



# Tela



The Magazine of The Friends of  
Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery

Spring 2022

This newsletter is completely FREE



## YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!

As you will already be aware, our long serving Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary Jeff Cooper will be retiring at the AGM in November after many years service. A replacement is needed, and members are asked to consider taking this on.

Jeff says "It's a very rewarding job! And puts one right in the centre of changes and developments."

The task is responsible, but not difficult - no degree in accountancy is necessary.

## Programme 2021/22

Unless otherwise indicated, meetings are held on TUESDAY afternoons during the 2021/22 season.

The Museum is closed to the public on Tuesdays, we will have the gallery to ourselves

8th March at 2pm: "Print Works - Doesn't It?" A talk by Heather Davis, Manager at the Lancashire Conservation Studios, Preston.

12th April at 2pm: "Beethoven and the Theatre." The dramatic works of the great composer described by Raymond Watton.

10th May at 2pm: "Kenyon in Blackburn and the First Western." Jamie Holman talks about the local pioneer of cinema.

Saturday 11 June at 2pm: THE DAVID SHIPWAY LECTURE. Brian Healey will lecture on "Midsummer Magic" - how the theme of midsummer has permeated Scandinavian painting.

14th June at 2pm: A talk by a member of Museum staff, subject to be announced.

Sunday 26th June at 2pm: Mike and Dot Millward invite members and guests to the FRIENDS GARDEN PARTY

## ON OTHER PAGES:

- 2-3. News
- 3-4. Annette Weisbrod, pianist
- 4-5. Curators visit Blackburn, 1939;
- 6-7. The Wild West Comes to Blackburn, 1904
- 8-9. A.N. ("Monkey") Hornby
- 10-11. The Misericords of Whalley Abbey
- 12. Committee matters, List of contacts

Following the successful visit to St Silas Church a couple of years ago, members might be interested in the series of café concerts being held there this year.

## ST SILAS SATURDAY MORNING CAFÉ CONCERTS 2022

12 <sup>th</sup> February	John Robinson <i>Director of Music Blackburn Cathedral</i>
28 <sup>th</sup> May	Michael Pain <i>Bolton Parish Church</i>
16 <sup>th</sup> July	Anthony Hunt <i>Salford Cathedral</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Linda Carrington <i>Fairhaven Parish Church</i>
8 <sup>th</sup> October	Robin Stopford <i>The Company of Voyces</i>

Coffee and biscuits from 10.15 am,  
Concert begins 11 am

ADMISSION £5

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Friends enjoying themselves in the past



*Glorious weather at Joy & Charles Heffernan's in 2002 at the Chairman's Garden Party didn't prevent Dorothy Clarke, Margaret Halsall and Ann Bradley having a good time.*

## SEVENTY AT 70

The Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire, Lord Shuttleworth, and a collective of local business leaders and cultural professionals have awarded the Blackburn artist Jamie Holman the commission for a new artwork to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Friends will remember Jamie's brilliant talk on James Sharples and *The Forge* just before the pandemic hit, and Jamie is now asking for help.

The proposal is to record 70 people aged 70 or older who have lived throughout the Queen's reign, to produce an archive that tells the story of the Queen's reign, our diverse Lancashire communities and the extraordinary individuals who best remember her lifetime of service. The stories will be woven into seven monumental tapestries woven in Lancashire that will be exhibited with audio so that audiences will be able to listen to the voices of the participants as they view the tapestries.

Jamie would like to meet potential participants, either in the studio in Blackburn town centre or at your meeting place, residential home, club or social group.

He will ask some simple questions:

- When did you come to Lancashire?
- What changes have you seen in this time?
- What are your earliest memories of Lancashire?
- What memories have you of the Queen?

He will ask you what jobs you may have had, where specifically you have lived in order to build up an understanding of your life. He looks forward to meeting you and making this important work.

Jamie Holman

<https://www.instagram.com/70years70voices/>

[jamie@unculturedcreatives.co.uk](mailto:jamie@unculturedcreatives.co.uk)

07878608349



## NEWS

### Refreshments at meetings:

Now that coffee and tea are once again available after meetings, a reminder to members that they are requested to make a contribution towards expenses.

A small heroic band of members make and serve the drinks and wash up afterwards. Any one who would like to volunteer to help, especially with the washing up, should contact Gillian Mason at the next meeting.

### Heritage Open Days: 9-18 September 2022

The theme for 2022 is "Astounding Inventions," which should provide some opportunities in Blackburn and Darwen. The Friends have offered to support this initiative, and we seek ideas as to suitable events, including visits to buildings not normally open to the public, unusual activities, suggestions for tours and anything else you think appropriate.

Please send your suggestions to the Secretary ([secretary@fobmag.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fobmag.org.uk))

### Museum Friends website

We are currently planning an upgrade to our website, to make it more relevant, improve its appearance and flexibility, and make it much easier to edit and maintain. Janine Monaghan will be looking after this project, and we welcome any reasonably polite comments or suggestions from members. Please contact Janine at meetings, or the Secretary ([secretary@fobmag.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fobmag.org.uk)).

**The Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery Website** carries news of exhibitions and events, and information about the collections. There is an interesting **Blog** with lots of contributions about various aspects of the Museum which is well worth reading.



*LAS has a new series of talks ( starting at 7.30 pm) plus our new address for our meetings which are now held at St Margaret's Church Hall, Ingol, Preston, PR2 3ZU., but in some cases, they will be held on Zoom. Please check the website or Facebook pages. New members warmly welcomed*

Friday 18th March 2022. *The Religious Landscapes of Hadrian's Wall.* Dr Eleri Cousins, Lecturer in Roman History at Lancaster University.

Friday 22nd April 2022. *Archaeology, Antiquarians and Anchorites: A New Methodology for Studying Anchorism.* Dr Victoria Yuskaitis, Academic Skills Officer, University of Southampton. Held on Zoom.

Friday 21st October 2022. *Windy Harbour.* Mr. Fraser Brown, Senior Project Officer at Oxford Archaeology North.

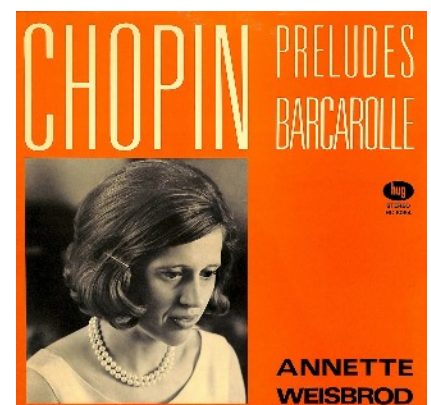
Friday November 18th 2022. *Recent Excavations in the Wyre Area.* Mr. David Hampson, Secretary, Wyre Archaeology Group

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## Annette Weisbrod

Following the item in Tela last year about Richard Weisbrod, Darwen mill owner and artist, Philip Crompton contributed several more news cuttings from Blackburn Library, this time about Weisbrod's daughter Annette, a successful international concert pianist who was briefly mentioned in the original piece. She was born in Blackburn in 1938, the first of 4 children from his first marriage to Lucette Glardon.

In 1976 Annette was the subject of a prominent article in the Blackburn Times, by which time she was living in Zurich and married to a Swiss industrialist, but according to the report she "still loves England, especially her native town of Blackburn." She was in Blackburn as part of a concert tour. It had been five years since she was last here, and on this visit, she was impressed with how clean and new much of it seemed (the town centre redevelopment had only recently been completed). "I hardly recognised it," she said at the Museum, where she was giving a lunch time recital, regretting she did not have time to look round the shops and the



*An early sleeve from an Annette Weisbrod LP*

*Continued on the next page*

market before dashing off to Worsley and another concert. She also claimed to regret the loss of her Blackburn accent!

Annette studied in London under Harold Craxton (professor at the Royal Academy of Music), who suggested she continued her studies in Switzerland, where she later settled and married. During a successful career she made numerous concert tours and released many records, at least some of which are still current; one was released as late as 2017. She also taught at the Berne Conservatoire until 2000.

She gave her first London concert at the Wigmore Hall in 1960 aged 22. One of the cuttings has a review from the Guardian by no less than Neville Cardus, who, while not entirely uncritical, wrote of "the Prokofiev pieces [she] played brilliantly ..." and Brahms Variations on a Theme by Schumann as showing "unmistakable feeling and understanding of the keyboard," commenting that "she brought much musical intelligence to her playing."

In a second Guardian cutting from the same year, another distinguished music critic, Gerald Larner, writes of her performance of the same Brahms piece at a concert in Blackburn Art Gallery: "All the contrast of texture and mood of this difficult work came out very well and ... one delightful sotto voice run ... alone would almost have made the evening worthwhile." A performance of Grieg's piano concerto in Blackburn Assembly Hall was described by Frank Kay in the Blackburn Times as "holding the audience spellbound," adding that it was "blatantly obvious" she had "a bright future."



A later cover from an Annette Weisbrod CD, 2017

## CURATORS OF NORTH-WEST MUSEUMS VISIT BLACKBURN

**CURATORS VISIT BLACKBURN**  
LOCAL EXAMPLES

**"Cry Your Wares" Says Federation President**

Interest in the Lewis Textile Museum, which they visited later in the day, led to the North-Western Federation of Museums and Art Galleries, playing a second visit to Samlesbury Hall for their annual meeting on Friday last.

Delegates were welcomed to the hall by the Mayor (Ald. F. J. Greeves), who was accompanied by the Mayoress (Mrs. Lambert). Ald. Greeves said he welcomed them not only as Mayor but in his capacity as chairman of the Free Library and Art Gallery Committee.

Speaking of the services rendered by Mr. T. B. Lewis in the preservation of Samlesbury Hall, the Mayor referred to the series of plays Mr. Lewis had written based on incidents in the history of the locality. He could not understand why they had not been published, but he believed a movement was on foot to get the author to consent to publication.

**WIDER APPRECIATION**

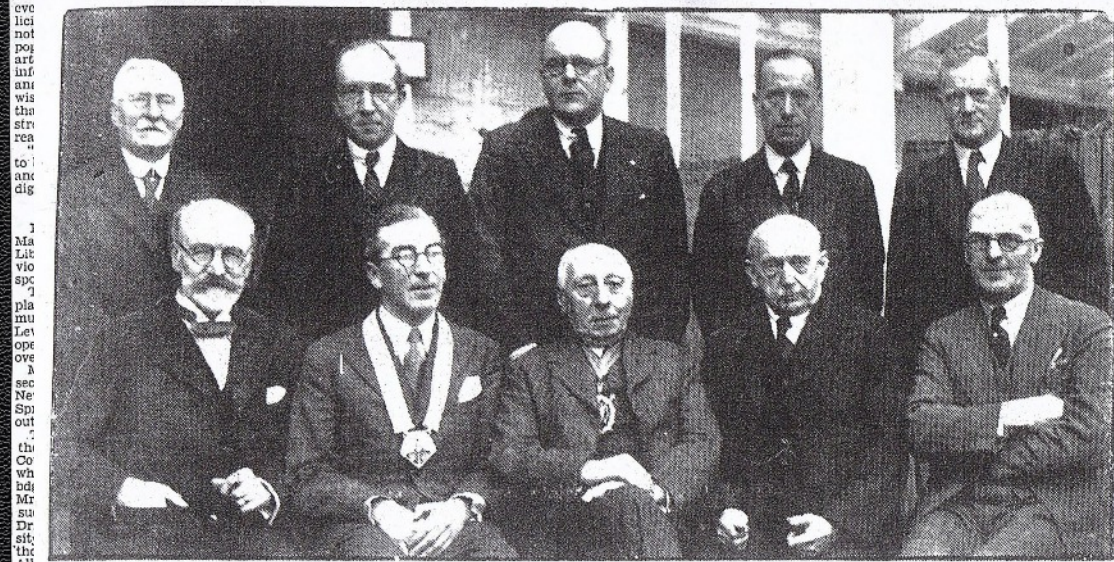
In his presidential address, Mr. S. D. Cleveland, assistant curator of Manchester City Art Gallery, referred to the value of publicity.

There seemed to be no doubt, he said, that nowadays, with all the post-war facilities for specialist education and travel, and with such vigorous new competitors for recreational interest as the talkies and broadcasting, it was advisable for those in charge of art galleries and museums to cry their wares, so to speak, instead of relying on the wares to attract attention.

There has been an increasing sense of the value of publicity in bringing about a wider appreciation of what was being done in art galleries and in museums. Even the National Museum, notwithstanding the immense population, both resident and floating, which the London area contained, now took care that their important additions, exhibitions and lectures were communicated to the Press.

The London Passenger Transport Board recently computed that as many people were conveyed to the national museums last year as to the various League football matches in the Metropolitan districts.

"The most powerful method of approach to the present-day public is undoubtedly the Press," declared Mr. Cleveland, "but not



**GROUP OF OFFICIALS** at Samlesbury Hall conference of North-Western Federation of Museums and Art Galleries  
Back row (left to right): Mr. R. Ashton (late Blackburn Librarian and Curator), Dr. D.A. Allan (Liverpool), Mr. G. Benrose (Stoke), Mr. H.G.M. Maltby (Salford), Mr. J. Hindle (Blackburn), In front: Prof. R. Newstead (Chester), the retiring president; Mr. S. D. Cleveland (Manchester), the newly-elected president; Mr. T>B> Lewis M.A. (Host), Mr S.L. Davison (Port Sunlight).

Blackburn Times 03.02.1939

**The Blackburn Times report of the visit to Blackburn by North-Western Curators. There is a transcript from the news cutting opposite.**

Many thanks to the Reference Library, and to Philip Crompton for telling me about it

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"The most powerful method of approach to the present-day public is undoubtedly the Press," declared Mr. Cleveland, "but not everyone has the journalistic flair of a publicity advisor. Indeed, many curators are not yet convinced of the appropriateness of popular Press references to museum and art gallery matters. Anything other than informed and serious criticism is anathema to some curators, while those who wish especially to address themselves to that indefinable, person, 'the man in the street,' feel that many of his kind do not read the more serious papers.

"I suggest, however, that it is possible to benefit from the help of both the serious and the popular Press without loss of dignity or lowering of standards."

### **IDEAL LOCAL RELATIONS**

In the subsequent discussion both the Mayor and Mr. J. Hindle (Blackburn Librarian) replied to the criticism of a previous speaker concerning the Press, and spoke of the ideal relations in Blackburn.

The latter suggested that, attractive display of exhibits would get people to visit museums. He instanced the success of the Lewis Textile Museum, and said since it was opened in September it had been visited by over 30,000 people.

Mr. Cleveland, who had held the office of secretary-treasurer, succeeded Professor R Newstead, of Chester, while Mr. W. C. Sprunt, of Warrington, was elected to carry out Mr. Cleveland's former duties.

There was an interesting ceremony at the conclusion of the, ordinary business. Councillor F. Sheffield, of Clayton-le-Moors, who originated the, idea of a presidential badge, invested the first holder of the office, Mr S L Davison, of Port Sunlight. Each successive holder, with the exception of Dr C W Carpenter, of Manchester University Museum, who died recently, then, wore 'the badge for a few seconds - Dr D A Allan (Liverpool), Mr H J M Maltby (Salford), Mr R Ashton (formerly Blackburn's librarian), Mr G Bemrose (Stoke), and Professor Newstead. The last-named then invested Mr. Cleveland.

At the Lewis Museum, delegates saw, the textile exhibits in action, tended by costumed pupils of. Miss Ida Shaw. They were then entertained to tea by the Mayor and Mayoress.

## Wild West comes to Blackburn – Buffalo Bill Show 1904 30,000 local people see an amazing show

An edited version of a longer article which appeared in the Blackburn Times on 1st October 1904. Many thanks to Blackburn Library for providing this article, the full version of which appears on the Cottontown website:

<https://www.cottontown.org/Culture%20and%20Leisure/Theatre/Pages/The-Wild-West-Comes-to-Blackburn.aspx#>

*The visit of Buffalo Bill's Wild west to Blackburn is an event of the past, but the impressions of that one day when Colonel Cody and his retinue of 800 men and 500 horses, types of all nations, pitched their tent in Simms field, Accrington Road, are indelibly fixed in the minds of the 30,000 people computed to have witnessed the two performances. For more than 20 years the last of the great scouts has been touring the world with his unique combination of horsemen and the announcement that he will retire from the role of public entertainer at the conclusion of his present farewell tour of Great Britain in November.*

**The show was at Penwortham near Preston the previous day. Prior to that it had been at Blackpool, Lancaster and Kendal.**

*It was at an early hour on Tuesday morning that the special trains from Preston, where Buffalo Bill had been showing the previous day drew up in the coal siding off King Street. The transport department is divided into three sections, The first train is composed of 18 cars, the second of 17, and the third of 14: a total of 49 cars, 1044 yards long and weighing 1184 tons.*

*A story is told of one Blackburn lady determined to see Colonel Cody, though she could not witness the entertainment. This lady sailed for America on Tuesday, and, ascertaining that Colonel Cody was in his van, she went up to the door and asked for an audience with him. This was willingly granted and, face to face with the man she was seeking, she told the great scout that, as she sailed for America that day, she would not be able to see his entertainment, but she would like to shake hands with him. Buffalo Bill laughed heartily and gave the desired handshake, and the lady went away contented.*

*An hour before the afternoon's performance began Accrington Road was alive with vehicular traffic and crowds of people walking to the camping ground. Special tramcars were run, and whilst these in quick succession put down their loads of sixties, hundreds more used the wagonette, the cab and the humble bicycle as means of reaching the show ground.*



*Continued on the next page*

*A large staff of police was on duty regulating the flowing traffic. The Wild West is open to the sky and the audience sit round three sides of the amphitheatre under a canopy which answers the dual purpose of a shade and a protector according to the hour and climatic conditions. No one could quibble with the weather on Tuesday. As to the two hour programme there is so such an abundance of it compressed in such a way that it is best considered in its totality. Perhaps we cannot do better than a quote which appears at the head of the official programme.*

***"An exhibition, the intention of which is to educate the spectator through the medium of animated pictures in the picturesque life of the Western American Plains in the days just past, showing primitive horsemen who have attained fame spiced with their counterparts of modern military horsemanship, all combined in an evening's entertainment, rendering the reading of books or viewing the works of sculptors and artists on the subjects more easily comprehended and enjoyed in years to come"***

*Led by a band of whooping Indians, the representatives of the different tribes and countries dashed break-neck down the arena, and the air was loud with the thud of hoofs and the clash of arms. The Indians, big muscular men, with jet black hair streaming in the breeze were almost all in their primitive habit their naked skins being coloured and crossed with all the designs of savagery. Feathers streamed from their head-dress and scanty costumes, and they carried their native implements of war. For several minutes the notes of the particular tribal music fell quaintly upon the ear. Arabs, Mexicans, Cowboys, Americans and English cavalry, and the elusive little Jap and for whom the audience had a special cheer followed in what had all the appearance at first of a stampede, and lined up to receive their organizer and General, Colonel Cody who rode to the head amid the applause of the of the entire audience, and formally introduced the Congress of Rough Riders as the performers of the day*

*In the opinion of many the Cossack's was the most daring of all the examples of equestrian riding seen during the afternoon. The Cowboys came in for a great reception and the way they controlled the bucking Bronchos was sufficient in the show that no power on earth could make the Cowboy come out of the saddle till he wanted to. There was some fine bareback riding as well by Indian boys and an exhibition by American girls from the frontier, who, with one exception, rode astride and with a very graceful seat.*

*The reception given to the whole of the performers was hearty in the extreme. At night, under the influence of the electric light and before an even larger audience, the Wild West was repeated. By midnight all traces of the show had vanished from Blackburn as if by the magic of Alladin's Lamp only to reappear at sun-rise next morning in some other town miles away.*

**The show moved on to Chorley the next day, the 28th September, followed by Wigan and Southport on the 29th and 30th. Making its way to other towns until arriving in Liverpool were sailed for America. The show never returned to the U.K. In 1913 the show was bankrupt.**

**Although photography was still in its infancy this show would have been very photogenic opportunity. However, the paper chose to illustrate its article on the event with pencil sketches drawn by a T.L. Ellison.**

**Another article on photography in the paper commented that whilst a number of visitors brought cameras the officials at the show took a dim view of it preferring them to buy official Wild West Show postcards.**

## A. N. ("Monkey") Hornby      By Ian Ferris

This imposing portrait of A N Hornby by John Collier, from the collection at Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery was the gift in 1893 of W H Hornby, presumably Sir Harry Hornby (1841-1928), A N Hornby's brother and MP for Blackburn from 1886 to 1910 who had the notable record of never once speaking or attempting to speak during his entire 24 year parliamentary career.

A number of events happened in 1882. There was a failed attempt to assassinate Queen Victoria, at Windsor.

Burnley FC changed codes, from Rugby union to Association football and outlaw Jesse James was shot and killed in St. Joseph, Missouri.

But for cricket fans it was events on Tuesday, 29th August that resonated the most. England lost a home test match to the Australia for the first time at the Oval by seven runs. This prompted the Sporting Times to print an "obituary" to English cricket:

From this was born the greatest rivalry in test cricket which we now know as The Ashes.

In Affectionate Remembrance of  
ENGLISH CRICKET,  
which died at the Oval  
on 29th August, 1882,  
Deeply lamented by a large circle of sorrowing friends and  
acquaintances  
R.I.P.

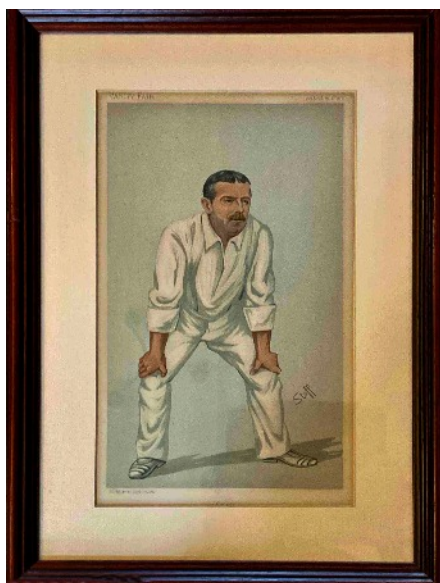


And the England captain who was to have the unwanted accolade of giving rise to The Ashes was Blackburn born Albert Neilson Hornby. He may have only played three test matches with little distinction, but that aside he led a successful sporting life, both international and local, in county cricket, rugby and association football.

Hornby was born 10 February 1847 at 41, King Street, Blackburn. The property is a Grade II listed Georgian building now used for retail purposes complete with "Blue Plaque" describing its illustrious former occupier.

His father was William Henry Hornby, a cotton mill owner in the Brookhouse area who was Member of Parliament for Blackburn from 1857 to 1865 and also the town's first mayor in 1852. Two of Albert's brothers, Edward and Cecil, also played first class cricket.

Albert attended Harrow School and seemed to have no problems fitting in with pupils from a different level of society and whilst he did not excel academically his sporting prowess won him many admirers as he played for Harrow against Eton College at Lord's. During his school years he was only five feet three inches in height which led to him acquiring the nickname "Monkey" because of his small stature and energetic nature.



*A N Hornby from Vanity Fair*

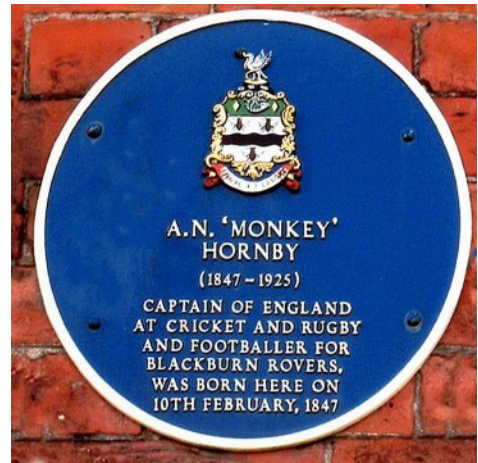
After a brief spell at Oxford University when it was quickly realised that academia was not for him Albert returned to join the family business in Blackburn and whilst his father was disappointed with the way University life had to be abandoned he was more than proud of his son's sporting achievements.

While he was at Harrow his family moved to Shrewbridge Hall (now demolished) in Nantwich, Cheshire where he had his own cricket ground. It was there in 1876 he married Ada Sarah Ingram, the daughter of Herbert Ingram MP of Rickmansworth, founder and proprietor of "The Illustrated London News" and set up home in Nantwich. He had four sons all of whom went to Harrow.

Tragically two of his sons, George and Walter, died fighting for their country whilst youngest son John was killed exploring in Canada. The eldest,

*Continued on the next page*





Blue plaque marking the birthplace of A N Hornby which now adorns 41 King Street (on the left)

Albert Henry, followed in his fathers footsteps both playing and captaining Lancashire at cricket between 1899-1914.

Hornby also played club cricket for East Lancashire and in June 1868 the club entertained an Australian Aboriginal Eleven at Blackburn. It was whilst at Alexandra Meadows in 1870 his renowned temper made an appearance when an argument with the umpire resulted in the umpire retiring from the game. This same fiery temperament was seen on England's tour of Australia in 1879 at Sydney. Hornby took direct action when a "larrikin" entered the field of play and attacked his captain Lord Harris. After a violent struggle Hornby, in the words of his obituary in the 1926 Wisden, "conveyed his prisoner to the pavilion."

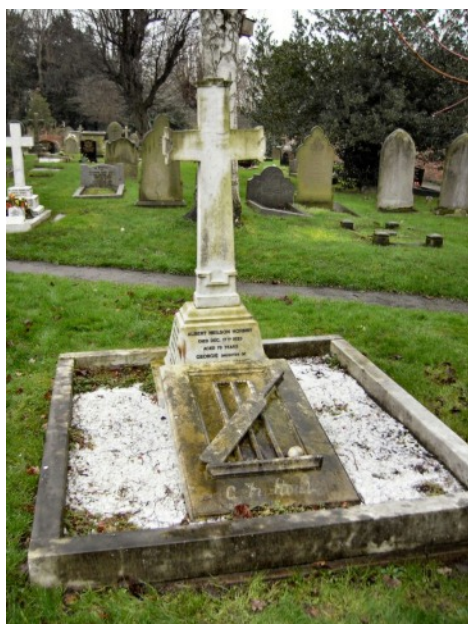
Hornby played for Blackburn Rovers in their inaugural game at Alexandra Meadows, against Partick Thistle on 2 January 1878 and is one of the main characters in the Netflix mini-series "The English Game" (2020) a drama about the origins of modern association football in England.

But it his cricketing association with Lancashire for which he is best remembered. Hornby's first match for Lancashire was in 1867 against Yorkshire at Whalley. His connection with the Red Rose County both as player and captain was to extend over 33 years after which he became president of the club

He was also a fine Rugby player but cricketing commitments limited his England international appearances to nine but still managed to become one of only two men to have captained England at both sports.

Away from football, cricket and rugby Hornby was Captain of 1st Royal Cheshire Militia enjoying the life of the country gentleman. He rode to the hounds keeping a stable of up to a dozen horses for himself and his wife. Similar to his sporting exploits he could be reckless, driving his horses hard killing three in one season.

He spent most of the winter in the hunting field until ill-health later on in life prevented him from enjoying any form of physical activity.



Hornby died at Parkfield, Nantwich, Cheshire on 17 December 1925, and was buried in the churchyard of St Mary's Church (*see left*)

For many years his opening partner for Lancashire was Dick Barlow and this was immortalised in the lines of one of the best known cricket poems, "At Lord's by Francis Thompson" and is a more fitting epitaph than being remembered as an undistinguished England cricket captain.

*It is little I repair to the matches of the Southron folk,*

*Though my own red roses there may blow;*

*It is little I repair to the matches of the Southron folk,*

*Though the red roses crest the caps, I know.*

*For the field is full of shades as I near a shadowy coast,*

*And a ghostly batsman plays to the bowling of a ghost,*

*And I look through my tears on a soundless-clapping host*

*As the run stealers flicker to and fro,*

*To and fro:*

*O my Hornby and my Barlow long ago!*

# The Misericords of Whalley Abbey

by Norman Thorpe

Whalley Parish Church and Blackburn Cathedral share a set of unique misericords made under the skilled hands of Master Carver Eatough in about the year AD 1430 for Whalley Abbey.



*Whalley Parish Church:  
The Choir Stalls*

When Mary and I were walking in the Cevennes, we came one late afternoon to the Trappist monastery of Notre Dame Des Neiges. (Our Lady of the Snows). This monastery offered shelter to Robert Louis Stevenson so we knocked at the door and asked if we could stay the night. The Père Hospitalier was sent for, and we were questioned as to where we were going, and whether we were walking or using some travel firm to help our journey. When the Reverend Father was satisfied that we were genuine travellers on foot, we were admitted for dinner, bed and breakfast in the Monastery. We were told the time of Vespers, and how to get to the chapel. As the brothers had made a vow of silence, would we please not chatter and joke at table during dinner. We attended Vespers. The brothers filed in and we stood. They sang most of the Office; they remained standing the whole time. Our other companions were about half a dozen French Catholic Parish Priests on vacation, and about the same number of Sisters who were either teachers or nurses. After a good dinner, we came back for Compline and had a similar experience: the brothers stood, and sang unaccompanied most harmoniously. So that's a minimum of ten hours standing each day. [And they

have a job to do, making meals, or laundry, or repairing tracks etc]. Like Stevenson, we were awakened by the chapel bell about 3 am as the brothers were called to Matins – the first office of the day. We did not attend. Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, Compline. These along with Mass are the Offices which the Brothers in the monastery meet to celebrate every day.



*Whalley misericord: The Trinity*

The seat of the stall in which you are sitting is a tip-up seat, and there is a strong desire when standing to perch on the tipped-up edge and take a bit of the weight off your feet, especially when you have just walked about 15 steep miles with all your belongings on your back. You might well exclaim "That's a mercy", and the Latin for Mercy is "Misericordia". These Mercy Seats were normal fitments from about 1200 AD; we don't know if the early ones were carved or not, but you can see the temptation

to a wood carver: a block of oak on the work bench. Carvers seem to have been free to select their design. Some are very mocking such as those which show a fox in a pulpit preaching to a lot of geese. There are also certain designs which are very frequent, like the Fox and the Goose, or a woman beating her husband with a pan, or rolling pin, or other implement.

We have something unique in Whalley, and that is three misericords with inscriptions in Latin, Norman French, or Middle English. With this account there a photograph of the one in Middle

*Continued on the next page*

English, taken by Dr Gavin. It is reprinted here for you to read. There are certain conventions used by the carver. A bar is put over a letter to indicate that the reader must supply a letter 'm' or 'n' as the next and last letter of that word. Example 'cū' indicates the word "com[e]". There is also the now obsolete letter 'thorn' þ which can look like p or y depending on the writer. This is the sound 'th', so my surname would have been written "þorp". So what is sometimes written 'ye Olde' is really 'the Old'. The sentence reads:

**Who so melles hý of ý+ al mê dos let hý cū heir & shoe ye ghos**

"Melles" means "meddles". The sentence translated word for word into modern English is "Who so meddles him of that all men does let him come here and shoe the goose" or



"Whoever meddles in other peoples' affairs would be better coming here to shoe the goose"

The Prior's seat shows a maiden overcoming a man of the woods by her goodness with a banner in her hand which says in Norman French: "Penser molt et parles pou" which is to say "Think much and speak little". The Abbot's seat shows various bunches of grapes and has the Latin sentence "Semper Gaudentes sind ista sede sedentes" which is in English "May they always rejoice who sit in this seat". The Abbot's name when this was made was William of Whalley. The supporters for this misericord are large W s.



In spite of thorough searches, I have not discovered any other misericords anywhere which have a sentence in any language. A very small number have the name of the chancellor or the treasurer of the church, but no more. If any reader of this article knows of any misericord whatsoever or wheresoever which has a sentence in any language, I trust that they will tell me via the editor.



**Illustrations on the left**  
*Whalley misericords*  
*Top: Shoeing the Goose*  
*Middle: Prior's seat, Lady and Satyr*  
*Bottom: Abbot's seat, Grapes*

**Editor's note**  
 We hope to organise a visit to Whalley in the summer. Details will be circulated when available.

## COMMITTEE MATTERS

The Committee of the Friends of Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery is once again meeting as it used to do before the pandemic, in person and at the Museum. Our first 'real' meeting in the Museum was held in September, since when we have met in November and last week, on 22 February. We now look forward to our usual rota of four meetings a year.

We are looking for additional committee members and are able to co-opt new recruits at any time, pending formal election at the next AGM.

The Museum staff are keen for us to be involved in their new projects and for us to contribute to their plans for the forthcoming year.

Membership of the committee is not onerous. We meet in the Museum at 6.30 pm on a Tuesday four times a year. We need the stimulus of different interests and different areas of expertise to keep the Friends active and effective.

Please join us. - contact Mike Millward (Secretary) [secretary@fobmag.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fobmag.org.uk) or (01254 245254) to find out about becoming a member of the committee.

Valerie Miles, Chairman

The committee met on 22nd February 2022 at the Museum. Matters considered included production of advertising banners for the Friends, Heritage Open Days 2022, an Open Art Exhibition at the Museum later in the year, and the continuing problem of the acoustics in the Gallery at meetings. An upgrade of the Friends' website is badly needed, and a debate is taking place about requirements, design and administration so that this can go ahead as soon as possible.

Blackburn's great sporting history was discussed and the desirability of it being better represented and its potential popular appeal were generally agreed. (*Te/a* is making a start with an article in this issue about A N Hornby).

The next committee meeting will take place on Tuesday, 3rd May 2022. If there is anything you wish to bring to the committee's attention, please contact one of the members (see the list below).

Mike Millward, Secretary

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### Committee Members

Jeff Cooper, Hon Treasurer and  
Membership Secretary  
Joy Heffernan, President  
Rebecca Johnson, Museum  
Manager, ex-officio  
Bruce Kitchin, Member  
Gillian Mason, Member

Valerie Miles, Chairman  
Mike Millward Hon Secretary & Newsletter)  
Janine Monaghan, Member  
Robert M Svarc, Member  
John Turkington, Member (Programme, Outings)  
Mary Waters, Member  
Raymond Watton, Member

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Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery: tel. 01254 667130

The Friends of Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery is a registered charity.  
It was founded in 1982 with the aim of promoting and supporting the  
Museum

Subscriptions for the year are: Individual membership £10

Guest fee for individual lectures £2