

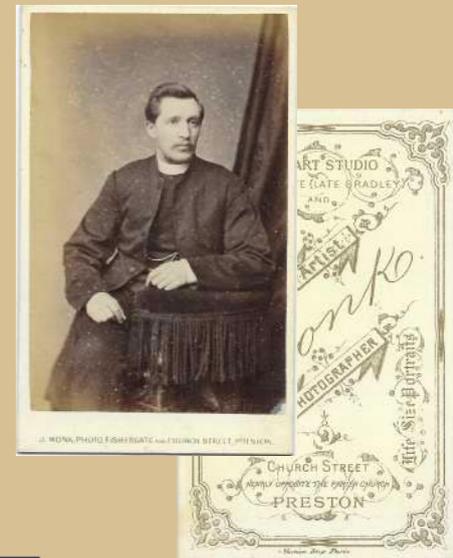
HERITAGE AND HISTORY IN PRACTICE

Enhancing Research Culture through Co-production and Public Participation

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Institute of
Creativity,
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& Culture



**UK Research
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WELCOME TO WORKSHOP 1: HERITAGE, VALUE AND RESEARCH

- Today we will explore:
 - The aims of our project and how it will work
 - What we mean by “heritage” and “public history”
 - What we mean by “co-production” and “research culture”
 - Discussion of family history stories and materials
 - Choosing what type of output you wish to contribute our exhibition

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand what historians mean by heritage and public history
- Recognise the value of personal heritage materials
- Understand the meaning of co-production and how that method can positively impact research culture
- Choose your output and begin planning it

MY BACKGROUND

- I achieved my PhD in September 2025 after defending my thesis that focused on freedom of religion. However, I also have a strong passion for family history research:
- Dating Antique Photographs Project (2024)
- Making Family History Matter (2025)
- Keeping East Lancashire in the Picture (2025)



PUBLICATIONS

the handbook of
**ANTIQU
PHOTOGRAPHS**

A GUIDE TO DATING NINETEENTH CENTURY PORTRAITS

Brandon Reece Taylorian
Associate Lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire



 University of Central Lancashire

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the handbook of
**FAMILY HISTORY
METHODS**

APPROACHES TO RESEARCHING
BRITISH ANCESTRY AND GENEALOGY

Brandon Reece Taylorian
Associate Lecturer and Research Associate
at the University of Lancashire



 University of Lancashire

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www.antiquephotographs.co.uk

WORKSHOP GROUND RULES

- Respect each other's stories and experiences
- Listen carefully and allow everyone time to speak
- Co-researchers decide what materials they are comfortable sharing
- Different interpretations are welcome
- Questions and discussion are encouraged
- Right for photographs during the workshops and exhibition not to be used

LET'S DO QUICK INTRODUCTIONS

First name

Where are you from?

What heritage materials have you brought with you today? Or what draws you to family history research?

AIMS OF THE PROJECT

1. To learn practical skills for identifying, interpreting, preserving and presenting heritage materials.
2. Develop confidence in working with personal and family history materials.
3. Explore how family heritage can contribute to wider historical understanding.
4. Emphasise the power and importance of 'participatory heritage' in local community identity and historical research.
5. Work collaboratively to create a small output of your choice to contribute a public exhibition.

HOW THE PROJECT WILL WORK

- We will gather **6 times** over the next couple of months for workshops, during which we will collaborate to produce outputs for an end-of-project exhibition.
- We will explore the value of heritage materials, learn practical skills for preserving these materials and develop ways to share these materials and stories with the public.
- The exhibition will commence with a launch event where co-researchers will display their outputs. Some co-researchers may contribute to a podcast.
- This project is **collaborative** and **co-produced** – everyone contributes their knowledge, ideas and experiences to help explore and share heritage.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

- Many important historical materials exist in family homes rather than museums or archives.
- When shared responsibly, personal materials can help historians and the wider public better understand local communities, social history, migration and family life, cultural traditions and experiences.
- Your heritage materials will help us see the past from new perspectives.
- The project's goal therefore is to share 'hidden heritage' with wider audiences.

PLAN FOR THE EXHIBITION

- Exhibition Launch Event to be held from 6pm to 9pm on **Wednesday 24th June**. You are all encouraged to attend this public event and to bring your friends and family members along.
- The exhibition itself will then be moved to the PR1 Gallery in Victoria Building where it will be on display from **Monday 6th to Friday 31st July**.
- After the exhibition closes, you will be able to collect your heritage material and you will be able to distribute any remaining outputs (e.g. copies of your articles) to your families or local history societies. You could also pursue publication.



University of Lancashire Student Centre, site of Exhibition Launch Event.



PR1 Gallery, site of exhibition.

PODCAST EPISODES

- Throughout July 2026, I will be creating five 20-minute podcast episodes and I need 5 co-researchers to join me.
- If you would like to participate in a podcast, please let me know and I can provide you the question list ahead of time. The podcasts will be published through University channels to support future heritage research.
- For those not wishing to be filmed, there will also be a chance for an interview that I will record but it will not be published and quotes from the co-researcher will be anonymised.
- Each co-researcher will receive a £20 voucher.



Media Factory, University of Lancashire.



Studio 304 inside the Media Factory.

DIGITAL TOOLKIT

- Based on your work, I will develop a digital toolkit that will act as a practical guide for working with heritage materials to bring them to public attention.
- The digital toolkit I create will be disseminated for use by other researchers, schools and colleges, and local history societies to improve how heritage materials are used in historical research and increase awareness of their value.
- I expect this digital toolkit to be ready by the end of September 2026.

END-OF-PROJECT REPORT

- I will also be producing an end-of-project report that I will share with you before its publication to check that everyone is happy with it.
- The end-of-project report will include co-researcher testimonials, examples of outputs produced, pictures from the workshops and exhibition, quotations from the podcasts etc.

HOMWORK TASKS

- At the end of each workshop, you will be given a homework task to guide you towards producing your output for the exhibition.
- These tasks will generally include conducting research, writing or gathering additional materials.
- Co-researchers are expected to complete these homework tasks because working on your output during the workshops alone will not be enough.

WHAT YOU MIGHT NEED TO BRING DURING THE WORKSHOPS

- I have many activity worksheets for you to fill in throughout the programme. You don't need to bring your own pens unless you want to.
- Laptop (if you wish to conduct research, have design software you would like to use or prefer to type your notes).
- Heritage materials: you will need to keep bringing your heritage materials as we delve deeper into historical interpretation and exhibition curation.

UNDERSTANDING HERITAGE

**WHAT DO YOU THINK
'HERITAGE' IS?**

WHAT IS HERITAGE?

- Heritage refers to the things we inherit from the past. This can include:
 - Historic buildings and landscapes
 - Documents and photographs
 - Heirlooms and artefacts
 - Traditions, memories and stories
- Heritage helps us understand where we come from and how societies change over time.



PERSONAL HERITAGE

- Heritage is not only found in museums or archives. Many important historical materials exist in people's homes:
 - Family photographs
 - Letters and diaries
 - Certificates and documents
 - Scrapbooks and albums
- These materials provide valuable insights into everyday life.



WHAT IS PUBLIC HISTORY?

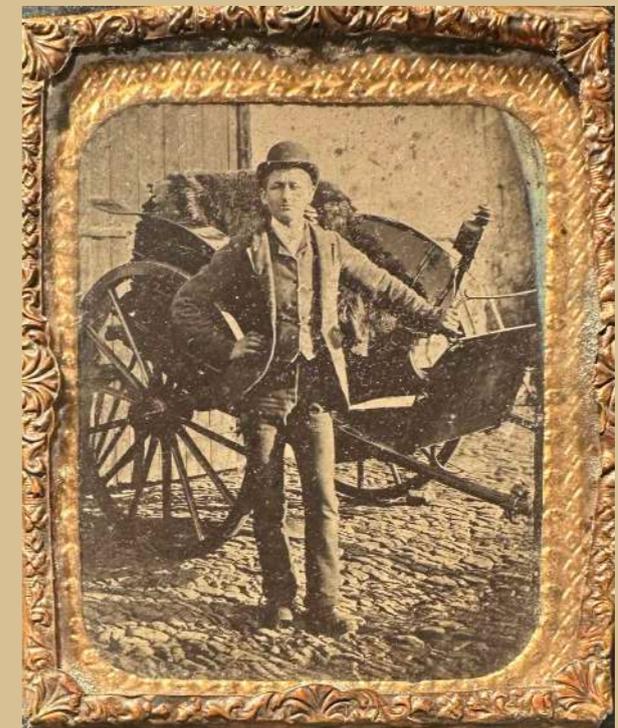
- Public history is history created with and for the public. Examples include:
 - Museums and exhibitions
 - Community heritage projects
 - Local history groups
 - Digital archives and websites
- Public history recognises that historical knowledge exists beyond universities.



**HOW ARE WE GOING TO
TURN ‘PERSONAL
HERITAGE’ INTO ‘PUBLIC
HISTORY’?**

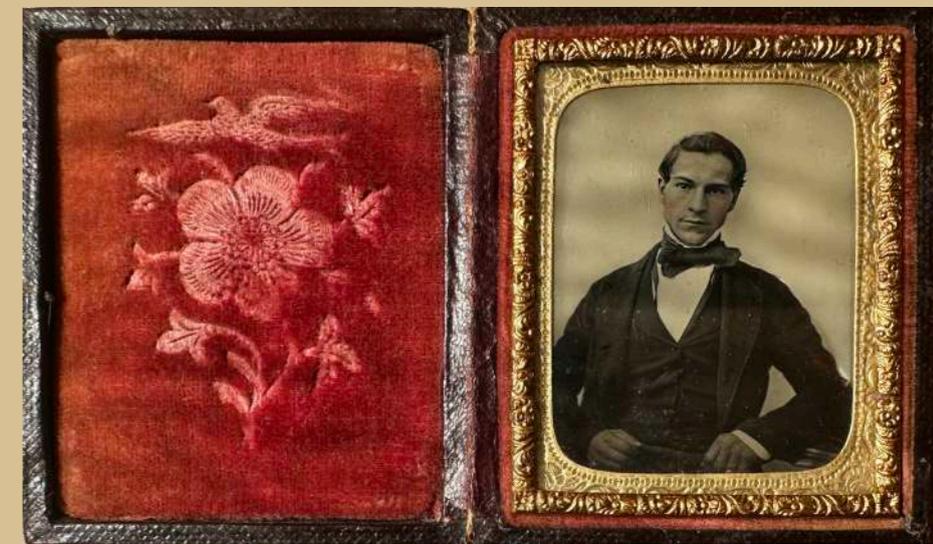
WHY OLD PHOTOGRAPHS MATTER

- Family photographs can reveal important historical information. They can show:
 - Clothing and fashion
 - Buildings and locations
 - Social customs and events
 - Family relationships and occupations
- They provide visual evidence of everyday life in the past.



PHOTOGRAPHS AS HISTORICAL SOURCES

- Historians study photographs to understand past. Key questions include:
 - Who took the photograph?
 - When and where was it taken?
 - What is happening in the image?
 - Why might the photograph have been taken?
- Photographs contain clues that help reconstruct historical context.



TYPES OF VALUE IN HERITAGE MATERIALS

- **Historical value:** evidence about past events or everyday life.
- **Cultural value:** connections to traditions, identity or community.
- **Emotional value:** personal memories and family stories.

EXAMPLE FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH ANALYSIS

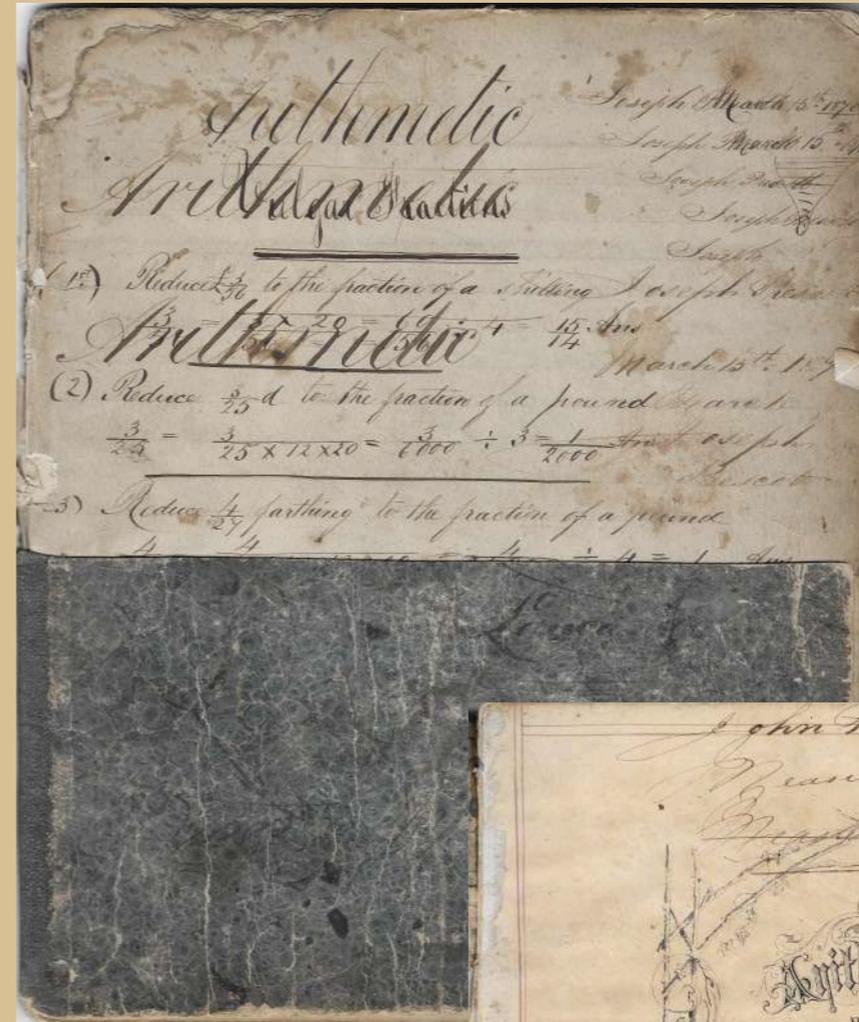
- First, we identify the type of photograph. This image is an **ambrotype**, which was popular between roughly **1851 and the early 1860s**.
- Next, we look at visual details such as **clothing, pose and format**. Early photography required long exposure times, which explains the very still and formal pose.
- Finally, we ask questions about **context and meaning**. Who were these people? Why was this photograph taken? Was it a family keepsake, a celebration or perhaps a portrait taken later in life?
- I used this photograph and others from my family's collection to write an article identifying the different types of 19th-century Victorian photographs.



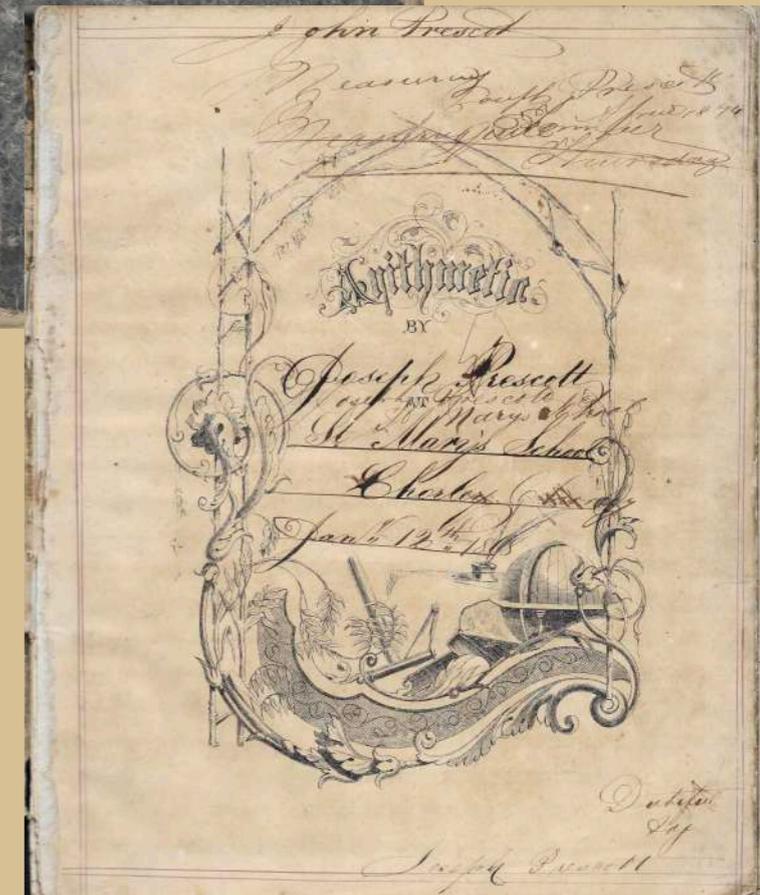
1858 ambrotype featuring a portrait of Ralph and Agnes Moon of Woodcock Hall, Ecclestone.

EXAMPLE HERITAGE MATERIAL ANALYSIS

- A relative of mine gave me a pair of exercise books that once belonged to my great-great grandfather who was a pupil teacher.
- After studying the exercise books dated 1868 and 1870, I realised that they contained insights on the role of religion in Victorian education and the structure of the Victorian school day.
- I turned the exercise books into a case study on mid-Victorian education in Lancashire and the prospects of pupil teachers.



Victorian exercise book dated 1870.



Inside cover of Victorian exercise book dated 1868.

EXAMPLE FAMILY STORY ANALYSIS

- My great-great uncle was inadvertently involved in the murder of his mother-in-law in April 1922 by his father-in-law.
- I used the murder as a case study of domestic violence and executions during the interwar period in Britain.
- I also studied how the newspapers portrayed the murderer through a lens of class and gender to explore broader themes about masculinity, alcoholism and labour norms during the period.



Brandiforth Street,
Bamber Bridge,
shortly following
the murder of
Ellen Thompson,
April 1922.



Lancashire Evening Post, 13th May 1922.



Bradford Daily Angus, 26th April 1922.

ACADEMIC VS PERSONAL MEANINGS

- Heritage materials often have different meanings. For example:
 - For a family member: memory, identity, emotion.
 - For a historian: evidence, social context, historical patterns.
- Both perspectives are valuable.

ACTIVITY

- Look at the heritage materials you have brought today. Think about what the material shows, what story it tells and what about it could be historically relevant?
- Discuss for 5 minutes:
 - Why are these items meaningful to you?
 - What stories or memories are connected to them?
 - What might a historian learn from them?

**10 MINUTES BREAK
FOR REFRESHMENTS**

THE MEANING OF RESEARCH CULTURE AND CO-PRODUCTION

WHAT IS RESEARCH CULTURE?

- Research culture is how research is carried out, shared and experienced — including the values, behaviours and relationships that shape research.
- The Heritage and History in Practice project aims to enhance research culture by:
 - Working in an open and inclusive way.
 - Valuing both academic knowledge and lived experience.
 - Supporting confidence, creativity, curiosity and shared learning.
 - Making research accessible and giving it a public and academic legacy.

**WHAT COULD “CO-
PRODUCTION” MEAN?**

WHAT IS CO-PRODUCTION?

- Co-production means working together as equal partners in creating knowledge
- It involves parties bringing different skills and resources together:
 - Academic expertise (research methods, historical context)
 - Public knowledge (family history, lived experience, personal archives)
- Knowledge is not created *by researchers alone* — it is shared, negotiated, and developed collaboratively

IN THIS PROJECT...

- You are not just participants — you are co-researchers.
- That means you will be working as an equal partner alongside me to design, deliver and analyse our exhibition.
- Where as traditional studies have participants merely as subjects, co-researchers bring unique insights, shape research questions and help interpret findings, thus **co-producing knowledge**.

MOVING BEYOND TRADITIONAL RESEARCH

Traditional research

Researcher = expert

Public = subjects or
audience

Knowledge flows in one
direction

Co-produced research

Researcher + public =
collaborators

Everyone contributes
knowledge

Knowledge is created
together

WHY CO-PRODUCTION IS USEFUL

- Many histories are hidden, overlooked, or undocumented.
- Family photographs and personal archives often: sit outside formal archives and contain rich but underused historical evidence.
- Co-production helps to: (1) bring these histories into research; (2) recognise the value of lived experience; (3) and challenge the idea that only institutions produce history.
- Your materials help expand what counts as “history.”

CO-PRODUCTION IN THIS PROJECT

- Across the workshops, we will work together to:
 - Identify and analyse heritage materials
 - Share knowledge and interpretations
 - Develop captions, narratives, and displays
 - Make decisions about what and how to exhibit
- Key idea: this is a shared process of discovery and creation

YOUR ROLE AS CO-RESEARCHERS

- As co-researchers, you will:
 - Bring your own materials, knowledge, and perspectives
 - Contribute to interpreting historical sources
 - Help shape the exhibition and its content
 - Decide how your stories are presented
- You are not being “studied” — you are helping to produce research.

YOUR ROLE AS CO-RESEARCHERS

- Co-production means shared authority:
 - No single “correct” interpretation.
 - Multiple perspectives are valuable.
 - Decisions are made collaboratively: what to include, how to interpret materials and how to present them publicly.
- Your voice has equal importance in shaping the outputs.
- We will all progress through the programme at different speeds.

BALANCING EXPERIENCE & EVIDENCE

- In co-produced heritage work, we combine:
 - **Personal knowledge** (family stories, memories)
 - **Historical methods** (analysis, contextualisation, evidence)
- Together, we will:
 - Respect personal meaning.
 - Apply careful historical interpretation.
 - Create outputs that are both **meaningful and credible**.

WHAT YOU WILL GAIN

- Through this co-production process, you will:
 - Develop skills in historical interpretation, heritage analysis and public storytelling.
 - Gain confidence in contributing to research.
 - Produce outputs for public display.
 - Contribute to a real research project.

**ANY QUESTIONS OR
COMMENTS SO FAR?**

**10 MINUTES BREAK
FOR REFRESHMENTS**

CHOOSING YOUR OUTPUT

YOUR OPTIONS



Poster or
Artwork



10-minute
presentation



Short article
(1,000 words)

These outputs will be presented at the Exhibition Launch on Wednesday 24th June.

CHOOSING A TOPIC

- The topic you choose needs to hold relevance or potential relevance to the public and broader history.
- This means it needs to improve the way we understand a topic e.g. by adding new knowledge, giving an alternative perspective.
- It cannot simply be a retelling of your family history.

SOME THEMES TO CONSIDER

- Migration
- Crime
- Artistry
- Industrial history
- Involvement in a religious movement
- Military service
- Family history best practice or community value
- Social issues
- Attitudes/tastes/customs of a particular period or group
- Involvement in a social, cultural or political movement

ADJUSTING YOUR TONE

- When presenting heritage materials to the public, it is important to use a tone that is **clear, engaging, and accessible**.
- Your audience may include people who are **not historians or researchers**, so the goal is to communicate ideas in a way that is easy to understand.
- Helpful tips:
 - Emphasise people, places and experiences; use short sentences and clear explanations; explain any technical terms; ensure you clearly periodise and contextualise your material.

CHOOSE AN OUTPUT

- Using the **Output Production Sheet** in front of you, we will spend the next 15 minutes writing down some initial thoughts and plans:
 - The type of output you plan to create.
 - The heritage material/family story you will focus on.
 - The main thesis you want to share.
 - How you intend to explain or portray your thesis.

HERITAGE AND HISTORY IN PRACTICE



OUTPUT PRODUCTION SHEET

In this box, write down the plan for your chosen output:

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TEMPLATE FOR SHORT ARTICLES

- **Title:** clear, engaging, describes the heritage material and includes a date/period (e.g. Remembering the Old Mill: Analysing a Lancashire Postcard, 1913).
- **Introduction** (100–150 words): introduce what the material is and your main thesis (i.e. why it is historically relevant), explain how you came to possess it.
- **Historical context** (300 words): explain the period, place and culture from which the material originates. In other words, set the scene for the reader and identify a potential gap in knowledge.

TEMPLATE FOR SHORT ARTICLES

- **Description of the material** (200 words): describe the item in detail, including its condition, justify the date you have ascribed to it, if it is a photograph explain who/what appears in the image). Insert a scan or photograph of the material and label it as a figure, give it a description, location and date.
- **Interpretation** (200 words): explain in more detail what the material reveals about the past (i.e. what does this material tell us that historians may not have been aware of beforehand?).
- **Conclusion** (200 words): restate your thesis in light of the interpretation you have given.

*Try to include between **5–10** credible references (i.e. journal articles or books). I will help with reference formatting.*

TEMPLATE FOR PRESENTATIONS

- Length: Aim for 7–8 slides to fit within 10 minutes.
- Slide 1: Title page, including your name.
- Slide 2: Explain your family story or what your heritage material is.
- Slide 3: Explain the historical context of your family story/material.

TEMPLATE FOR PRESENTATIONS

- Slide 4: Describe how your family story or material changes current knowledge.
- Slide 5: Description of the material.
- Slide 6: Reflect on the project experience (optional).
- Slide 7: Conclusion page (i.e. restate your thesis and why your family story/material is significant).
- Slide 8: Thank you and ask for any questions.

TEMPLATE FOR POSTERS

- Title (Top of Poster): short, large font, easy to read, includes reference to the material/family story, place and date/period.
- Main image/drawing that relates to your material/family story, with an optional caption.
- A short description about the material/family story.
- Explain how the material/family story tells us something new about the past.

TEMPLATE FOR ARTWORK

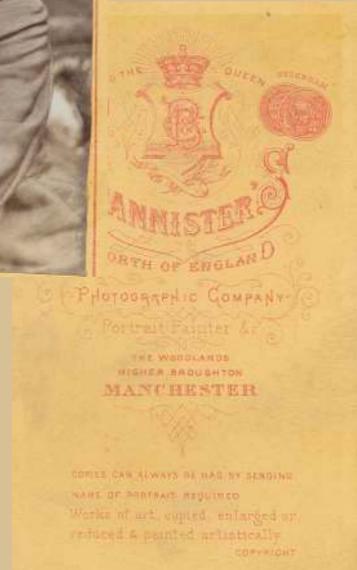
- The artwork you produce needs to express how your material/family story changes what historians know about the subject (e.g. by giving a new perspective).
- Participants should provide next to their artwork a title and short description of up to 200 words contextualising the piece and explaining how it changes our perspective on the topic.

HOMework TASK

- Conduct research on a piece of your family history that you can turn into the output of your choice.
- In the next workshop, we will discuss the research you have conducted to consider how you might develop it into your chosen output.
- It would also be useful if you could think about how your chosen story/material could illuminate a broader historical theme.

NEXT STEPS

- In the next workshop we will:
 - How to safely handle heritage materials
 - How to digitise photographs and documents
 - Ethical considerations when making family history public
 - How to preserve materials for the future
- You will also decide your main thesis and the interpretative angle for your output.



Thank you for listening

Next workshop: 1st April

Any questions in the meantime? Please email me:

brtaylorian@lancashire.ac.uk

