

John O'Hara 1812 – 1877

Born in Ballina, Killmore, County Mayo (maybe Sligo due to border demarcation at the time) to Michael O'Hara and Mary Cairns.

He married Rose Ann Dunn around 1827 as their first child, Margaret, was born in 1828.

Sons John, Michael and Patrick (and probably several other children) were all born in Ireland and so the family were there until at least 1844.

Sometime between 1844 and 1851 (probably by 1846 as he celebrates 25 years of the fishmongering in 1861) they travelled to Scotland as they appear in the 1851 census as living at 118 Main Street, Gorbals where John is classed as a fish dealer

Newspaper cuttings appear to show John as a “character” . It appears that he dealt as a fishmonger from 14 Saltmarket at a place called The Oyster Rooms. A number of reports concern incidents based at this location.

It appears that he was in trouble for allowing some kind of party within his premises at one point – the mind boggles at what this might have been. Although the next clipping states he was running a drinking club !!!

The Saltmarket and Bridgegate became fashionable areas for the city's wealthy merchants to set up home. In 1650 Cromwell stayed here when he visited Scotland. In 1759 a certain Agnes Craig was born on Saltmarket, fifth child of respected physician Andrew Craig, she is better know under her married name, Agnes MacLehose, or through the alias she and Robert Burns communicated – Clarinda. Around 1710 the city's first post office was on Saltmarket, in 1763 James Watt ran a shop here and Peter Tait's Glasgow Journal, forerunner to the Glasgow Herald, was run from number 11.

Entertainment on Saltmarket came from the old show grounds and circus building near the court buildings. In 1845 the City Theatre was opened on the Saltmarket, on a site next to the Courts. It burned to the ground just five months later, followed a month after that by Cooke's Circus next door. Later in the 19th century the Saltmarket became a notorious slum, with many illicit bars.



129 Saltmarket June 1904

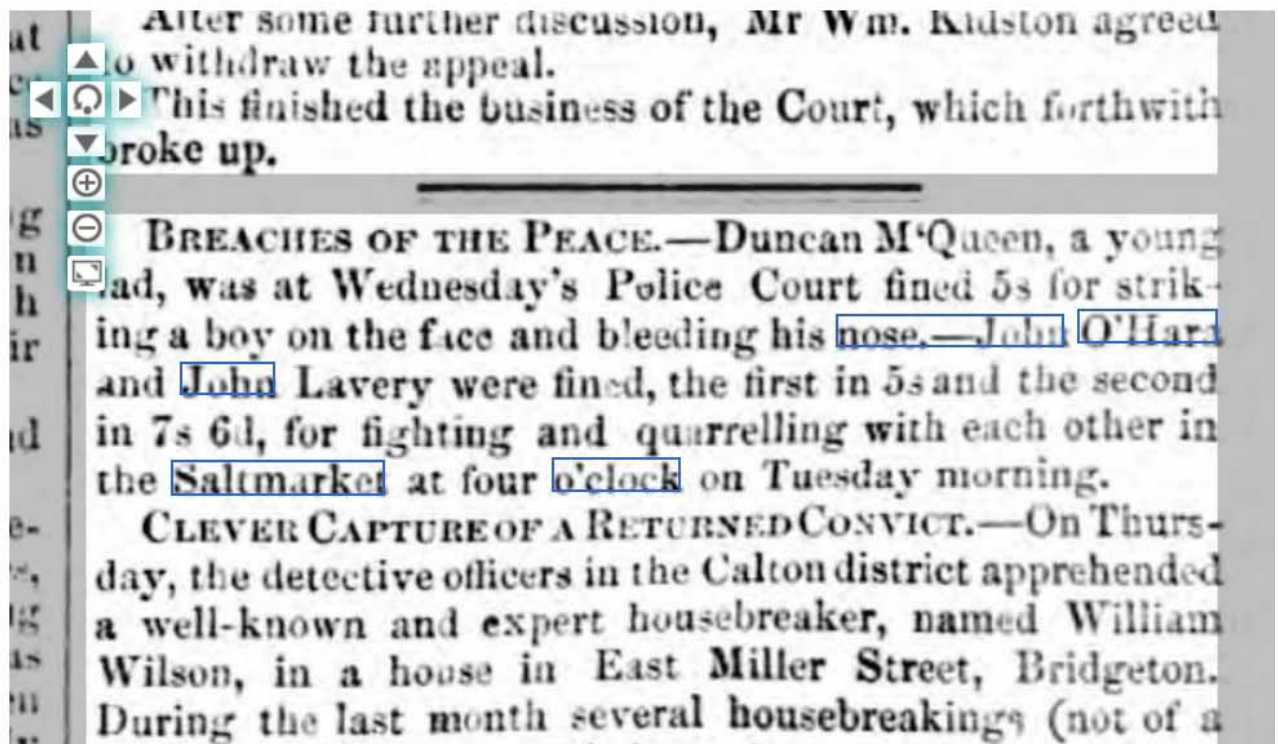
In late 19th century Glasgow the area bounded by Stockwell Street and Saltmarket, the Trongate to the north and the Clyde to the south was referred to as "District 14". In 1889 a report by Glasgow's [Philosophical Society](#) described this area as having 7,150 people living in 1,308 houses and sharing 100 water closets. Of the 99 common lodging houses in the city, 63 of them were in this small district. The city's medical officer in a report on the area described the slums that people here were living in as "*filthy beyond measure....High Street, Saltmarket, Briggait are all sanitary evils....For years the population of many thousands has been added to Glasgow by immigrants without a single house being built to receive them.*"

A correspondent for the Glasgow Herald complained about the "*public houses...doing a roaring trade*". Managing to then offend several diverse groups of people at once he continues "*A graphic sketch of the conditions around the High Street, Saltmarket, Bridgegate and Trongate, between the hours of midnight on Saturday and six o'clock on Sunday morning would astonish many of our featherbed philanthropists who devote so much thought into bettering the conditions of Australian savages.*"



Saltmarket from Bridgegate in 1868

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18 Saltmarket

Glasgow Morning Journal - Saturday 18 December 1858

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tied out the contents of a whisky-bottle he knocked her down, trampled on her with his knees, and struck her twice on the face. Fined £5, or 60 days' imprisonment.

Alexander M'Arthur, 58 Oswald Street, was found guilty of permitting a breach of the peace in his house on Sunday afternoon, and fined £5, or 60 days' imprisonment.

Ann Wilson, for being drunk and disorderly yesterday morning, and when taken to the South Prison station-house assaulting a constable there on duty, was fined £5, or 60 days' imprisonment.

John Brannan and Felix O'Neil pled guilty to fighting in Saltmarket yesterday morning, and were each fined 21s., or 15 days' imprisonment.


John O'Hara was fined in 21s., with the alternative of 15 days' imprisonment, for attempting to rescue O'Neil from a constable.

Alexander Beatson was charged with assaulting Michael Collins, a seaman, on the afternoon of Nov. 24, in Howard Court, Howard Street. This case occupied the Court about an hour and a-half. It appeared that a man named Craig met Collins in Jamaica Street on the afternoon in question, and after accosting Collins the latter ran away, followed in Howard Court by Beatson, who knocked him down and kicked him, inflicting wounds that had caused him to be removed to the Infirmary, where he had remained till the other day. The defender was fined £5, or 60 days' imprisonment.

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Leopard,..... Thursday.

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DEC. 18
Princess,..... Saturday,

Glasgow Free Press - Saturday 12 November 1859

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and, if he has not, surely it would be well for the authorities to send him to prison without the alternative of a fine the next time he is brought before them.

DISORDERLY HOUSE.—Henry M'Kichnie, spirit-dealer, 60 Stockwell Street, was, at the Central Police Court, on Saturday, fined £5, with the alternative of 60 days' imprisonment, for harbouring women of doubtful fame—John O'Hara, club keeper, 18 Saltmarket, was charged, at the same Court, with allowing a number of dissolute boys to dance, sing, and cause breaches of the peace within his premises. This fellow is well known to the police. He was found guilty, and ordered to go to prison for 60 days, or pay a fine of £10. He complied—though it should not have been afforded him—with the latter alternative.

graphy, writing, book-keeping, and drawing and painting. The presentation of prizes is announced to take place in the City Hall on Tuesday.

CENTRAL POLICE COURT.—At this Court yesterday, before Bailie Gemmill, John **O'Hara** was fined in £5, with the alternative of 40 days' imprisonment, for having, on Thursday morning, permitted a breach of the peace within a drinking club at 18 **Saltmarket**.—Wm. Pringle was fined in £2, or 30 days' imprisonment, for having, on Thursday, been drunk and disorderly in Saltmarket, and resisted and assaulted the police.

subscription list, and the appointments of directors, but they expect to be in a position to do so very shortly.

THE FATAL PRIZE FIGHT: (*To the Editor of the Glasgow Sentinel*).—Sir, with reference to the paragraphs in the newspapers, during this week, regarding the fight at Erskine Ferry, I beg to intimate that I am in no way connected, as many think, with the **John O'Hara** who is mentioned there, and who lives at the foot of the street.—I remain, your obedient servant, **JOHN O'HARRA**.—Oyster Rooms, 14 and 16 Saltmarket, 29th June, 1860.

FAIR HOLIDAYS.—The Glasgow and South-Western railway Company advertise their usual series of excursion trains during the fair holidays, and in addition to the former excursions to Dumfriesshire and the Ayrshire coast, the opening of the new line to Girvan is taken ad-

Glasgow Free Press - Saturday 22 June 1861

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SALE,
AND 16
IRGINIA STREET.
R & CO.,
GLASGOW.

Publ... that they have now
No. 16 Virginia Street, and
East Corner of Virginia
...
odation has enabled them
epartments of their Busi-
l facilities for the speedy
...
be found replete with all
S in the HOME and

Valuation.
WILLIAM M'FARLANE,
WRIGHT AND MANGLE MAKER,
39 STOCKWELL STREET, GLASGOW.

CITY OF GLASGOW OYSTER ROOMS,
NO. 14 AND 16 SALTMARKET STREET.
JOHN O'HARA PROPRIETOR.

THE Proprietor of the above Rooms
returns his thanks to his Friends and Patrons for
the very liberal support he has received during the 25 years
he has been in the Oyster Trade, and begs to say, he has
daily on hand a supply of the Best OYSTERS, from the
most Celebrated Fishing Grounds; also, LOBSTERS,
CRABS, SHRIMPS, and other Shell Fish, which he will
supply at the Shortest Notice to Hotels, Taverns, and Pri-
vate Families, on the Most Reasonable Terms.

THE TRADE SUPPLIED.
OBSERVE—14 & 16 SALTMARKET STREET.

The 1851 census shows John as a fish dealer but the 1861 census has him down as Harbour Labourer ! There are other inconsistencies on the ages but they are living at the same address. I see Harbour Labourer as another term for Fish Dealer and a certain amount of vanity that makes them 10 years younger than they really are !

1851 OHARRA, JOHN (Census 644/2 53/ 28) Page 28 of 33
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House No.	Pariish of	Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, or Deaf, or Dumb
						Males	Females			
81	118 Main Street		John McQuillan	Head	M	52		Exp Dealer	Island	✓
			Elizabeth D.	Wife	M	48		D ^o Wife	D ^o	✓
			James D.	Son	M	17		Sub Winger Maker	D ^o	✓
			John D.	Son	M	14		General Lab	D ^o	✓
			Catharine D.	Son	M	13			D ^o	✓
			Frances D.	Son	M	6		Scholar	D ^o	✓
82			John David	Head	M	25		Coal Miner	D ^o	✓
			Margaret D.	Wife	M	22		D ^o Wife	D ^o	✓
			Mary D.	Daughter	M	1		D ^o Daughter	Southshire Scotland	✓
83			John O'Hara	Head	M	58		Dealer in fish	Island	✓
			Ann D.	Wife	M	46		D ^o Wife	D ^o	✓
			Thomas O'Ryan	Son in law	M	20		Lab from Funday	D ^o	✓
			Margaret D.	Daughter	M	19		D ^o D ^o	D ^o	✓
			Michael O'Hara	Son	M	14		Lab Salt & Pottery	D ^o	✓
			John D.	Son	M	12		Home Dealer	D ^o	✓
			Catharine D.	Son	M	8		Lab Dealer Son	D ^o	✓
			Mary D.	Daughter	M	6		D ^o D ^o Mother w ^o	D ^o	✓
			Mary O'Allister	Servant	M	21		Lab	D ^o	✓
			Michael O'Ryan	Son	M	51		Dealer in fish	D ^o	✓
Total of						18	7			

1871 Census shows him as a boarder at 165 Main Street, Cambusnethan with a family named Buben.

Makes two claims on the Poor Law in 1876 and 1877 in Lanarkshire.

Second application made 23rd March 1877 in the parish of Govan where he has been living for 11 days.

For the previous 15 years he has lived in Cambusnethan and Wishaw since the death of his wife

Poor relief notes

Volume C01/26/56 Entry 55 19 April 1876

John O'Harra residing at Mrs Wilsons, Cockhill. Born Parish of Kilmore, Ballynaw, Co Mayo or Sligo.

Widower, age 76, RC, hawker, disabled by age.

Parents Michael O'Harra, weaver and Mary Cairns, both dead.

Children

Michael, labourer, married, 3 children, living Police Office Lane, Glasgow

John, hawker, widower, 4 children, living Police Office Lane, Glasgow

Patrick, labourer, married, no children, living Paisley Toll.

Residences - present house, 3 months

Prior residences

Mrs McFadyens, Kirk Road, 3 yrs

Mrs Meechans, Thomson Square, 3 mths

13 Lynchs Main Street, 2 mths

Mrs McKenna, Marshall Street, 6 mths

Wishaw in lodgings for 11 years ago since his wife died.

19 April 1876. Relieved 1/-

20 April 1876. Relieved 2/-

24 April 1876. Relieved 2/6

1 May 1876. Relieved 2/6

Died of Bronchitis