

Family History Research Group

Newsletters 51-55

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Family History Research Group

Newsletter Fifty-One



WHO MIGHT HAVE USED A TOILET LIKE THIS?

Janice

This week's contribution supplies us with even more information about how our ancestors relieved themselves. Joan's article on sanitation is still available for you to read on our group page on the Mawdesley u3a website.



This is a working model of a tippler toilet c1890 and can be viewed at the Science Museum in the water and sanitation section. [Flushed away: Sewers through history | Science Museum](#)

Joy Lofthouse

Joan's article on toilets through time made me think of the toilet my husband used as a child in Bawdlands, Clitheroe. In the late 40s and 50s. The house where he lived had a front room and a back kitchen/dining room with a staircase leading to a landing bedroom where my husband slept and one big front bedroom. It's a good job he didn't have any siblings! The front room downstairs had a door straight onto the street but there was no back access.



This area became an improvement area in the 1980s, the houses designed into cottages etc by knocking some together.

Houses in Bawlands

Where Ian lived in Bawlands there were four terraced houses in a row and getting to the toilet must have been an experience.

At the top of the row there were two toilets for the four households to share. He was lucky (maybe) to live near the toilet so didn't have to walk past everyone else's windows to relieve himself. Apparently one homework from secondary school he had to draw the water system within his house... he completed it very quickly as it was 1 cold water pipe coming into the kitchen sink. The teacher was apparently a bit taken aback; thought he was joking but then suggested he shared someone else's for the discussion.

He was lucky that he didn't live in West View, Clitheroe, where his grandparents lived. They had a Tippler toilet in the back yard (but at least they didn't have to share it with another household). I think it was a bit more of a modern version of this!



Houses in West



West View area

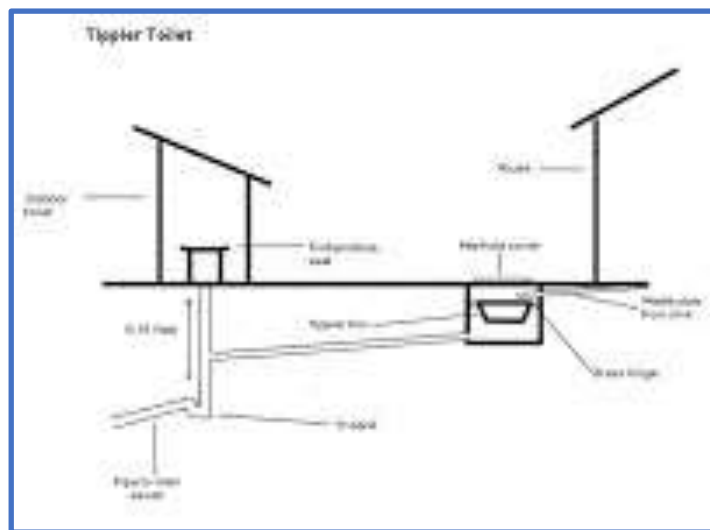


Diagram of a tippler system

The water to flush the toilet was the waste water from the kitchen which went along a pipe beneath the back yard to the toilet.

One never knew when the tippler was going to tip so could be sitting there as it flushed!

A brick and tile manufacturer from Burnley, Lancashire, James Duckett, designed this toilet in 1887. Known as a tippler closet or 'tippler' it was officially called the 'Automatic Slop Water Closet'.



“TIPPER”, “TIPLER”, or AUTOMATIC SLOP-WATER CLOSET

The automatic slop-water or Tippler closet provided an ingenious way to use wastewater from the kitchen sink to flush the lavatory which was outside, usually at the bottom of the yard some 8 feet or more away.

The closet is referred to as a "Tippler" as this is the name used by local people and also appears in the book Lancashire Privies. However, it would appear that more widely they were called "Tippers", the name given to them in a Gladstone Working Pottery Museum publication and in "Thunder Flush and Thomas Crapper"

These closets seem to have been used quite widely in Lancashire and Yorkshire. According to the Gladstone publication they were in regular use for about a hundred years from the second half of the 19th century. One was still in use in Ramsbottom in 2003.

The tippler closet required a supply of water from the slop stone sink in the kitchen to flush the toilet which was connected to a sewer. The sandstone Slop stone sinks themselves required very little water because although they were quite large in area (3ft by 2ft), they were only about 3 inches deep.

Whenever the sink was emptied, its waste water collected in the tippler mechanism which was an open-topped earthenware container about 2 ft by 10 inches, holding 3 or 4 gallons. This has also been described as being shaped like a shoe with a pouring spout where the toe would be. It was counterbalanced (usually with thicker ceramic) at the back so that it returned upright when empty. When filled with water the weight tipped it and delivered the full volume of water down the pipe to the closet. It would therefore flush automatically when the tippler mechanism was full and not necessarily when required and people describe the unexpected subterranean noise of rushing water as being quite frightening for small children. According to Ron Freethy, the mechanism would take about 5 mins to fill from a running tap and when it emptied you could hear a loudish 'clunk'.

The tippler mechanism produced a suitable volume of water to flush the closet, but to get enough power the pipe needed to slope downwards. Since the mechanism itself was underground, this meant that the U-bend, which had to be flushed, could be up to 6 ft below ground level. This may account for the other local nick-name "The Long Drop" or even "Whistle and drop". The toilet itself had a tall "turret like" pedestal made of brown stone ware with a wooden seat, and the stone pipe beneath it was some 18 inches in diameter.

One manufacturer claimed that the automatic slop-water closet never froze and this is quite likely since the whole mechanism was underground. It is thought that Dr Alfred Hill of Birmingham was the first to introduce tipplers on a large scale. There were various types of tipplers but some of the best known were made by J & A Duckworth of Burnley, other firms being Allen and Day.

Amusingly Ian's Dad was a plumber and fitted many household and public toilets in Clitheroe and the surrounding villages. He took his equipment on a hand cart. In the mid 60's Ian's Dad bought the West View house (prior to that it was rented) installed a bathroom and they moved in.... with Grandma in situ!

A brief history of the flush toilet

[https://www.baus.org.uk/museum/164/a_brief_history_of_the_flush_toilet.](https://www.baus.org.uk/museum/164/a_brief_history_of_the_flush_toilet)

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Newsletter Fifty-Two



Children of the 1950s

Janice



Shruggs Wood

Those of us who lived on or near Towngate were wellie wearing free range kids. We were expected to stay outside, out of the way and out of trouble until mealtimes or bedtime. None of us owned watches so

relied on factory hooters, the ringing of bells and the chiming of the church clock to keep track of time. We roamed through fields, woods, and many places we shouldn't really have been. We dammed streams, made dens, slid on frozen ponds, and went swinging on ropes attached to tree branches taking us flying over deep water. We were told that dock leaves could be found near nettle patches so just use those to sort out stings instead of going home for first aid and sympathy. We all had a very healthy respect of insects and other creatures and knew that dog mess was something to be avoided at all times. There are no photos of what we got up to when we were a bit older. We didn't have mobile phones and photos could have been used as evidence against us! Not that we did anything really bad or had been forbidden from doing. Nearly everyone in Leyland knew who we were and word would have very quickly got back to our parents. We knew what the consequences would be.

A path from the back of the churchyard led down through an avenue of beech trees to a stream. A footpath then went across a field to Worden Lane giving us access to the park.





Two of my friends lived where Leyland South post office is now. Mrs. Pincock kept a pottery shop and the family lived above and behind it. We spent many hours playing in the yard stretching behind the cottages on Church Road. A favourite activity was to

launch ourselves on shared roller skates down the sloping tunnel towards the road. It was essential to grab the drainpipe on the right-hand side of the photo so that we didn't crash into the traffic.

Bikes gave us even more freedom and life got even more interesting. My friend's dad found one abandoned, took it to the police and when it wasn't claimed refurbished it for her. He then very bravely volunteered to teach us both how to ride it and after successfully launching myself down the path running past St Mary's Church, I simply had to have a bike of my own. I saw an ad in the newsagent's window at the Cross, mentioned it to my mum and she said that I had better get my money out and go to look at it. It was a sturdy Raleigh, probably made many years before the war but well maintained. It had a dynamo for the lights, a chainguard and mudguards all adding to the weight but I didn't care. Having bikes meant that we could stray far from home. When we were older, we cycled onto Bretherton and Croston Moss to pick potatoes and beetroot. The weekend job was at a farm at Whitestake where we spent our Saturday mornings in a greenhouse pricking out celery seedlings and then in summer, hoeing lettuces.

My younger brother went off on a fishing expedition with his friends and on the way home got a puncture. He rang Mum to ask for help and her reply was "what do you expect me to do"? He was miles away and after a long walk home learnt how to carry out repairs.

The Parish Hall is the taller builder attached to the pub



We spent many Saturday afternoons at St Andrew's Church Hall playing badminton, socialising, and generally messing about. We were lucky to have a building large enough to take three badminton courts. The older part of the building had once been the vicarage and in some of the rooms it seemed as if the vicar had just left behind what he didn't want when he moved to the new vicarage.

In the rooms upstairs there was old furniture, harmoniums, and drawers full of all sorts of things. Downstairs, the library had shelves lined with old musty books and more brown furniture, all disposed of in the 1960's when the room was converted into toilets. For many years St. Andrews had a fine brass band conducted by my dad's cousin and the sound of them practicing could often be heard coming from



the band room. On Saturday evenings we went back again for youth club and the day after for Sunday school. During the week there were youth organisations to go to and more badminton, all taking place in the same building.

The hall in much earlier times (all photos courtesy Leyland Historical Society)

The hall was used by many generations for harvest suppers, walking day teas, Christmas parties and much more.

We were blessed by having stable loving families, a good community, and the freedom to take risks, learn and enjoy ourselves.



Family History Research Group
Newsletter Fifty-Three



MORE STITCHING STORIES

Janice

After seeing the photo of my sewing machine (newsletter 50) Linda informed me that in 1968, her father gave her the pale blue version of the same model. Her machine gave up in 2016 so replaced it with another Singer. Her daughter had used it to sew all sorts of materials to produce art collages when she was at school which would have pushed any sewing machine to its limits.



While at school Linda made this dress for an exam using a Simplicity pattern. It her took her hours to neaten all the seams with blanket stitch. She also covered all the buttons on the front and the sleeves. Linda wore it for several years and it still hangs in her study wardrobe. I tried to persuade her to model it for us but unfortunately it no longer fits.

She also made her own wedding dress using a Thea Porter pattern which had been featured in a magazine. The hat she wore for the occasion is above the pattern.



Linda's wedding dress



Linda wondered if I had ever worked out what to do with the attachments which came with the sewing machine. I didn't get any so perhaps they were an optional extra. I have since remembered that I did have some that came with a machine I was given when I was twelve. It was black with gold decoration and dropped down into a fine piece of oak furniture when not in use. In a previous life it had been operated by a treadle but came to me with an electric motor fitted. The attachments were in one of the drawers along with other sewing bits and bobs. I kept them over the years thinking they might come in useful as they still fit the machine I have now but I still don't

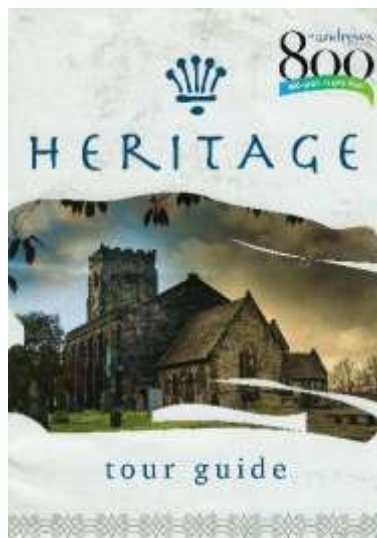
know what to do what to do with them. Over the years I have taken them out of the box occasionally, fiddled with them and then put them away again. I have attachments for my food processor, floor steamer and many other gadgets and don't use any of those either.

In 1962 I made a dressing gown and wore it for the sewing department fashion show (Newsletter 15). I took it off at the end of the catwalk to reveal my baby doll pyjamas. Interestingly, the pattern is a size 12 with measurements of bust 32" waist 25" and hips 34", far smaller than what is today considered to be a size 12.

Did ladies really strut round the house in their night clothes wearing stiletto heeled mules? Nobody I knew ever did.



ST. ANDREW'S LEYLAND



The earliest record of a church on the site of the current St. Andrew's is from 1220 so last year marked the 800 year anniversary. As part of the celebrations, an open day was held which included guided tour of the church and grounds.



A major refurbishment of the church took place in the 1990's making the building far more suitable for use. There is now an entrance lobby with a toilet, refreshment preparation area and a place to hold a creche.

Luckily, the event was scheduled to take place in early March 2020 so went ahead without any restrictions. While there I met friends, some of them from my childhood.



Looking back through the glass screen towards the lobby at the west end of the church

CHILDHOOD

The guest list for my birthday parties was rather smaller than that of most children today. I don't think my friend Peter looks all that different now (he is also in the photo taken in the church; can you spot him?).



When I was very young, I taught myself to jump from the top step!

What would you call this vehicle?

TOILETS

I have realised that the ivy-covered structure at the top of the steps was where earlier residents of our home relieved themselves in the days before flushing toilets. We had a flushing outside toilet attached to the house and one in the bathroom.



As a child I can't remember needing to use the toilet while at church.

I can remember what the church ceiling looked like before the roof was replaced in 1951 when I would only have been one. What is your earliest memory?

SOME PEOPLE NEVER GREW UP!

Christine assured me that she wouldn't have gone to play in the woods by herself but I'm not sure they carried out a health and safety assessment. Catharine has recently joined our group. Welcome!



Family History Research Group

Newsletter Fifty-Four



TROLLEYS, CARTS OR GO-KARTS?

Janice



I suspect that what these things were called all depended on where children lived. In Leyland they were bogeys and until recently I didn't have a clue where the name came from. I now know that a bogey was the name given to the wooden trolleys used to pull loads of coal out of the mines either by ponies or people but why this term was adopted by children in Leyland is a mystery. The contraptions in the photos were probably constructed by our older brother Frank and cousin Billy, Auntie Annie's son. I seem to remember them trying to modify these and other models by devising braking mechanisms which were not always successful and sometimes just plain dangerous. We preferred the heel and toe scrapping on the ground method and if

that failed, we threw ourselves off sideways. I have no idea why we didn't break any bones, could it be all the welfare and school milk we drank? Not that we escaped damage, I still have scars on my knees from childhood accidents.

My brother Frank enjoyed making and tinkering with things and decided to do an engineering apprenticeship. Unfortunately, he became desperately ill in his late teens. During convalescence he took apart and rebuilt a 1930s MG at the motorbike repair shop on Towngate. He was still very unwell so Mum didn't dare say anything when he brought home lumps of oily engine to fiddle with, fortunately we still had flag floors downstairs. For those of you who are familiar with Towngate in the 1950s, the motorbike repair shop was between Pickup's and the Coal Marketing Board shop.

Frank's car looked rather like this when renovated, I used to sit sideways in the space behind the seats. At least one member of our u3a travelled in it to nights out in Liverpool and barbecues on Formby beach.



Both my brothers enjoyed messing with large knives, pea shooters, catapults, cap guns and bows and arrows.

QUIZ TIME!

Local, national and world events would have affected the lives of our ancestors. Can you place the following in a timeline and then attach dates? Which is the odd one out and why? If not sure, just guess – the answers will be in the next newsletter.

1. When did the State start funding education for the poor in schools?
2. When was Victoria declared Empress of India?
3. When was vaccination for the poor introduced?
4. When was slavery abolished in the British empire?
5. When did the second Boer War begin in South Africa?
6. When did the battle of Waterloo take place?

7. When was the Suez Canal opened, linking the Mediterranean and the Red Sea?
8. When was the first census taken in Wales?

WHERE DID WE GO LAST WEEK?



We called at a place where I spent some of my childhood holidays, where is it?



Where is this and what went wrong on this beach last year?

Looking back to where we started a wonderful walk, can you name the village and where were we heading?



Name the island.

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Newsletter Fifty-Five



THE QUIZ ANSWERS - The questions are now in chronological order.

Janice

Q. When did the battle of Waterloo take place?

A. It was fought on 18 June 1815 between Napoleon's French Army and a coalition led by the Duke of Wellington and Marshal Blücher. The decisive battle of its age, it concluded a war that had raged for 23 years, ended French attempts to dominate Europe, and destroyed Napoleon's imperial power forever.

[Battle of Waterloo | National Army Museum \(nam.ac.uk\)](https://www.nam.ac.uk/visiting/battle-of-waterloo)

Q. When did the State start funding education for the poor in schools?

A. Funding of education for the poor in schools run by churches started in the 1830's. Expenditure increased rapidly, especially after the first education inspectors were appointed in 1839 and a pupil-teacher scheme of training was implemented from 1847. By the early 1860's, an economy-minded Liberal government wanted to get value for money. Education funding became linked to pupils' results on the 13 February 1862. Grant payments were linked to pupils' success in basic tests in reading, writing and arithmetic. The system was dubbed 'payment by results'.

Q. When was slavery abolished in the British empire?

A. It was abolished in the British empire on the 1 August 1838. In 1834, slaves in the British empire started a period of 'apprenticeship', during which they were obliged to work without pay for their former owners. Abolitionists campaigned against the

system and in the Caribbean, there were widespread protests. When the apprenticeship period ended in 1838, over 700,000 slaves were freed in the British Caribbean. Plantation owners received about £20 million in government compensation for the loss of their slaves. The former slaves received nothing.

Q. When was vaccination for the poor introduced?

A. It was introduced for the poor in June 1840 when Parliament enabled local poor law authorities to provide vaccination at the expense of ratepayers. Battles over the ethical and practical issues involved lasted for the remainder of Victoria's reign. Some authorities were reluctant to pay, even after infant vaccination was made compulsory in 1853. Further tightening of the regulations in 1867 and 1873 saw a number of anti-vaccination campaigns. In 1898, parents were allowed a certificate of exemption for their children on grounds of conscience.

[The anti-vaccination movement that gripped Victorian England - BBC News](#)

Q. When was the first census taken in Wales?

A. This took place in March 1851 and revealed the extent of Welsh support for the Nonconformist church. In addition to the population census of England and Wales, a census was taken of places of worship. This revealed that around 80% of Welsh worshippers went to Nonconformist chapels and only 20% to the established church. Awareness of this numerical superiority greatly encouraged the demand for the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales. Partly due to the opposition of the Conservative party and the House of Lords, this did not take place until 1914.

Q. When was the Suez Canal opened, linking the Mediterranean and the Red Sea?

A. The Suez Canal opened on the 17 November 1869 linking the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Britain had opposed the building of the canal by an international company, but changed its position in 1875 when Benjamin Disraeli's Conservative government bought 40% of the Canal Company's shares. The canal then became of vital strategic interest, particularly as a route to India and the Far East, and was protected by British troops from 1883.

Q. When was Victoria declared Empress of India?

A. This took place on the 1 May 1876. India came under direct British government control in 1858, when the remaining authority of the East India Company was dissolved. The Conservative prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli, suggested to the queen that she should be proclaimed empress. His motive seems mainly to have been flattery. Despite objections from the Liberal opposition, who were not consulted, the title was endorsed and Victoria used it officially from 1877.

Q. When did the second Boer War begin in South Africa?

A. It began in South Africa on the 10 October 1899. After the First Boer War in 1880-1881, the Boers (farmers of European descent) of the Transvaal forced the British government to recognise their independence. But the Boers refused to recognise the rights of the British (many prospecting for gold) in the Transvaal, leading to the Second Boer War. Although the Boers had initial military successes, the war ended in May 1902 with a Boer surrender. It was costly and unpopular war and Britain received much international criticism for its use of concentration camps.

(My great uncle Wally fought in the second Boer War and was wounded. Unfortunately, his service record is badly smudged so I can't read what his injuries were.)

The odd one out in the list is the Battle of Waterloo which took place before Victoria came to the throne. If Napoleon had won and eventually invaded the United Kingdom, the rest of the century might have been rather different. Before the French army could set foot in the U.K. Napoleon would have needed to do



something about his navy. Along with the Spanish fleet, it had been decimated at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

[Napoleon - Wikipedia](#)

[Queen Victoria - Wikipedia](#)



WHERE DID WE GO LAST WEEK?

Q. We called at a place where I spent some of my childhood holidays, where is it?



A. Criccieth Castle looking towards the west



Photo taken looking in the other direction

When Mum decided she had had quite enough of staying in caravans and B&B establishments which had to be vacated at 9 a.m. each morning we upgraded to accommodation at Criccieth on the Llyn Peninsula. The place we stayed in did breakfast, evening meal and had a comfortable resident's lounge. It took us hours to get there, the highlights of the journey were marvelling at Scotland Road for various reasons, going through the Mersey Tunnel (this was before the M6 was built) and entering another country for the very first time.

We spent the week messing on the beach, going for long walks, and driving out to see the sights. My cousin Fred had a holiday home across the bay at Barmouth so we always spent some time with him and his young family.

Q. Where is this and what went wrong on the beach last year?



A. Nefyn beach (walking well away from land!!!)

In August 2020 Storm Ellen battered the coastline washing away many of the beach huts at Nefyn. Many thousands of pounds change hands when they come up for sale, the remaining huts are now firmly attached to the sea wall.



The photo appears on Wales online

Things got even worse on the 19th of April this year when a massive landslide tumbled down onto the beach. Amazingly, the sea has washed away most of the debris.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=nefyn+landslide+2021&docid=608035492260618622&mid=698617CAB807C5F2261A698617CAB807C5F2261A&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>



Looking back to where we started a wonderful walk, can you name the village and where were we heading from?

Aberdaron can be seen at the far end of the beach. We set off from there to walk round the tip of the Llyn peninsula on what is part of a pilgrim's way. Centuries ago, pilgrims in their thousands

were finding their way to Bardsey Island, drawn there by stories of the special peace to be found at the edge of the western world – drawn to the place of the setting sun, with only the vast ocean between them and the unknown. 1,500 years ago, St Cadfan had founded a Christian community there.

Bardsey Island



Where did we visit on our way home?



The laburnum arch and the David Austin rose garden are both at Bodnant