d.1865). Possible topics could be:

- ways in which the writer used our locality in her stories
- how the writer became involved in the story of the drowning on the Bay (as recounted in Simon William's *A Morecambe Bay Tragedy*).
- some of her contemporary descriptions of the locality, found in her letters.

Editor's note: Silverdale station only opened on 1st September 1857, so had only been open a few weeks when Mrs. Gaskell came looking for accommodation.

WALLS, WALLS, WALLS

The Society contributed to the Silverdale and Arnsdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Landscape Trust talk and exhibition about the Historic Walls of the AONB at Yealand Village Hall on March 22nd. Brian Jones, trustee of the National Dry Stone Walling Association, showed us the variety of wall types and constructions that are in this area. He is concerned that valuable historic information could be lost unless work is done and has proposed the following draft scheme.

THE HISTORIC BOUNDARIES OF THE ARNSIDE AND SILVERDALE AONB

Aim

To produce a complete record of the historic boundaries within the AONB

Historic maps of parish, estate and enclosure boundaries

Historic documents and social history of boundaries

Present state of the boundaries

Record of the state of any marker stones

Who?

Need to involve AONB, Landscape Trust and AONB office
Kendal and Lancashire Record Offices

Mourholme Local History Society for Lancashire

Peter Standing (Landscape Trust Events Committee
Chairman), has studied Beetham

Need Arnside input

Brian Jones will do field work

Outputs

Self published book (Mourholme LHS, Landscape Trust,
AONB ??)

Maps in AONB format

Archive quality digital copies of all maps and documents

Exhibition

Talks

Already in place

Boundary posts in Lancashire (Jenny Ager?)

Some surveys (Brian Jones)

Some maps and documents (Mourholme, Peter Standing)

Work Plan

1. Assessment of existing material
Assessment of possible material elsewhere
Write full work plan
Estimate costs
Ask for new helpers
2. Get small grants for archive costs
3. Outputs
 - Book
 - Maps
 - Records
 - Exhibition
 - Talks

Future

Information boards
Renovate markers

Anyone who might be interested in getting involved with this work should get in touch with Brian Jones
E: [b. jones@physics. org](mailto:b.jones@physics.org) T: 01524 732305.

THE SILVERDALE HOARD

Jenny Ager

We may think that the area of North Lancashire that the Mourholme Local History Society covers is small and insignificant, but we have been in the news recently, due to an important Viking hoard that has been found in the area.

In mid September 2011, Darren Webster from Silverdale was going back to work after taking his son home from school, when he decided to spend some time using his metal detector, with the owner's permission, in a field near 'Continental Stone', his worktop and tiling business in Yealand Conyers. He had found a Tudor half-groat in the field before, but this time his metal detector gave a strong signal and when he dug down about eighteen inches he found a sheet of lead that had been bent to form a container. Darren says he was a bit disappointed at first, but when he lifted out the lead pot silver pieces started falling out of it and when he looked inside the container he could see bracelets, which he thought were most likely to be Viking and to be important.

That evening Darren reported his find to Dot Boughton, the local Finds Liaison Officer for Lancashire and Cumbria. Dot said that when she first saw the silver, she was speechless, and that finds of Viking silver were very rare in this area, which made this very exciting. The find was then transported to the British Museum where each piece was photographed, examined, cleaned and catalogued. The British Museum describes it as one of the most important recent finds, and hugely significant.

On December 14th, Darren Webster and his wife attended the launch of the Treasure and Portable Antiquities Scheme reports for 2011, at the British Museum, with the now named Silverdale Hoard taking pride of place. It has been on display at the British Museum since 15th December and on 16th December Simon Jones, H. M. Deputy Coroner for Preston and West Lancashire held an inquest, and declared the find to be Treasure. The Treasure Valuation Committee of independent experts is now valuing it. Lancaster City Museum has expressed interest in buying the Silverdale Hoard. Under the Treasure Act 1996, Darren Webster as the finder of the treasure will be awarded half the value and the owner of the field, a Silverdale resident, the remainder.

Darren Webster at the British Museum with some of the Silverdale Hoard



The Silverdale Hoard consists of 201 silver objects, 27 coins, 10 Viking-period arm rings, 2 finger-rings, 14 ingots, 6 bossed brooch fragments, a fine wire braid and 141 fragments of chopped-up arm-rings and ingots, known as hacksilver. The coins are a mixture of Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Viking, Frankish and Islamic types, indicating the Vikings' widespread trading connections, all over Europe and the Near East. They include coins of Alfred the Great (871-899), his god-son the Viking leader Guthrum, also known as Athelstan and Alfred's nephew Aethelwold, or Alwaldus. The hoard also contains a coin previously unrecorded, carrying the name of an unknown Viking ruler in northern England, Airdeconut or Harthacnut.



It seems that the hoard was buried around 900AD, this is a time when the Vikings had been driven out of Ireland and the Anglo-Saxons were trying to gain control of the north of England from the Vikings. It was a time of turmoil and uncertainty. There is a lack of evidence concerning the north west of England at this time and this find will give important information about the history of the area at a time of social, military and political upheaval. It seems as though the owner buried his treasure in the container to keep it safe, intending to return to it. In the 10th century, the treasure would have been worth a mid-sized herd of cows.

Let us hope that this locally found treasure can be kept in the area for local people to learn from and enjoy.

The Silverdale Hoard was reported, using the Portable Antiquities Scheme, a voluntary scheme administered by the British Museum to record objects found by members of the public in England and Wales. The British Museum has announced that it is planning a television series with ITV1, to show the 50 greatest treasures found by the public over the 15 years that the scheme has been in operation. The programme will probably be called “Britain’s Greatest Treasures” and will feature journalist Michael Buerk and historian and author Bettany Hughes. It is likely to include the Silverdale Hoard and the Crosby Garret Roman helmet, found in May 2010 near Kirkby Stephen in Cumbria.

Note:

Information for this article is from various sources, including:

The Westmorland Gazette, “Huge Viking hoard found” and “Darren unearths find of a lifetime”, October 27th, 2011

<http://finds.org.uk/news/stories/article/id/226>

British Museum Press Office, “Important Viking hoard highlights the continuing success of the Treasure Act and Portable Antiquities Scheme”, 14th December 2011

<http://blog.britishmuseum.org/2011/12/14/two-hoards-and-one-unknown-viking-ruler/> Ian Richardson, Portable Antiquities and Treasure, British Museum, “Two hoards and one unknown Viking ruler”, 14th December 2011

The Times, “Treasure hunter dug for a hoard of silver and found a new Viking king”, December 15th December, 2011

Lancaster Guardian, “Museum may bid for hoard of Viking treasure”, December 22nd, 2011

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silverdale_Hoard, “Silverdale hoard”, updated 30th December 2011

<http://finds.org.uk/news> , “ITV and the British Museum to reveal the 50 greatest treasures discovered by the British public”, 26th March, 2012

ACCESSION DAY, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6th 2012
Sheila Jones

‘Oyez, oyez, oyez,

This day, the sixth day of February in the year of our Lord 2012. Good people of Carnforth, in the fine and ancient county of Lancashire, in this land of England, within the great kingdom known as Great Britain, pray give ear to this proclamation.

This day, an auspicious day, being the anniversary of our gracious queen, Queen Elizabeth the Second’s accession to the throne, in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and fifty two, this day is a day to be thankful.

We remember the late king, King George the sixth and we offer our thanks for the reign of our gracious queen, Queen Elizabeth the Second of Great Britain and Northern Ireland throughout these sixty years past.

Pray be upstanding, good citizens of Carnforth, and lift up your glasses. Our loyal toast is, The Queen, Duke of Lancaster!

God Save the Queen’

On that morning, on the way to buy the paper, I had seen a man with a Union Jack under his arm and had asked the occasion. He reminded me that it was Accession Day and said it was to be celebrated in the square . Having bought

the paper, I noticed a further advertisement of the event, and this time bestirred myself to rush home and get my husband so we could both hurry down. We got there just before 11 a.m. to hear four members of the Salvation Army playing to the little crowd, still gathering about. In the centre was the resplendent Town Crier and the Lady Mayoress, wearing her chain of office. The manager of Booth's was pouring tots of wine which his assistant handed out liberally. One of the local Year Six classes arrived with two teachers.

At the appointed hour the Town Crier, with a nod to the band which stopped its music, rang his bell and unfurled the above proclamation which he declaimed in his sonorous voice. We all did lift up our glasses and drank the toast; the man with the flag waved it enthusiastically; the band played the National Anthem and we joined in, though quietly because there are fewer occasions now on which one is used to sing it; the Lady Mayoress said a few words; a man proposed a toast to her, and then another to the Town Crier and with that bit of levity the ceremony ended; but a sense of patriotism and pleasure in being gathered together in this way was palpable and there was no great rush to drift away.

For myself, I will remember it, and be grateful that we are not yet grown so worldly that emotions cannot be evoked and love for queen and country expressed when the day demands. Thanks are due to those who organized it.

REPORTS OF EVENING MEETINGS

April 27th 2011 – “Markets, fairs and traders”

The last talk of the 2010/11 season, following the AGM, was given by Janet Nelson on the subject of markets and traders, (rather than the advertised title of *The Slave Trader's Wife*) in the 18th century.

It seems that in the eighteenth century people who went ‘shopping’ were gossips with time to waste, whereas those with more serious intent went ‘marketing’. Market charters granted to towns such as Warton, which had a market as early as the 13th century, imposed strict rules and had close links with the church, (signified by the market cross) though the church influence had waned by the 18th century.

Much information was gathered from the 1712 – 1714 diary of Thomas Tyldesley, gentleman, of Lancaster, who bought from Lancaster market on Wednesdays and Saturdays, but had to go to Wigan for other items including a gun. Most of his purchases were on credit, as his rents were slow to come in.

Fairs, usually of a specialised nature, were held once or twice a year, though Inglewhite, on a drovers’ route, held four cattle markets per year, and Cartmel, also on a drovers’ route held a fair and a market. Itinerant pedlars were familiar figures, selling small items such as scissors, and enjoying several pots of ale in the process, but deterrents for bad behaviour such as stocks and the pillory are still to

be seen in some places such as Poulton le Fylde market place.

The creation of turnpikes made life easier for retailers such as William Stout, a grocer cum ironmonger of Lancaster, and obviously a very hardy Quaker, who rode to London to purchase the goods for his trades.

With the growth of the number of shops in the late 18th century and the coming of railways in the 19th century markets and fairs lost some of their importance, but present day scenes in Lancaster on Wednesdays and Saturdays, reminiscent of those three centuries ago, prove that they are still far from dead.

September 28th 2011 – “Personal names and local history”

Dr. Angus Winchester, of the University of Lancaster, dealt first with surnames from the time when they became hereditary in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. They were separated into four categories, the first being occupational names such as Smith or Baker or Todhunter (a hunter of foxes). Next came locative or place names, such as Burton or Lancaster, then patronymics, (i. e ‘son of’), such as Jackson or Williamson or even Jones (a corruption of John’s son), and finally by-names or nicknames such as Armstrong or Broadhead. Charts showed how certain names were at first restricted to certain areas and only slowly spread further afield; names such as Armstrong, Graham and Routledge were, pre-1750, heavily concentrated around Carlisle, while Messenger and Monkhouse were to be found in the Eden valley. Much use

was made of the Protestation Returns of 1642, which was in the nature of a census with the ulterior motive of exposing those who might be hostile to the king. Its disadvantage as far as the study of surnames was concerned was that many Roman Catholics refused to sign it. Although the survey was limited more or less to Cumbria, it served to show how, at a time when the country's population was a mere fraction of what it is today, the movement of population must have been very slow.

In the second part of the talk Dr. Winchester dealt with forenames, adding that much more research has yet to be done. In the sixteenth century and before, godparents often were responsible for choosing forenames, but the 1642 Protestation Returns showed few surprises with John, William, Thomas, Richard, Robert and Edward being among the most popular, just as they would have been three hundred years later. More surprising to us would be the inclusion of Gawen, but the Arthurian legend was in vogue at that time, so that it and names such as Lancelot (popular in North Cumbria) and Percival became fashionable. The names of saints, such as Mungo and Cuthbert were also commonly found, and biblical names became very popular from the late seventeenth century. Although by no means unknown previously, the fashion of having two forenames rather than one did not gain popularity until the nineteenth century.

Dr. Winchester packed a lot of information into an hour and gave us plenty to ponder over.

October 26th 2011 – “A History of Milnthorpe”

At the October 2011 meeting, Christopher Robson gave a whistle stop tour of Milnthorpe, from prehistoric to more modern times. Milnthorpe is situated half way between Lands End and John O’ Groats and was the first town in Westmorland. Anglo-Saxon sites can be found at Heversham and Beetham. St Peter's at Heversham was built on the site of a monastery founded in the 7th century and contains part of an Anglo-Saxon cross shaft, while the church tower of St Michael's at Beetham is built on Saxon foundations .

Although Heversham and Beetham were the ecclesiastical centres, Milnthorpe (‘the village by the mill’) was the economic centre by virtue of its proximity to the Kent estuary and its overland links with Kendal and Lancaster. In 1280 the town gained its charter for a weekly market and annual fair, and trade flourished with numerous inns and hostelries accommodating the needs of travellers.

For centuries the Bela was navigable to Milnthorpe, and port facilities developed along the river and at Sandside on the estuary. The town thrived on coastal trade well into the 19th century exporting woollen goods, leather, charcoal, gunpowder, limestone and timber, and importing coal, grain, spirits and ‘exotic’ goods such as sugar and spices until the building of the Arnside Viaduct in 1857 effectively cut off sea-borne trade for ever.

A book has recently been published about an eighteenth century resident of Milnthorpe. Joseph Fayrer was the captain of a slave ship and also the Liverpool agent for Low

Wood Gunpowder factory. The story of the Captain and his family can be read in Leonard Smith's book "A South Lakeland Nautical Dynasty", published in March 2012.

November 24th 2011 – “Maritime Recollections’, extracts from the oral history archive of the Maritime Museum”

An interested audience listened with rapt attention to recordings, some of them from the early 1980s, made by former fishermen and their wives, describing life in the fishing community in the early and middle parts of the twentieth century, with special reference to shrimp fishing.

Shrimp fishing was usually a family concern, in which all members had their parts to play. The shrimps would normally be boiled on board the fishing boat as it returned to harbour, with other family members left to 'pick' them on arrival. One man told of how, as a boy of ten or eleven, he would have to be up at 4.00 a. m. to pick shrimps and prawns, for the princely sum of 6d per week which was presumably his pocket money. Life was also hard for female shrimp pickers, who might work from 2.00 p.m. until 2.00 a.m., with little chance of leisure, such as the 'pictures', or a social life.

It goes without saying that life was hard for the men, with long, exhausting hours at sea, sometimes so exhausting that sleep was difficult to come by. They also had to be careful to choose a wife who would be able to adapt to the unsociable conditions and financial uncertainty, though most seemed to do so successfully. One particularly difficult period occurred early in 1940 when, during a very

cold spell which was initially good for fishing, the sea froze over and put a stop to fishing for nine weeks, so that, with no financial assistance, families were hard pressed to survive.

Minor injuries and inconveniences, such as salt water boils and *‘sprawn horns’ were accepted as a feature of life, but more alarming was an occasion when a boat ran aground on a sandbank off Ulverston and was only refloated with great difficulty.

One man told of his experiences as a twelve year old boy, helping his father who was the Cockersand lighthouse keeper, while another told of the pride they had, not just as fishermen, but also as expert sailors.

Perhaps the most amusing part of the evening was when an old salt told of how funerals in the fishing community were regarded not with gloom and despondency, but as an excuse for ‘a right good day out’.

Thanks to Michelle Cooper for her judiciously chosen recordings, and for her introductions to each one.

* ‘Sprawn’: the word is not in my dictionary. Is it a synonym for prawn?

December 8th - “A Morecambe Bay Tragedy” by Simon Williams

Simon Williams gave an illustrated talk to tell the story of how five men lost their lives in a boating accident near

Kents Bank in 1850, and the repercussions arising from the inquest.

To go into further detail would be superfluous, as the Society has published Simon's story, and the evening served as the opportunity for the book launch. It is a slim volume of some 37 pages, but packed with interest and well worth the £3 asking price. After light festive refreshments Pauline Kiggins took up the story to tell how Mrs. Gaskell came into the story by her kindness to some of the children left fatherless by the accident, and how through her efforts one of them was enabled to enter into a profitable career.

January 25th 2012 - "Markets to Supermarkets"

Dr. Michael Winstanley told us of the change from open air markets to the elaborate enclosed market halls favoured by Victorian town councils. How the Co-operative Society grew from its beginnings with the Rochdale Pioneers, and how small privately owned shops, like T. D. Smith's in Lancaster gradually lost out to the supermarket chains we see today.

Shopping is still changing and internet buying and selling is becoming more and more popular. But organic food and locally sourced produce is gaining popularity and the locally based shops of E. H. Booths have a special place in the North West, growing from one shop in Blackpool in 1847 to now having 28 shops.

February 22nd – "Child migration and the British Empire"

Dr. Stephen Constantine, author, with many years of study in the subject, was well qualified to talk about child

migration from Britain to various parts of the Empire, exposing the falseness of several media pronouncements in the process.

Child migration started in the early 1600s, when some children were sent to Virginia, but reached its zenith in the period from about 1860 until the 1920s, by which time about 150,000 children had been sent abroad, mainly to Canada, rather than the 500,000 which has sometimes been claimed by the media. Some children were sent to countries of South Africa in the nineteenth century, to Australia not until the 1930s, and to New Zealand a little later still.

Most of those sent overseas were boys, aged from 6 to 14, whose future lay mainly in farming in Canada, but contrary to widely accepted beliefs they were by no means all orphans. Many had a least one parent, and were not necessarily unloved. Some were no doubt taken by what was known as 'benevolent kidnapping' to rescue them from cruel backgrounds, but they could equally well be chosen because they came from large financially deprived families, in the hope that there would be better opportunities for them abroad.

Many charities were involved in the schemes for sending children to a new life, such as Dr. Barnardo's, the Fairbridge Society and the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society (later the Children's Society), and each had its methods of raising the necessary funds, persuading 'celebrities', church dignitaries and royalty to patronise them. There were also events such as one at the Albert Hall,

when thousands of Barnardo children were paraded and some of them demonstrated their skills.

Once they had arrived abroad upbringing could be tough, especially in the rough and tumble of Australia, but there was a belief that removal from the dangers of a British urban environment to a rural environment abroad would be beneficial. This was not always the case as sufficient supervision was simply not available to cover the large expanses of territory, notably in Canada, and there were inevitably cases of cruelty and abuse. Those who tried to make contact with their parents or families back in Britain were often fobbed off with evasive replies, and mothers in Britain trying to make contact would often be told that their children had died. Many migrant children would therefore wonder about their identity, and ask themselves 'Did my mother not love me?'. For migrant children educational opportunities were few, as it was assumed that farming folk were not in need of education. In Canada those who had been migrant children tended to be looked upon with disdain until attitudes changed after the 1939-1945 war, and now the survivors are looked upon with admiration.

Social changes brought an end to child migration in the 1960s, since when the belief seems to have grown that apologies, such as that of Gordon Brown, are in order for what some see as a dark episode in our history, but in truth, although the scheme had serious imperfections, it was carried out with the best of intentions in an attempt to give disadvantaged children a better chance in life.

NOTES AND QUERIES

This is to remind people that the Mourholme Local History Society has published Simon Williams' book *A Morecambe Bay Tragedy*. Clive Holden has commented on it briefly in his report of the December 2011 Society meeting. It is available to buy at Society meetings and in local shops.

The book was a result of Simon's investigating the history of his house. Let anyone on the committee know if you have found out interesting information that could be published in the magazine or even as another book.