

Record Society of
Cheshire



Lancashire and

Old Crocks and Dodgy Car Salesmen: Interpreting Cheshire's Vehicle Registrations, 1904-07



A Talk by Dr Craig Horner, Manchester
Metropolitan University

2pm on WEDNESDAY 24TH APRIL 2019 at
LIVERPOOL CENTRAL LIBRARY

All Welcome.

Images courtesy of Cheshire Archives and Local Studies, and Michala Hulme

Motor Vehicle Registrations for Cheshire up to the First World War are being transcribed, and the first volume (1904–07) will be published by the Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire (RSLC) this year. Additional genealogical work has added further personal information.

This talk will reflect on the wider findings so far. The 'story' of the expensive motor car, registered new by people with addresses in leafy commuter towns, and ending up a few years later on a working-class terrace, can now be proven. But the reality is turning out to be much more complicated. Motor vehicles, and not just motorcycles, were also sold on up the social scale. They were also passed on within the same family, or sold back to previous owners. The vast majority of all recorded ownerships was by men, although this probably masks a wider use of motor vehicles by women, as 'owner' is

often different to actual user. Also, the different uses that the successive owners might put their vehicle to (change of body, for example) is also now made clear.

The talk will also draw on the contemporary press, which alerted the novice owner to the sharp practices of the salesman, and to what to look out for when inspecting a vehicle; a sixty-mile hilly run was recommended! Motor magazines condemned vehicles of five or ten years' old as old crocks, and urged readers instead to buy new, convinced that the new motor car had practically reached the point of perfection. This talk will also take a look at some of the sales techniques used by entrepreneurs, and give a flavour of the new industries cropping up: the chauffeurs, the commercial drivers, the car-hire operators. Maybe motoring in Cheshire one hundred years ago was not that different after all.

The talk will be of interest to a wide range of people, including motor-car enthusiasts, family, local and social historians and everybody who is interested in what primary sources can tell us about the lives of our recent ancestors.

Everybody will be welcomed. For more information, please see the society's website, where you can make contact with

The Record Society
of
Lancashire and Cheshire



members of the Council. <http://rslc.org.uk/>