

The year was ushered in with very strong weather particularly windy & wet. On the 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> there was a heavy storm of Snow, which singularly began in the South & reached us here on the 11<sup>th</sup> Just - It snowed all night - but so rapid was the Thaw that on the 14<sup>th</sup> all vestiges were obliterated -

Jan 8<sup>th</sup> Died Mr J<sup>no</sup> Stevenson of the White Bull Inn Salford Bridge, aged 56-7 - It is feared that intemperance hastened his end - He was a very interprising Man, particularly it must be noted he was the Originator of daily Omnibus in the Town, which was found to be highly convenient. Whether they will be continued remains to be seen - He was interred at Whalley on the 11<sup>th</sup> & the Licenced Victuallers walked in Procession a part of the way in respect to the deceased.

Jan 14<sup>th</sup> "Little Birdie" the Giller<sup>1</sup> of our Son Richard died - to the grief of all the family.

Poor little Bird, thy warbling voice  
 We listen to no more  
 For thou art silent in thy Cage,  
 And one lament thee Sore -  
 Oft has "dear Essie" petted thee  
 And given thy daily bread  
 But now she sadly sighs & says  
 Papa "Poor Birdie" dead -  
 But still in Memory of our Dick -  
 Who brought thee is away  
 With us thy Body shall remain  
 Till many a distant day.  
 And tho no more we hear thy Song  
 Which filled us with delight  
 Will keep thy form for sake of him,  
 Forever in our sight  
 So if our God is good to Thee  
 And thou again shall come  
 Poor little Birdie thou shalt see  
 Within thine own dear Home  
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Jan<sup>y</sup>. Clara Lister visited us from Ollerton in Nottinghamshire. We had very bad Weather during her visit - She is a very sensible young Woman. We took her to Blackpool, Preston & Liverpool - She left us with regret on Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> Opening of Rishton Schools Sermons by the Revd C W Woodhouse MA.

Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> At Over Darwen - rough day.

Feb<sup>y</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> Attended the Handel's Anniversary at the Black Horse, - Mr Clough (tho' very poorly) presided. - There was a very large attendance, and a pleasant Meeting. -

March 8<sup>th</sup> Thursday, the Annual Meeting of the Over Darwen Gas Company, - re-appointed a Director, - £7.0.0 per Cent Dividend, - The weather very frosty - A comfortable and pleasant Meeting. -

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<sup>1</sup> A dialect term for a wren, usually in the form 'giller-wren', (*The English Dialect Dictionary Vol. II. D-G*, Joseph Wright (ed.) (London, 1923), p. 412).

[March] 12<sup>th</sup> New Reform Bill brought by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.<sup>2</sup>  
 [March] 23<sup>rd</sup> Died Mrs J Gate - aged  
 [March] 25<sup>th</sup> Lady Day - very suddenly Mr Adam Duckworth He was interred at St Peters when the Lodge walked in procession about 50  
 [March] 27<sup>th</sup> Oratorio of Messiah at Darwen went with Fanny - and was much gratified -  
 [March] 28<sup>th</sup> Day of Humiliation for the Cattle Plague attended the parish Church<sup>3</sup>  
 [March] 29<sup>th</sup> Good Friday - Weather fine - To the Church in the Morning - Afternoon at Whalley.  
 April 1. Easter-Day - cold but fair - Church Morning and Evening - Dr Robinson at Trinity. Dr Rushton at the Parish -  
 Easter Monday - very throng fair - fine but cold.  
 Tuesday the usual Annual Tea Party<sup>4</sup> about 350 present - very pleasant Meeting -  
 Wednesday Grand Catholic Ball -  
 Thursday Grand First Assembly Ball at the Town Hall was made K T this Evening -  
 [April] 6<sup>th</sup> Dined with James Shorrock Esq at Astley Bank, Darwen - about 14 present, a very delightful company - Mrs Shorrock a most agreeable Lady - Home by Train - Parish Well -

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April 8. Sunday - Mrs James Forrest died suddenly - my son Thomas' Mother-in-law.  
 May 1<sup>st</sup> Very Winterly - snow & sleet - Mr McNab interred the Superintendent of the County Constabulary aged 31. - Eight children & widow -  
 In this Month the Rev R T. Wheeler visited Blackburn and preached first in St John's Ch. on behalf of the Schools Collection £130. Afterwards at Trinity Church, and on the following Sunday at the Parish Ch. at all which Services, and also at Witton very large & overwhelming Congregations were present and handsome Collections made  
 [May] 20<sup>th</sup> Whitsunday - Hot and fine - Wind Easterly.  
 [May] 21 Monday went with Fanny & Mrs T. to Lytham and had a pleasant day - Also visited Blackpool  
 This Day died Thomas Latham, the oldest Innkeeper in Blackburn. He was generally called old Tat being a sporting character  
 [May] 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday - The Mayor dissolved the Council Meeting abruptly in consequence of the disorderly conduct of Councillor Backhouse.<sup>5</sup>  
 July. Funeral of Dr Gill Free Mason, Accrington  
 Aug 16<sup>th</sup> Married at Holy Trinity Ch: by the Revd Dr Robinson Mr Charles Lomax Tiplady, to Miss Elizabeth Harrison, Schoolmistress, Christ Ch: May God prosper them

<sup>2</sup> Gladstone, on behalf of his Liberal government, introduced an Electoral Reform Bill which was defeated in June 1866 (Angus Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture: 'Habits of Heart and Mind'* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 251-3).

<sup>3</sup> This had been called by the Bishop of Manchester. Cattle plague, also known as Rinderpest and Steppe Murrain was a highly infectious viral disease. This outbreak began in London in June 1865 then spread throughout the country. A policy of isolation and slaughter was introduced by the government which led to the eradication of the disease by 1867 (*Blackburn Standard*, 28 March 1866; John R. Fisher, 'British Physicians, Medical Science, and the Cattle Plague, 1865-66', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (Winter 1993), pp. 652-4).

<sup>4</sup> For the St. John's Female Friendly Society.

<sup>5</sup> After a debate of over 50 minutes on the minutes of the last meeting of the council, in which Tiplady was prominent, Councillor Backhouse argued with the Mayor about the vote to confirm their accuracy. After a heated exchange between the Mayor and Backhouse, the Mayor removed his robes, declaring the meeting closed (*Blackburn Standard*, 9 May 1866).

The weather in August & September exceedingly stormy, wet & ungenial - The harvest backward and much Grain spoiled, Eight weeks rain

Sep<sup>r</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Grand Banquet at the Town Hall - James Thompson, Mayor, also review of the Volunteers, a very great day in the Town.<sup>6</sup>

Sep 22<sup>nd</sup> Old Henry Mercer, aged 97 Years died. The oldest Man in the Town

Oct 13<sup>th</sup> Died James Houalker son of Mrs Houalker, late Bay Horse Inn, aged 44 years after a very long & painful sickness.

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Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> A week full of change disaster and trouble -

Forrest & Co (my son's father law succumbed to bad Trade and losses. My Son Thomas a partner.<sup>7</sup>

[September] 29<sup>th</sup> Died awfully sudden, while eating his Supper Mr Ralph Abbott, aged 33, The Secretary of Lodge, 345, -

This day I underwent examination for the Stone but after a very severe Test by Mr Pickop he said there was none - only a partial stricture of the prostate gland -

The weather until the 30<sup>th</sup> [September] fearfully wet and ungenial for the harvest.

Oct 1<sup>st</sup> Delightful & summer like - at Whalley and Clitheroe

[October] 2<sup>nd</sup> Poor Ralph Abbott interred. A procession was formed to the Ceremony.

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Also Robert Peel, formerly Draper - in reduced circumstances. -

Oct 1. Meeting to establish a Church Institute.

The dismal Weather ended with 30<sup>th</sup> Sep and up to the 10<sup>th</sup> Oct very fine - On the 9<sup>th</sup> Tuesday spent a day at Blackpool with Mrs T. Mr & Miss Stevenson, and Essie - also visited Lytham.

Rev J. Smith left St John's Mr Baker appointed Sep 28.

[October] 9<sup>th</sup> Journey for a Day to Blackpool with Wife & Essy.

[October] 13<sup>th</sup> After a long, severe and dreadful illness died Mr James Houalker aged 45 years - In early life he was a fine strong young Man, but I think his Trade of Spirit Merchant led him into Company too Much - He married Lydia Lawson one of the finest Women in the Town, and she attended him with the devotions of a Martyr.

Also Died this day awfully sudden, Thomas Boardman, Esq, Painter & Gilder, a Man of varied attainments. - He latterly made himself conspicuous by his exposure of certain encroachments of the New Exchange Committee<sup>8</sup> - He was in his year He died on the Platform of the Whalley Station.

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Oct. Died John Yates Esq Iron founder, by a rapid consumption - There was a public procession at his funeral of Workmen & Free Masons. -

Nov 9. Fine Day - John Dean an old friend & acquaintance & schoolfellow, appointed Mayor, A very worthy Man, and an instance of the success attending honesty - punctuality and diligence in business Mr Dean commenced life in a Mill, was afterwards a journeyman

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<sup>6</sup> The field-day, on Alexandra Meadows, and banquet were provided by Thompson, a Conservative and a Churchman. Over 300 attended the banquet (*Preston Herald*, 15 September 1866).

<sup>7</sup> Forrest and Co. of Brookhouse Fields Mill, Blackburn, failed towards the end of September 1866 with debts estimated at £10,000 to £16,000 (*Preston Herald*, 29 September 1866).

<sup>8</sup> On 2 August 1866, Blackburn's Borough Surveyor submitted a report to the Council supporting Boardman's allegation of encroachment in building the new Exchange. However, the council voted against giving a vote of thanks to Boardman for revealing this encroachment (*Blackburn Standard*, 8 August 1866).

Sawyer - Subsequently he took up the Coal Business, in which, & Slate Merchant he prospered Remarkably. Last there a Man &c Prov.

[November] 7<sup>th</sup> Retired from the Corporation - Motion made & Ald Baynes seconded by Counc<sup>r</sup> Abbott - and expression of sincere regret<sup>9</sup> -

[November] 15 & 16<sup>th</sup> Dreadful Flood - Water higher than I had seen for 20 years. - Whalley Bridge could scarcely take the Water.

Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> Journey to Preston to pay off the Preston Banking Company £81-0-3 - John Robinson lent me £80.0.0 at 5 per cent - and I lodged with him - Shares in the Water Company. -

On the 28<sup>th</sup> [December] Died much respected, the Rev Dr Skinner aged 68 years - He was pastor of Mount St Scotch Kirk for the long period of 36 years and was eminently useful & much beloved. He was a staunch opponent of all State Church Endorsements. There was a public Funeral on Thursday Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> 1867.

The Year 1866 concluded under a storm of hail, wind & Snow wh: commenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> leading to a hard frost on New Year's Day. - My health has been upon the whole pretty fair except in Autumn when an attack of my old Complaint seized me but was providentially averted. - The weather from July to Dec<sup>r</sup> was awfully wet there being many Flood especially that on Nov 16 & 17 when all Lanc & Yorkshire were nearly under water i.e. places adjacent Rivers. The Trade is moderate but money very dear & scarce. -

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<sup>9</sup> In his letter of resignation Tiplady gave his reason for retirement as his health being 'very precarious' and his unwillingness 'to occupy any position in the Council when unable to perform the duties attached thereto satisfactorily' (*Blackburn Standard*, 14 November 1866).