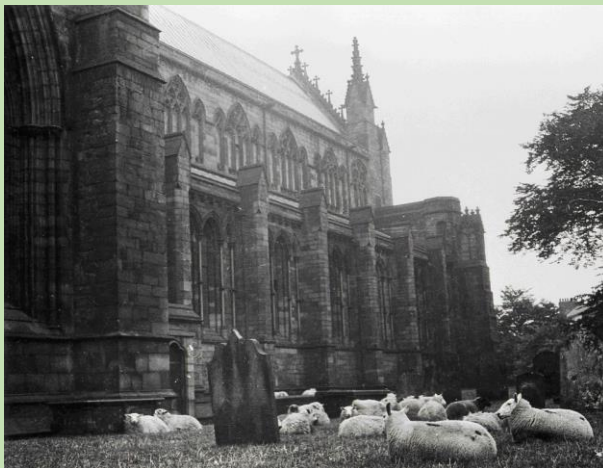




# Cumbria Local History Federation

Bulletin 90: Winter 2022



Sheep at Carlisle Cathedral from the Mary Fair collection.

Thanks to Tullie House and CWAAS for this image

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## Chairman's Chat

The Federation is about to celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday and we are planning a number of events to mark it during 2023. Hopefully dates, subjects and venues will start to appear after Christmas.

The Archive Project has been successfully completed. All the groups who requested an advisory visit by consultant archivist, Kevin Bolton, have now received their individual report. Kevin also produced a report for the committee on the overall programme (page 3). The committee intend to take up most of Kevin's suggestions for future events.

We held a very successful, fully subscribed Convention at Allithwaite Village Hall and I would like to thank the Cartmel Peninsular Group for all the hard work they put in organising the event and helping to run it on the day. We are hoping to hold next year's Convention in the west of the county and a suggestion of the village hall at Allhallows has been made. We are looking for suggestions for a topic. One of the big successes of this year's Convention was the Presentation by the Cartmel Peninsular group on the research they have carried out in their area on the topic of Farming.

Local groups (or individual) talking about their own research at one of the conventions is something the committee would like to encourage. If you have something you would like to tell the rest of the Federation about please get in contact. We can offer support with presentation skills etc.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Poland for all the hard work he has put in as treasurer, getting us set up as a charity and managing the accounts. Also Professor Peter Roebuck has had to retire from the committee on health grounds and finally Adrian Allen who was a driving force on the Federation Committee before his untimely death.

I said in opening comments that the Federation is 30 years old and I feel that it is in a very strong position at present. However, if the Federation is to maintain this position and keep going forward we do need new blood on the committee.

Graham Brooks Chair CLHF

## MANAGING LOCAL ARCHIVES Project

### Visits to Societies and final report

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A collaboration between CLHF, Cumbria Archive Service and Archives Consultant, Kevin Bolton, has resulted in delivery of two 2-day training programmes from Carlisle and Kendal Archives to representatives of 14 different local history groups in June. The training covered accessioning, cataloguing, preservation/conservation, copyright/privacy, digitisation, digital preservation, sharing collections online, and CAS.

Following the training, groups were given the opportunity for a follow-up visit for support and assistance with Kevin Bolton. 10 groups were visited. A Committee member of CLHF attended each visit. Following each visit, Kevin Bolton created a report summarising the visit, identifying strengths/weaknesses in collections management, and outlining some recommendations. Each group received their own individual report and recommendations.

The diversity between groups was interesting. For example Sedbergh had a mainly online archive reflecting the fact that 66% of their members are overseas while Cockermouth have a large physical collection which are used to put on exhibitions at the Kirkgate centre in Cockermouth.

The following is an extract taken from the Executive summary of Kevin's final report: 'In summary, the following themes emerged:

- Collection formats All the groups had collections in physical formats and nearly all the groups had some type of digital collection.
- Storage and packaging. In general storage of the physical collections was quite poor, but some groups had made efforts to package their collections.
- Resource and expertise. I was amazed by the commitment, passion, and expertise of the volunteers, but nearly all the groups were struggling to recruit volunteers, especially younger volunteers.

- Acquisition and provenance. Very few groups have processes in place for accessioning or recording provenance.
- Cataloguing. Nearly all the groups have some type of catalogue for their physical collections, but it was quite common for digital archives to not be catalogued,
- Digital storage. Most groups are using a personal or a group PC/laptop to store their digital collections and they usually have a second copy of the data on a portable hard drive or on Cloud storage.
- Digitisation. Most groups have some type of digitisation equipment – either a scanner or camera, but they were often owned by an individual.
- Websites. A lot of the groups are struggling with their website. They are often using old or outdated web design software and they struggle sometimes to find volunteers to help run the website.
- Online access to collections. Alston Moor Historical Society has designed an inhouse system to manage their collections and make their catalogues and digital collections accessible online.
- Contemporary collecting. I was slightly surprised by the lack of contemporary collecting by groups (e.g. late 20th century/21st century collections).
- Capacity and audience development. Groups talked about their struggles in recruiting new volunteers and attracting new audiences.'

Although the 'Managing Local Archive course and consultation' is now completed, CLHF are now looking at how to support groups to improve their digitalisation using the Alston Moor History Society catalogue system. Two models of hosting the system are being considered and the number of groups wanting to utilise this system will be ascertained.

## CLHF Convention and AGM 2022

### Down on the Farm 'A Wonderful Day'

A warm welcome greeted delegates at this year's convention which was very well hosted by Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society. This paved the way for a lively meeting where old friendships were refreshed, and new acquaintances made.

The four talks reflected the diversity of the world of Local History but shared the enthusiasm that all speakers clearly felt for their subjects.

Angus Winchester set the scene, challenging the idea that sheep were the mainstay of Cumbrian medieval farming. In 1297 Furness Abbey had 482 oxen, 186 cows and 5000 sheep over 4 estates but most of the sheep were on the Yorkshire estate. The north in the 13<sup>th</sup> century was essentially cattle country.

By the 15<sup>th</sup>- 17<sup>th</sup> centuries gentry families were increasing in prominence as landowners with increasing numbers of sheep although Alston moor still had many cattle. The sheep flocks had many more 'weathers' or castrated males compared with modern times. These weathers were useful as they knew the areas the herds could be in and were capable of deterring predators such as foxes.



Angus Winchester in discussion with Keith Cooper at the Convention

Keith Cooper from Great Asby was the second speaker who deftly brought to life the year 1875 at Halligill Farm in Westmorland. The talk was based on a simple diary kept by farmer John Brunskill and well contextualised with sources such as contemporaneous local newspapers and farming manuals.

In the after-lunch session David Johnson kept everyone well awake with a fascinating case study of his home territory Chapel le dale, North Craven. Near Skipton. This study had started with the transcription of over 600 wills and inventories from between 1548-17 reflecting the wills of 384 people, were transcribed by 13 people. Between 1700-1750 a further 144 wills were transcribed.

In the final session Cartmel Peninsula LHS gave a medley of short presentations. The society established in 1996 and have run a newsletter, web site and facebook page. Using the theme of Village Histories their research is varied and comprehensive, recently supporting the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Allithwaite Church.

With over 100 articles of original research completed, the society have recently focussed on agriculture. Cartmel Agriculture Society are celebrating 150 years of their Agricultural show. The show started in 1873 nr Cartmel Priory, when horses were the major feature with hundreds attending and enjoying the horse leaping as the chief attraction. The Cavendish family of Holker Hall became patrons of the show once it had demonstrated it could be sustained and successful.

All in all the day was very enjoyable and reflected well on the world of local history and the pleasure that can be derived from close examination of all things local.

The AGM was managed efficiently by the Chair Graham Brooks. Full minutes are available on the CLHF website. Graham gave thanks to three valuable ex-Committee members, acknowledging their contributions and also to Jane Platt as a retiring Trustee. Jane will be replaced by Richard Brockington who has kindly agreed to renew his commitment to the CLHF.

## NOTES ON THE FARMING YEAR

John Thornthwaite became a friend of our family when we moved to Cocker mouth. John died several years ago now but he wrote down his memories of growing up at a farm in Setmurthy in the 1930s for his neighbour, Stan Warner. As a city girl, I admit to having had very little idea of the farming year before moving to Cumbria many years ago, and it was quite enlightening for me to understand a little more about the hard work that is a farming life.

John was born at the Ruddings Farm, Setmurthy, in the mid-1930s, where his father farmed about eighty acres with one horse. The farm comprised a farmhouse, farm buildings and stables, and John remembers his father keeping it basically as a self-sufficient unit, run on the following lines:

### **STOCK**

COWS – about thirty, made up of milkers, heifers and fat stock for the market. The milk was cooled and put in churns, which were collected daily from the end of the lane by the Milk Marketing Board. Some of the milk was kept by the farm and churned into butter for home use.

SHEEP – about one hundred made up of Herdwicks, Bluefaced Leicesters, and breeding ewes.

ONE FARMHORSE – called Jess

PIGS – one sow for breeding. The piglets were sent to market and one kept back for the farm to be fattened up, and then a butcher from Embleton would come to slaughter the pig on the farm. The meat would be used for ham, bacon, sausages, black puddings, and the pigs' trotters (feet) for pies.

TWO DOGS – collie sheepdogs, Ben and Jack

HENS – about two dozen and one cockerel: Rhode Island Reds, white Leghorns and Bantams, all running free and with hen coops for nights.

DUCKS – about one dozen Khaki Campbells, geese and guinea fowls.



William Gibsons farm at Buttermere WW1period from C' mouth archives

## **CROPS**

Hay was the main crop with Corn harvested for cattle feed. Turnips and potatoes were grown for the kitchen while Kale, Mangold and field carrots all went to the sheep and cattle. The vegetable garden produced potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, onions and leeks, also fruit trees (apples and pears) for use in the house.

## **ANNUAL CYCLE ON THE FARM**

1. Muck-spreading at end of winter/spring, with muck from the farm middens spread in heaps on the fields. It was then spread evenly over the land with hand gripes (a form of large fork).
2. Ploughing – done by one man and a horse-drawn, single-furrow plough, a long, slow job. If a hay crop was to be grown, the ploughing was omitted and the grass was allowed to grow naturally after muck-spreading.
3. Harrowing – carried out with a spiked mesh of steel pulled over the land by a horse and one man.
4. Sowing – corn seed was down by a man using a fiddle drill, a device for spreading seed evenly by a man vibrating a seed tray, shaped rather like a violin with a bow.



5. Rolling – a heavy roller was drawn over the land by a horse and one man to push the seed into the soil.
6. Other crops – concurrently with the corn and hay preparation: the pattern would be about one field corn, three fields hay, one field turnips, kale, mangolds and carrots.



William Gibson's farm ploughing WW1 fro Cockermouth archives

7. The 'lull' when crops were growing: this period would be used to generally tidy up, trim hedges, dyking to clear field gutters and drains, attending to lambing and calving, and later getting stock to Cockermouth Auction Market.
8. Harvest - the hay harvest was cut with a horse-drawn mower, rather like a large modern hedge-trimmer. The cutting would start on a sunny day at about five to six o'clock in the morning and be left in swathes until about noon when it was turned over to dry the underside. Next day the hay was shaken up with a gripe to dry and later gathered into hay cocks. The cocks were collected in a horse cart and taken to the barn where they were 'mewed', that is compressed by men and boys trampling it down.

The corn harvest was binder-cut by a hired tractor, which cut and bound the corn into sheaves. The sheaves were then gathered up and made into stooks of about twelve sheaves, arranged so that the corn heads were in the air. They would be left for two or three days

and then turned bottom to top to dry the corn stalks. The stooks were then collected and made into ridged stacks and the top thatched.

9. Threshing – in Autumn the stooks were removed from the stack and fed through a hired threshing machine, driven by a steam-engine supplied by Mr McGuffie from Ireby. There would be one man on the stack passing to another man feeding the thresher, and one man bagging the corn from the output of the machine. The corn was then stored for winter cattle feed, and the straw for winter bedding for the cattle.
10. Stack bottom burning – after all but the bottom layer of stooks had been taken from the stack, the base of the stack would be set on fire and burnt out to clear the accumulated rubbish and vermin, and generally tidy up the stack yard.
11. Autumn pig butchering – after the pig had been slaughtered it would be butchered into pieces for winter use. The hams and bacon parts were placed in saltpetre on slate table sconces in a cold house, and when they were judged to be properly cured they were put in white flour bags and hung from beams in the kitchen.
12. Winter – the winter days were mostly concerned with the feeding and welfare of the stock, and milking, etc. When the weather permitted, there were always the tidying and repair jobs to be done.

An old black-leaded range provided all the heat for cooking, baking and water heating in a large kettle. The farm had piped water but no electricity, so inside lighting was provided by 'Aladdin' paraffin lamps, and outside lighting by storm lamps. When John was ten years old his father died, and his mother kept the farm going for about six months, but it was hard work and the farm was eventually re-let and they moved to a cottage at Ouse Bridge.

In May 1993 John took Stan to see his birthplace at the Ruddings Farm, and it has now been developed into an attractive residential area. The old farmhouse has been renovated.

Gloria Edwards, Cockermouth Heritage Group.

## Ancient Cures of Horse and Cattle Diseases

A gentleman farmer in Westmorland had some cattle affected by the “foul,” a word used in the 1800s to describe various horse, and cattle diseases, heard that an old man in the neighbourhood who had long practised farriery was famous for curing such diseases and went to consult him.

The farmer explained the problem to the old man. His directions were few but simple. The owner of the animal was to go silently, on his own, at midnight into his orchard and cut a turf at the foot of the largest apple tree therein and then hang it carefully on the top most branch of the tree,

The turf cut must be one on which the beast had trodden on with its diseased foot. If this was performed exactly instructed, the turf would moulder away and so would the disease slowly leave the animal. The old man, the farriery, added that he had never known this cure to fail.

A *murrain* is an old word for various contagious diseases among cattle in the mid 1800s. The custom of “*need fires*” was thought by the farmers to be the best cure. The “fire” was produced rubbing two pieces of dry wood together and it was then carried from place to place through the district as a charm against the cattle being infected. Bonfires were kindled with “*the fire*” and every household brought straw or brushwood and laid it down in a narrow lane. When the fire was burned down sufficiently the cattle were forced through the smoke two or three times and, finally, the ashes were scattered to the winds to the benefit of the whole area.

A farming family were alleged to possess a charm called “*The Black Penny*.” It was said to be somewhat larger than a penny and was possibly a Roman coin or medal. When any cattle were affected with “*madness*” the Black Penny was dipped into a well of water which ran towards the south. Sufficient water was then drawn and given to the animals affected which were guaranteed to be healed.

A farmer's widow on the Westmorland borders had a cow which was taken ill. She was told to take it to the church, which she did, and ask the minister to say a prayer over the animal. The priest came and laid a hand on the beast's shoulder and said "If you live, you live and if you die you die." According to the widow the cow's health improved from that moment on.

The following year the minister was taken ill and the widow, hearing this, went to visit him. She found him in bed very ill, she put her hand on his shoulder and said "If you live you live, if you die you die." At that the minister burst out laughing and his throat got better from that moment on. The man had been suffering from Quincy, a severe form of throat infection, which broke from the effort of laughing.

Peter Holme, Kendal Oral History Group

## The Mary Fair Collection



Mary Cicely Fair was a fascinating, multi-talented woman who was born in Manchester and lived in Eskdale, Cumbria throughout most of her adult life. A published photographer, writer and archaeologist, Tullie

House hold a significant portion of her archive. This comprises of over 5000 original negatives, a significant number of her prints, notebooks and correspondence as well as her archaeological finds.

The images here and on the cover were taken by Mary Fair in the 1920s and 1930s in Cumbria, usually within a few miles of her home in Eskdale.

Very little escaped her gaze, or her interest. The image of the sheep grazing on the graveyard at Carlisle Cathedral is a 'novelty' that infrequently features in her work. Perhaps she sought to point out that even in the city, we are not far from our true Cumbria rural way of life.



It was the everyday aspects of life Fair saw around her were recorded in her meticulous image and note making. From the hardiness of the Herwick sheep, the family life of the farmer tending livestock and reaping to the coming together of a community at shearing time or boon ploughing. With this collection we are left with an unflinching account of Cumbrian life in the early twentieth century that demonstrate the intimate connection farmers have with their landscape.

There's an excellent series of essays written by colleagues available here: <https://www.tulliehouse.co.uk/introduction-mary-cicely-fairs-photography-and-herdwick-sheep>. If you have time to volunteer, we are always looking for assistants to help us catalogue and care for this highly significant collection. Get in touch with the Tullie House curatorial team at [curatorialenquiries@tulliehouse.org](mailto:curatorialenquiries@tulliehouse.org).

With thanks to CWAAS for permission to reproduce the images.

Elsa Price, Tullie House.

## TEXTILE HERITAGE at Keswick Museum

Until mechanisation and (cheaper) mass production poorer, working, country folk produced their own linen and wool for their own use as a cottage industry. It was a very labour-intensive activity but if they had spare capacity (for example, if they had several daughters who could undertake the various processes) they could sell excess thread or cloth.

THE EXHIBITION at KESWICK MUSEUM looks at the production of linen and has a textile heritage trail along the River Greta which highlights many of the textile related sites which relied on the river. It also looks at wool production by featuring a local farm, which produces wool in the same way as 200 years ago. Visitors can go to the exhibition then actually go to Low Bridge End Farm, St Johns in the Vale and see for themselves.

Please come along to the Community Gallery (free) to find out more from 4/12/22 – 31/1/23. (Please note, the Museum is closed the first two weeks of January for decorating.) Sue Hinde, Skiddaw (Keswick) U3A

## Treasurer's Farewell

Thank you all the Committee for their friendship, support and trust together with my fellow Treasurers. Many of our member societies make prompt payments, making Liz Kerrey, our Membership Secretary and my job considerably easier.

Holding the first cluster meetings across the county in 2019 helped to bring about a new understanding between the Federation and Members. Agreeing a constitution and obtaining charity status put in place important pieces in the Federation structure. Following on from the cluster meetings the application for funding to the National Lottery drew support from so many sources, but the arrival of Covid ended the application. Despite the setback with the support of CWAAS and the late Adrian Allan, the Archives workshops took place. A great achievement even if we had to scrape around for the money. I wish the Federation and all members every success for the future. John H.Poland

## Ambleside Oral History Group

### Can a gas tank clear your head?

As the impact of Covid recedes, anxiety over inflation and the cost of energy seem to have replaced the pandemic. Many people are economising on heating their homes this winter, but how easy was it a century ago when coal was king, essential to everyday living, but dirty, inconvenient, and environmentally harmful?

Dipping into Ambleside Oral History Group's (AOHG) Sound Archive, coal was an essential expense, unloaded from Windermere station in sacks and delivered to Ambleside by horse and cart or coal merchants' lorries. The sacks were emptied into cellars via coal holes, or through small doors built into the back wall of coalhouses or sheds, where ashes were also left for collection. Most households kept the kitchen range lit through winter and summer, for cooking, hot water and drying wet clothes. According to Derek Scott, whose father was a hotelier, the most expensive item on the 1918 shopping list for the Prince of Wales Hotel in Grasmere was coal, to supply coal fires in every guest bedroom. As a child, Derek marvelled at so many chimneys on the roof, all trailing smoke up into the sky. Supplies of hot water were run off a tap from the set pot, located at one end of the kitchen range, and legions of maids in hotels and big country houses ran up and downstairs first thing in the morning, carrying hot water in cans to every bedroom for washing and shaving. Later all the grates were swept, ash emptied and fires re-laid, with elegant paper fans placed in front of fireplaces in summer.

Coal was such an important commodity, most small towns in South Lakeland had two or three coal merchants, with at least two goods trains daily bringing in coal to Windermere Station. Much of it arrived in Lancashire Collieries wagons, whose inspectors carried out spot checks on prices charged by the coal merchants. Coalmen always carried their weights and measures, ready to dispute any accusations of short-weight contents as they emptied each sack.

Ambleside Gas Works, with its three gas holders, was opened at the top of the narrow and twisty Blue Hill in the 1860s, just over ten years after the railway reached Windermere. Gas usage was very popular in

Ambleside and district and the gasworks required so much coal that it took up to five return journeys daily, fetching coal from Windermere to satisfy the demand for coal and gas:

“The coal was brought by the wagons across by hand, loading from Windermere Station, four loads a day, wet, rain, blow, snow or hail. They had to have the coal so they could have the gas,” John Prickett recalled. John was one of seven children living on site next to the gasworks, where their father worked. Coal was shovelled by hand from the trains onto the coal wagons in Windermere station yard, four tons a time, in all weathers. If there was no coal, there was no gas, and the Ambleside area relied on gas for street lighting, and latterly for cooking and heating. Coke was also used to heat schoolroom stoves, public buildings and kitchen ranges, and even in the glasshouses of the wealthy, supplying exotic fruits all year round for their dining tables. Most big houses also had log fires burning, and at Rydal Hall in the 1920s, the wood was cut with a power saw driven by a water turbine, and the surplus was carted to Ambleside to be sold.

The seven children living up at Ambleside Gasworks ran free among the gas holders and retorts, and John Prickett watched with fascination as people suffering from colds and flu puffed up Blue Hill to breathe in the fumes from the settling tanks:

“There were three gas holders right next to the gasworks. It was a very interesting place to be of course, because in the olden days, when people were messed up with ‘flu and catarrh and what have you, the gas tar used to come out into a settling tank and it used to break up - ammonia and all that sort of thing and creosote came off, and leaning over this tank was like leaning over a big bottle of smelling salts, which you couldn’t put your head in too far, or else it nearly knocked your head off anyway. They used to bring people up who were suffering with these type of things, to lean their heads over these tanks to smell the fumes that had come off the gas tar. And it did, it cleared your head very much so, it did.” Little did they know that 60 years later, long after the Gasworks had been dismantled, the soil was so heavily polluted with cyanide waste that people were advised not to grow vegetables there.



John, while working on relief stoking one day, managed to turn off the entire gas supply to the whole of Ambleside, which created mayhem round the village. Street lights went out and the gas went off everywhere, including boarding houses where the evening meal was being cooked. “If you’d turned the gas back on you could have gassed half the village or caused a major explosion or something. So everybody that was available on the Council had to go round telling everybody to light all the by-passes on gases so that when they turned it on, it didn’t blow...through being green and not doing the job on a regular basis I turned the gas off in the village – very very popular, I was.....as I say I only lasted there until I was made redundant,” John recalled.

With AOHG’s sizeable archive of memories stretching back three generations and more, details of individual interviews sometimes get temporarily forgotten – but never lost. Re-reading accounts of everyday life in the 1900s, the resilience of past generations was admirable, and equally informative were the economies they adopted to make everything go further. However, home medicine remedies involving inhalation of toxic gas tar fumes from the gasworks’ settling tank to clear the sinuses probably wasn’t such a good idea!

Meanwhile, AOHG’s work recording the impact of Covid continues, with recent interviews conducted with a primary headteacher, a pharmacist, a vaccinator and a sixth form student. In the past six months, AOHG has also given a total of sixteen audio/visual presentations to groups throughout Cumbria and Lancashire. The most frequently requested topic was “The Big House” closely followed in popularity by “Tales Of The Unexpected” and “World War Two – Ambleside’s Story”.

To book a presentation, choose a title listed on the website, [www.aohg.org.uk](http://www.aohg.org.uk) and contact Judith on 07855 909238. All interview transcripts are available to read and research, just click on ‘search the archive’ for access. Sound can also be made available on request.

Jane Renouf      Ambleside Oral History Group

## RAVENSTONEDALE PARISH HISTORY GROUP

### Ravenstonedale Parish History Group celebrates 'oor mak o'toak' (Westmorland dialect)

Launching the 2022/2023 season of Ravenstonedale Parish History Group talks, Jean Scott-Smith, honorary secretary of the Lakeland Dialect Society, entertained 25 members and guests with a lively insight into the history and meanings of dialect words and illustrated her knowledge of what she described as her first language, with a variety of readings.

In the early part of the talk, Jean provided an introduction to Westmorland dialect speech and writing. Derived from the Greek noun 'dialectus', today's dialect was the normally understood speech of those native to Westmorland up to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. After that time the influence of railway, economic migration within the UK and the service of soldiery in European wars, led to dilution and import of language and terminology from other parts of the Nation, culminating with the concept of the King's English, very much associated with the arrival, just over one hundred years ago of the BBC (October 1922).

Westmorland dialect was itself subject to influences, most notably the Scandinavians, who arrived in the area as peaceful settlers, originally settled in the Isle of Man and arrived in the Westmorland area between 925 and 950. Danish is also an influence, seen today in words within place names, such as 'Thorpe' meaning a village or hamlet, often preceded by the name of someone from the location (Hackthorpe for example). Scandinavian influence is evident in familiar terms on our maps and local road signs, including Thwaite (meaning clearing), Wath (meaning 'ford') and Tarn, which literally means 'tear', as in weeping. As Jean said, 'what a lovely way to describe a distant and small body of water'.

The Lakeland Dialect Society was formed at Tullie House, Carlisle in 1939. The society was, and is dedicated to the academic study of the Cumbrian dialects, of which the Westmorland dialect is one. The Society fosters dialect speech and writing, the results of which formed the basis of the readings and texts which Jean referred to and performed from. Notably

the Society had formed a working relationship with the Young Farmers organisation, bringing the work of the society and interest in local dialect to local young people.

The readings included poems and collected narrative. One poem followed the role of Bill Dodd, a Howgill End farm worker, who could mend everything around the farm with just his binding string (Jean illustrated the talk with a length of traditional binding string). As it says in the poem 'Auld Bill cud allus fix it wid a bit o binder string'. The shepherd's adventures included tethering an escaped bull, improvising a wedding ring and ultimately in the workshop of St Peter, employed in repairing or fettling jobs in heaven. Another poem traced a twenty year romance and another dwelt on the antics of flocks of starlings. Jean read one of her own pieces, which had been awarded a National prize for original writing in dialect. This took the story of Noah and the Ark, and considered the challenges Noah would have faced today in undertaking the assignment, with the necessity of obtaining the requisite permissions from the various authorities, including obtaining permits to commence construction and for the transportation of endangered species!

In summing up, Jean left the audience with the important lesson of 'use it or lose it', because once lost then the Westmorland dialect could never return. In their vote of thanks, RPHG fervently expressed their wish for Jean to return, as her talks are always much enjoyed.

## **RAVENSTONEDALE PARISH HISTORY GROUP**

### **A panoramic 12 month journey along Hadrian's Wall**

Maurice Steele, drove for two hours from the Western lakes to Ravenstonedale to present his film to the October meeting of the History Group (RPHG), 'Walking through history, Hadrian's Wall from Wallsend to Bowness-on-Solway'. Over 30 members and guests demonstrated their appreciation of his journeys, both his journey on Wednesday to Ravenstonedale and the twelve month journey he took to gather the visual material that became his very entertaining film.

The film documented the route along the Hadrian's Wall National Trail which follows the line of the Hadrian's Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site, passing through some of the most beautiful parts of England – from rolling fields and rugged borderlands to the vibrant cities of Newcastle and Carlisle – with dozens of sights of historical interest along the route. Using still photography, painstakingly edited into many transitions, with a soundtrack, the film was a picturesque and thoroughly entertaining presentation.

As the photographs were collected over twelve months, the seasons came alive with vibrant spring flower, snowy scenes and the warmth of summer illustrating the highlights of the walk, along with interesting deep dives into historical stories, related to the Roman and other centres of interest encountered when travelling from East to West.

In addition to professionally rendered voiceovers, the soundtrack featured good use of various musical clips. These included background instrumentals as the route traversed each season and longer complete musical contributions pertinent to sights visited and explained in more depth, including the Blaydon Races and the folk song 'Flowers of the Forest' which perfectly supported a remembrance day scene.

The many scenes of interest celebrated in the film included an early stop on the route which introduced the history of Vickers Armstrong, formed when Vickers merged with the Tyneside based engineering company of Armstrong Whitworth founded by William Armstrong to become Vickers-Armstrong. Armstrong Whitworth and Vickers had developed along similar lines, expanding into various military sectors and produced a whole suite of military products. Armstrong Whitworth were notable for their artillery manufacture at Elswick and shipbuilding at a yard at High Walker on the River Tyne.

Further on, Stephenson, forever associated with the global phenomenon of railway transportation, who was illiterate up to the age of 18, and self-educated himself to enable his engineering career. His birthplace at Wylam can be visited on the trail. Other notable lives documented in the film included John Clayton. John was part of a wealthy family, however

he also worked hard to increase his fortunes and land-holdings. When he died, his nephew Nathaniel George Clayton inherited around 20,000 acres of land and £713,522 0s.2d, of £42,732,833.08 in modern money!

Luckily for future generations of archaeologists and visitors to Hadrian's Wall, John Clayton used a portion of his wealth to purchase land which contained Hadrian's Wall and its forts, milecastles and turrets. His objective was to preserve the wall for future generations, a legacy enjoyed by those who walk the trail today. Edward 1<sup>st</sup>, who died in 1307, is commemorated with a modern sculpture at Burgh-by Sands, on the final stretch of the Hadrian's Wall trail.

Of interest for readers of the Herald, is that Cumbria, specifically the part of the county served by the paper is home to the longest visible stretch of Hadrian's Wall. Views of the wall was a key feature of the film as the journey continued from the Cumbrian border to Carlisle and then on long straight lanes and roads to Bowness-on-Solway, the end of the trail.

For more information on the National Trail, go to [https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en\\_GB/trails/hadrians-wall-path/](https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/hadrians-wall-path/)

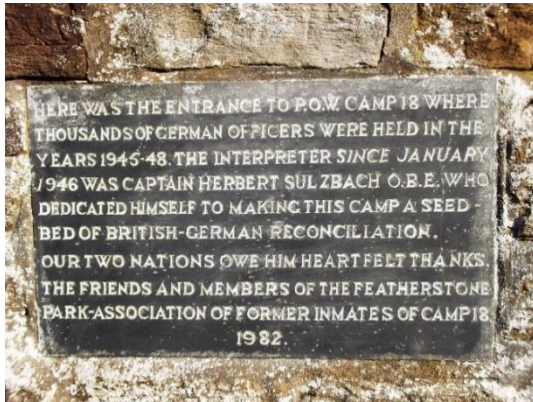
Coanwood Featherstone Lambley History Group inc  
Tindale, Hartleyburn, Plenmeller, Knarsdale and Kirkhaugh



We had a very interesting walk and talk at Midgeholme earlier this summer. The walk was run jointly by Clive Seal and Graham Brooks who were extremely knowledgeable about the history of the mining and railway in the area. 24 of us

learnt about the King Pit at High Midgeholme, the Quarry and all the

smaller Drifts and Shafts down in Midgeholme Bottoms. It was hard to imagine that over 200 men were working in the King Pit up to 1955. A few weeks later we had another walk which was arranged in collaboration with the Bewcastle Heritage Society. This encompassed a walk to Featherstone Castle, Featherstone POW Camp 18, Lambley Priory, Lambley Viaduct and back along the old Railway line passing Coanwood Station back to the Wallace Arms. A thoroughly enjoyable walk was had by over 40 folk, with interesting historical input from Trevor Telford, Nic Broomhead and Richard Macdonald.



Other events this year saw 85 people attend for 2 talks on the same night relating to the POW Camp a Photographic Exhibition at Hallbankgate Hub and we have had a fantastic 66 new paid-up members joining our group in 2022. Roll on 2023 when we should have a new website and make inroads into the writing of our Local History Book. Richard Macdonald – Chairman

## Lorton and Derwent Fells Local History Society

Bulletin 89 contained a review of *The Dark Path to Knowledge*, edited by Michael Pearson and Ian Hodkinson. By a fortuitous coincidence, Professor Ian Hodkinson had delivered a talk entitled 'Early Naturalists in Lakeland' to Lorton and Derwent Fells Society on 14 July. A retired professional biologist, Ian has researched the history of natural history studies in the Lakes area. Two years ago, his book *Natural Awakenings*:

*Early Naturalists in Lakeland* was published, and his talk was based on this.

Ian introduced eleven of the very earliest naturalists, wandering their local fells and valleys sharing their findings with others, both locally and nationally. Without exception the people talked about were men, many were clergymen, several were shoemakers and several from Kendal. They cover the period from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century to early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Thomas Lawson (1630 – 1691) was a Quaker schoolmaster and plant collector, born in Yorkshire, but who lived most of his life in The Lakes. He sent specimens to John Ray, who produced the first scientific classification of British plants. Lawson's name lives on in that of a variety of hawkweed from France, described in 1779 and given the name *Hieracium Lawsonii*.

William Nicholson (1655 – 1727) was Bishop of Carlisle, a man of wide interests including fish, fossils and antiquities as well as plants. He was a friend of Lawson but opposed in philosophy. He too sent rarities to John Ray.

John Robinson (active 1690 – 1710), also known as John Fitz-Roberts, on account of there being too many others named John Robinson in Kendal. He was a shoemaker and botanist who collected fossils and plants, selling them on to scientists and other collectors in Oxford and London. 16 of his specimens are now preserved in the Natural History Museum.

Thomas Robinson (c1646 – 1719) was another clergyman, a naturalist of Ousby. He was a flat-earther and creationist and saw his botanical study as being to the glory of God and to demonstrate his theological beliefs. Robinson invested heavily in the Goldscope Mines and when they went bust, he lost his investments and ran off to sea. Robinson published *An Essay towards a Natural History of Westmorland and Cumberland* in 1709.

Charles Leigh (1662 – 1707) was a physician and naturalist of Manchester, a self-publicist of little talent, whose work was poorly regarded. However,

his name is remembered in three North American sunflowers named *Helianthus Leighia*.

John Wilson (1696 – 1751) was born at Longsleddale at a time when a family of herbalists called Lickbarrow was active in the dale, using herbal medicine to cure illness. He became another shoemaker of Kendal and a lifelong atheist. Wilson taught himself Latin in order to follow his botanical interests. In 1744 he published an early field guide to wildflowers, with illustrations, written in English to serve a general readership. He called this *A Synopsis of British Plants in Ray's Method*. Wilson added two previously unknown species of plants to the English list and later had a genus named after him – the Australian Silky *Wilsonia*.

William Hudson (1634 – 1793) was born at Kendal, where he received a better education than Wilson and went to London to be apprenticed as an apothecary and became a demonstrator at the Society of Apothecaries' Chelsea Physic Garden. He made regular donations of plant specimens to the Royal Society and in 1762 published *Flora Angelica* in Latin, containing local plants not previously identified.

James Jenkinson (1738 – 1808) was another Quaker, born in Yealand Conyers, Lancashire. He was a botanist, master of the Friends School in the village and he later published *A Generic and Specific Description of British Plants* in 1775, in English and aimed at the general public.

William Richardson (1699 – 1767) was curate and schoolmaster at Crosthwaite before being appointed vicar of Dacre. He published on the natural history of the Ullswater area, focussing on mammals, birds and fish and rarer plants.

John Heysham (1753 – 1834) from Lancaster attended the school where Jenkinson was schoolmaster. He studied medicine at Edinburgh and worked in Carlisle as a physician. He made an important contribution to public health in such matters as rabies in dogs and typhus. His interest in bills of mortality (lists of causes and ages of death) led to an approach by the Sun Life Assurance Company and ultimately to actuarial tables of life expectancy. Heysham is famous for producing the first serious attempt at



an extensive catalogue of animals in Cumberland. Published in 1794, *A Catalogue of Cumberland Animals* included mammals and fish, though insects were almost entirely absent. This now serves as a baseline of species then abundant in the county and provides stark evidence for what we have lost – sweet mart (pine martin), foul mart (pole cat) and the wildcat, ptarmigan, dotterel and corncrake. Heysham was buried at Carlisle Cathedral and there are several memorials: at Richardson Road cemetery, and commemorative windows at Carlisle Cathedral and Lancaster Priory.

John Gough (1757 – 1825) Known as ‘The Blind Philosopher’, Gough was born in Kendal into a Quaker family, though he was later disowned when he married in a conventional church. He was blinded by smallpox at the age of three but learned to use all his senses, including touch, taste and smell and developed a prodigious memory. He taught himself maths, later instructed John Dalton and set mathematical puzzles in magazines. A friend of Wordsworth, he published 50 papers, covering a range of topics including the effect of sound on unsighted people. He kept meticulous records of meteorological events, the migration of birds, linking these to observed data on temperature and climate. He described the effects of temperature on animals (torpor in dormice) and the importance of water for plants. For example, stonecrop takes up water from its roots, not the atmosphere as had been previously thought. Duckweed dried out for decades can spring back to life if provided with water. Gough was buried at Kendal and is only recently becoming recognised for his considerable achievements.

This talk illustrated the different backgrounds of these men, while at the same time, they enjoyed close connections. They were exploring the same area of interest and shared their findings locally while making links to the wider world, some of which live on in the names of plants. They really were on the map in their own time and, thanks to Ian Hodkinson, that place in the world is now being celebrated more widely as it deserves.

Sandra Shaw of Lorton and Derwent Fells Local History Society

## Chairman's Musings

There continues to be a lot going on in the world of the CRA. In August we held our management team meeting. This was a hybrid meeting with a number of us being together in a room in Carlisle station, whilst others joined via Zoom. Prior to Covid we had all tried to get together in one place, usually at Crewe. However, as we had previously managed hybrid meetings, we felt it would make sense to continue with them if at all possible. This saves travel time for individuals that cannot attend in person as well as reducing our costs. Despite some initial technical hitches, all went well and we shall be repeating this for our November meeting.

The display at Dalemain Mansion went ahead. Dates have been agreed for one at Ravensglass museum, starting in February next year and our new membership form has been completed and printed. The long awaited Kendal & Windermere Line book by Dick Smith is getting closer to publication, possibly this year, if all goes well. Just when you think you have found out everything there is to know about the line something new pops up and Dick has to investigate it to see if he needs to include it, with the inevitable knock on effect. Also we have new modelling items in the pipeline too!

We have had loads of really good publicity recently, mostly on the back of this electronic newsletter, which goes to lots of press and other groups of people and this has also resulted in us being asked to provide information, images or people who are knowledgeable on a particular subject or area. Carnforth, Carlisle station buildings, Seascale and Grange-over-Sands, being a few. Long may it continue! We are now looking forward to our Autumn Conference at Shap Wells in November.

Philip T Tuer    Chairman

## Dalemain Mansion Celebrates Family Link to Lancaster & Carlisle Railway Line 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



On 15th December 1846 the inaugural train from Lancaster arrived in Carlisle. Two days later, timetabled passenger services started. These events marked a milestone in the construction of what we now know as the London to Glasgow “West Coast Main Line”. At Carlisle and Penrith, it was now possible to travel to and from the South by rail.

This sixty-nine mile railway from Lancaster to Carlisle, across Shap summit, and the associated stations and viaducts, had taken an incredibly short 30 months to complete. Last December this milestone was celebrated with the unveiling of plaques and pictorial displays (provided by the Cumbrian Railways Association (CRA)), at Penrith and Carlisle stations.

Instrumental in getting the line built in the 1840's was the then owner of Dalemain Mansion, Edward Hasell, who was the first Chairman of the Lancaster & Carlisle Railway company riding on the very first trains!

To recognise this association, the CRA and Dalemain Mansion joined together to mount a photographic exhibition during August which celebrated the opening of the line and the involvement of Edward Hasell. Hundreds of visitors were able to see this exhibition as part of the tour of Dalemain Mansion. The exhibition included images of the line and stations (from the CRA library and courtesy of Dalemain Mansion) over the years up to the current day and some historical explanations. Robert Hasell-McCosh, the current owner of the Dalemain Estate, commented "Dalemain has a long-standing connection with the railways in Cumbria and it means a great deal to our family to partner with the CRA to provide this exhibition. The CRA do outstanding work to promote the history of railways in the county."

CRA Chairman Philip Tuer said: "The CRA is delighted to be able to work together with Dalemain Mansion to help publicise, to an even wider audience, the family link with the building of this important railway and showcase the line's history over the years". Don Jary

## **Report from Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group**

CVBG is gradually getting back to the normal round of activities after Covid. We are holding a live event once a month as well as continuing with the monthly Zoom talks. Some recording of buildings is taking place and several houses and former houses on farms have been drawn to our attention and visited.

The AGM was held in Appleby in September and a few changes were made to the committee. Notably, we have a change of treasurer, as Mike Kingsbury retired after nine years and Margaret Jarvis has taken over. Membership is at its highest since our foundation in 2013.

Following the AGM members had a choice of activities, including a tour of St Anne's Hospital, (almshouses) founded by Lady Anne Clifford in 1653,

and a self-guided walk along Boroughgate, using the Step by Step guide written by June Hill and Claire Jeffery as part of the Heritage Action Zone project, and distributed free to all members earlier in the year. The afternoon ended with a visit to the tombs of Lady Anne Clifford (died 1676) and her mother, Margaret, Dowager Countess of Cumberland, (died 1616) in the parish church of St Lawrence where June Hill gave an introductory talk.

Monthly live events have included visits to

1. (June), Raughton Head, Middle Skiprigg and Hudbeck, led by Stephanie Hewison,
2. (July), Fallen Yew at Underbarrow, led by Dan Elsworth,
3. (September), Scales Hall, Skelton, led by Paul Lewis,
4. (October), Ona Ash, Kirkoswald, led by Andrew Carter.

Members continue to receive the quarterly newsletter by post and e mail news between editions. Yet to come are a walk round Milnthorpe, led by Stuart Harling in November and the Christmas lunch in December.

New members are always welcome. See website, [www.cvbg.co.uk](http://www.cvbg.co.uk)

June Hill

## Towards a Dictionary of Cumbrian Biography

### The Evolution of Cumbrian Lives

[www.cumbrianlives.org.uk](http://www.cumbrianlives.org.uk)

Like many of your members, I have always been interested in genealogy and biography. From the age of fourteen, I sought out elderly relatives all over the country to accumulate family names and stories and thus my family tree and family history grew. After some years, having researched branches in Lancashire, Cheshire, Durham and Suffolk, I was particularly delighted to discover ancestors living in Hawkshead.

After twelve years of teaching English language and literature in Cumbria, Egypt, Norfolk and Nottinghamshire, I felt I needed a change, so I

resigned and began writing a novel. This took two years and although the quality of my prose may have improved during the process, predictably, the letters from publishers' readers and agents revealed my goal of a literary publication to be a fantasy. One of them suggested that I should try a full length biography instead.



So in 1989, I made a shortlist of potential subjects for a Cumbrian biography, some from my home area of Furness. Having selected the artist George Romney, after several years' work I managed to publish *A Striking Likeness* in 2002. By then I had made a minor contribution to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography with the life of William Cockin (1736-1801) and to the Grove Dictionary of Art with the Rev William Gilpin (1724-1804). I also researched William's brother, the equestrian artist Sawrey Gilpin (1733-1807) (Armitt Journal, 1998). Much later, when I

worked on the Public Monuments and Sculptures survey, I added their younger brother, the military surgeon Sir Joseph Gilpin (1745-1834) to the collection. During this period it became clear that many significant Cumbrians were not included in the ODNB.

Later in 1998, a group of local biographers and historians met at Charlotte Mason College and agreed to found a county biographical project aiming to identify, research and write up all interesting Cumbrians, from the time of the Romans onwards. To avoid duplication of effort, we decided that the subjects chosen should not already be included in the ODNB. Encouraged by the late William Rollinson (1937-2000) and under the chairmanship of Lesley Shore, we planned the

project during ten meetings and had a helpful encounter with Brian Harrison, the then editor of the ODNB at Oxford. For the purposes of the project the boundaries of Cumbria are the same as those imposed in 1974, but we decided that it was not a requirement that each subject should be born in the county. However, it is expected that they should have achieved something of interest.

From 1998 until 2020, working intermittently, Richard Hall and David Cross each produced an alphabetical list of likely names culled from archival resources, the shelves of several reference collections and the internet. Each name was researched briefly and written up as a paragraph, with bibliographical references when available. Other names arose at the suggestion of a range of enthusiasts. Then, in 2020 Stephen White, librarian of the Jackson collection at Carlisle, merged the two lists and removed duplicates, so that the joint result of this Index was some 2000-3000 individual paragraphs. Further characters sourced in the books on local heraldry by Roy Hudleston (1905-1992) have been included, with cross references. During this process it became clear that we should also include references to all the local entries from the ODNB itself, so gradually this is also being encompassed.

Just before the start of the pandemic, Darren Kierman of Kierweb, in Carlisle, was asked to design a website and the Index was installed within it. Next, the project was drawn to the attention of members of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society and they were asked to submit ideas for longer lives in which they were interested. Through this connection, several members of the Cumbria Local History Federation and of the Friends of Cumbria Archives also came on board. Contributors were encouraged to use the template provided by the editors of the ODNB and to list sources, rather than footnotes, at the end of each entry.

Among the writers who stepped forward, we are particularly grateful to Jean Warburton, Kevin Grice and Tim Cockerill, who between them have researched and written more than fifty lives. Altogether, we now have a tally of more than 100 lives, written and edited, often of four or five

pages in extent. After this wonderfully productive period during the pandemic, the launch of the Cumbrian Lives website was finally held in Carlisle on Wednesday 27 July 2022.

From the outset, we have been keen to broaden our scope by identifying individuals from a wider range of occupations than are represented in the ODNB. Observers have wondered what our criteria might be. Following the success of the Mass Observation and Oral History projects, it seemed appropriate to include huntsmen, climbers, cattle breeders, cheesemakers and craftspeople. In addition, as the visitor is an important, albeit fleeting, member of our communities, some travellers and tourists are also included. For us, the project celebrates advocacy. If someone is prepared to research and write up a life with enthusiasm, provided the standard reaches the editorial bar, this life can be added to the project. We do offer editorial assistance and pointers to neophytes.

We hope that the project will be of interest to a wide range of Cumbrian historians, residents, visitors, students and schoolchildren. Local professionals and enthusiasts are all encouraged to explore the Index and to submit further ideas for long or short lives to the editor, or indeed to write them. It would be enormously worthwhile to include one or two of the more interesting characters from each parish. Subjects do not need to be numbered amongst the great and the good.

We look forward to hearing from potential contributors and new editors. In addition, we are looking for volunteers interested in fund raising, researching portrait images and negotiating permissions.

Do get in touch.

David A Cross BA Dunelm, MA, PhD Lancaster, Editor





Historic England

Cumbria  
County History Trust

## Calling all curious local history detectives!

Cumbria County History Trust and Historic England are looking for volunteers to take part in a new project researching important and historic buildings in Barrow-in-Furness. We need volunteers to work as part of a team to check the accuracy of information held on the National Heritage List for England, and to help enrich the List with images and contextual research. Some volunteer roles require site visits, while others are desk-based. Full training will be given.

The project will take place between January and March 2023 and it offers a great opportunity to learn more about the rich history of Barrow, meet new people and take part in an exciting research project. Interested in finding out more? Please email Sarah Rose [s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk) for more information.



Image by Lucy Millson-Watkins © Historic England

Volunteers in Leeds learning how to conduct a condition survey.

## Do you know of any Cumbrian portraits painted by Henry Pickering?



Portrait of a Gentleman by Henry Pickering

<http://www.artnet.com/artists/henry-pickering/>

accessed 17 Oct 2022

Marion, who contacted Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society recently, asked if we came across any painting by Henry Pickering to let her know. She has been researching his background and paintings as very little is known about him. She knows that he was brought up in Warrington, his paintings date between 1740 and 1770 and most of his identified subjects lived in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire and North Wales.

She had recently found Henry's burial record in Skipton, Yorkshire where he was buried on 15 Dec 1770. From his will, which was proved in Manchester in February 1771, she learned that his wife's name was Mary, they had 4 children and that they lived in Manchester. Sales of his goods in Manchester, during 1771, state they were for the benefit of his children who were aged between 10 and 19 years old.

Henry's burial record states he was 'from Cartmal' whereas other burials on the page state that they were 'of Pickering'. On receipt of Marion's e-mail I did some research to see if I could find anything about Henry in Cartmel records. I only found information about the death and burial of Mrs Mary Pickering who was buried on 6 Jan 1771. Was she Henry's wife? We have concluded that the answer is yes. Why were they both in Cartmel? Why had he travelled to Skipton? There are no known family connections to Cartmel and we can only speculate that Henry was possibly looking for new commissions in the area or considering moving there for the sake of his health.

His will stipulates that *'As to my pictures my Request is that they may be Finish'd by the Best Drapery Painter and then deliver'd to the Gentry who have Favour'd me with their Commands...'* which is an intriguing insight into portrait painting at this time and the reason a newspaper report announcing his death dubbed him the 'ingenious face painter'.

If you know of any portraits painted by Henry Pickering, in private collections in Cumbria, please let me know and I will pass the information to Marion.

Pat Rowland, Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society.

## 'The Dead Man's Penny' – The World War One Memorial Plaque

Some years ago, in the happy days when I was an enthusiastically active member of the team of Family History Society volunteers attending Fairs and Conferences, (I still am pandemic restrictions permitting), I was always involved in helping fellow members and members of the public in their family history research quest. From time to time I happened upon an item of interest, a particular medal or even an item or two that a visitor donated. After over a couple of decades of this endeavour, I now have a varied collection of miscellaneous items gracing my desk drawers, office shelving and walls. Particular amongst this collection is a 'Dead Man's Penny' together with two medals, the George V Silver 1914-1918, and the 1914-1915 Star, all the awards to Private James Alfred ROBERTS G/4025 of the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) who died on

Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1916 following injuries incurred at Thiepval in the battle of the Somme. There are strong feelings that, though he was a member of a South of England Battalion, he would have close North of England family connections.

The **World War One Memorial Plaque** was made from Bronze, weighing 350gms and sized at 120mm, hence it was popularly known as the “Dead Man’s Penny” among front-line troops, also becoming widely known as, the “Death Penny”, “Death Plaque” or “Widow's Penny”. 100 years ago, British soldiers were involved in the fierce fighting of the First World War's *Battle of the Somme* in northern France. The battle was one of the conflict's bloodiest, lasting for 141 days over a 15-mile front.



After the war, the family of every serviceman killed received this bronze plaque of condolence, also known as the 'Dead Man's Penny' or 'Death Penny' because of its resemblance to the coin. 1,355,000 were issued, made from 450 tons of bronze. No rank was stated, because there was no distinction made between the sacrifice of individuals.

It was in October 1916 that the British Government setup a committee for the idea of a commemorative plaque that could be given to the next of kin for those *men and women whose deaths* were due to the *First World War of 1914-18*. The first a family would know of the death of family member was the arrival of a telegram from the War Office. This would be followed by the *World War One* Death Plaque and any medals the serviceman would have earned serving his country. The original plaque was a 12-centimetre disk cast in bronze gunmetal, which included an image of Britannia and a lion, two dolphins that represented Great

Britain's sea power and the emblem of Imperial Germany's eagle being torn to pieces by another lion. Britannia is holding an oak spray with leaves and acorns. Beneath this was a rectangular tablet where the deceased name was cast into the plaque. No rank was given as it was intended to show equality in their sacrifice. On the outer edge of the disk, it bears the inscription, '*He died for freedom and honour*'. The memorial plaque was posted to the next of kin protected by a firm cardboard purpose made folder, which was then placed in a white HMSO envelope.

Production of the plaques and scrolls, which was supposed to be financed by German reparation money, began in 1919 with approximately 1,350,000 issued. They commemorated those who fell between 4th August, 1914 and 10th January, 1920 for home, Western Europe and the Dominions whilst the final date for the other theatres of war or for those died of attributable causes was 30th April 1920. The next of kin of the 306 British and Commonwealth military personnel who were executed following a Court Martial did not receive a memorial plaque. Private Roberts is remembered at the Debt of Honour Register at the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France, full details are available from the CWGC.

I would like to extend an invitation to anyone of James Alfred's family to make contact with me and I would be most happy to donate this valuable collection to the rightful family for their retention.

Ian White

[ian.white4@live.co.uk](mailto:ian.white4@live.co.uk)

## Help and advice sought

Has any other CLHF Society had experience of becoming or attempting to become an incorporated body? We recently faced being asked for personal indemnity from a committee member when booking a venue. We wondered whether becoming an incorporated body would avoid this having to be taken on by an individual if we considered booking the same venue again.

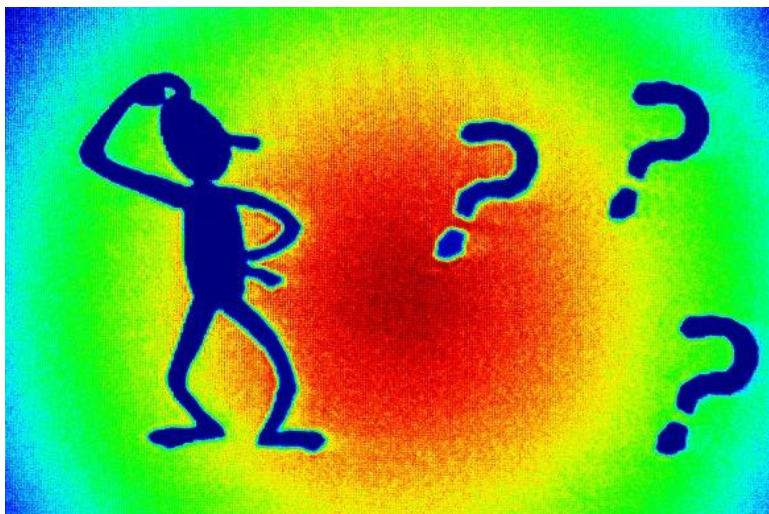
Any suggestions, advice, assistance, experience gratefully received.

Sandra Shaw

Secretary of Lorton and Derwent Fells Local History Society

[sandra.m.shaw@btopenworld.com](mailto:sandra.m.shaw@btopenworld.com)

## Has anyone an answer to this perennial question?



Our history group covers a fantastically interesting part of Cumbria with an accessible history that goes back well before the 12<sup>th</sup> century. We have the usual valleys, fells and rivers plus numerous small settlements and towns. The area includes the usual network of roads, churches, farms, industrial sites, monuments and a countryside littered with farms, and that's before we get to the people who have lived in the cottages and mansions we now occupy.

The lectures and trips we organise are well attended, membership fees are minimal and we have AGMs' that are so short we don't have time to finish our coffee. So, I ask you, why is it that only a handful of people in our history group are ever interested in delving into the history of their surroundings and putting pen to paper when there is so much to find out and learn?

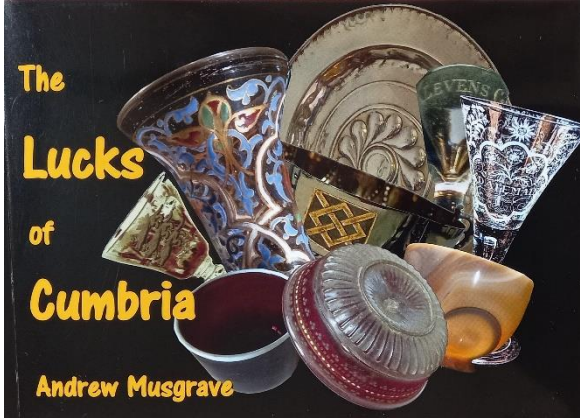
What is it you do to encourage research, AND IF IT WORKS please tell me so we can do something similar.

Name supplied but responses to the Bulletin Editor to save any embarrassment please.

## Local history Publications

*The Lucks of Cumbria* by Andrew Musgrave

Published by Lightship Guides & Publications £15 at all local major book shops



The Lucks of Cumbria should have been included in the summer edition of the Bulletin but due to circumstances beyond our control this did not happen. However, the delay gives an opportunity

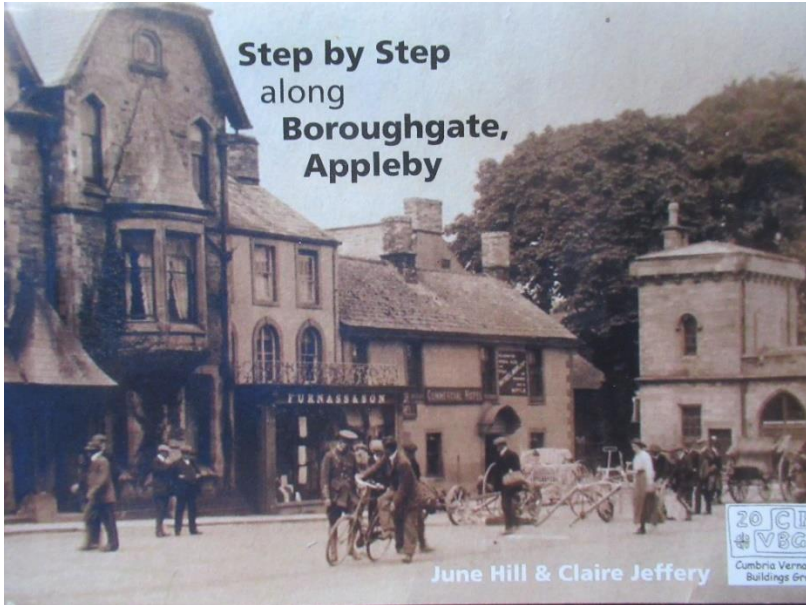
to impart the news that this unusual local history book won the 'Bill Rollinson Prize for Landscape & Tradition' at this summer's Lakeland Book of the Year Awards. Many congratulations to the author, Andrew Musgrave, who is a member of the Cartmel Peninsular Local History Society, who so efficiently hosted the CLHF convention in Allithwaite in October. The 'Lucks' described in this well illustrated book are mostly precious heirlooms that were believed to impart fortune to some of the major families of Cumbria. These include a Venetian glass bowl of Muncaster Castle that has a regal association, Workington Hall's agate communion cup that had belonged to Mary Queen of Scots and of course the superbly decorated Syrian glass chalice that is the 'Luck of Edenhall' the erstwhile home of the Musgrave family in the Eden Valley. Told with more than a hint of the whimsical these tales help to shed light on the changing fortunes of some of the county's historical leading families and the properties they inhabited. The author is himself a descendant of the Eden Valley Musgraves and with each 'luck' pocket history he reveals an historical background to both the property and family to which it is connected. The Lucks of Cumbria would make an interesting addition to any local historian's Christmas stocking.

Christine Craghill



## ***Step by Step along Boroughgate, Appleby***

(Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group, 2022), JUNE HILL & CLAIRE JEFFERY, 26pp. £3.00 + £1 postage.

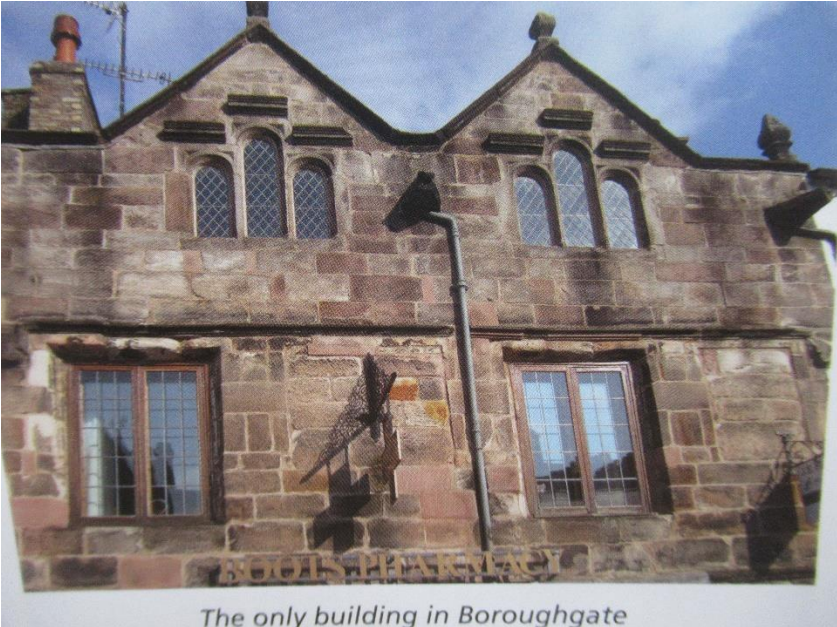


This is a gem of a publication. It is No. 10 in a series by June Hill. Like its predecessors, it is specifically designed to encourage people to experience and explore history on foot. Its dimensions will allow it to be carried in a handbag or an overcoat pocket and its laminated cover will safeguard it against the elements. The contents provide a wealth of information about Boroughgate, Appleby's main street, which runs uphill from St. Lawrence's Church in the north to the Castle in the south: 'arguably one of the most beautiful streets in an English town'.

There is, firstly, an overview of Appleby's history from the close of the 11<sup>th</sup> century when it ceased to be under Scottish rule. Each building is then discussed in sequence, beginning with the Cloisters (which form a gateway into the churchyard) and the Low Cross; then proceeding up the west side of the street; and returning from the High Cross to follow the east side before closing with the Moot Hall, remarkably 'still in use today



for its original purpose'. Treatment of buildings, including details of earlier and current uses and ownership, is richly complemented by splendid colour photographs. Technical details are briefly but clearly explained. And there is a sketch map listing the properties in the order in which they are discussed, together with notes on further reading, Ordnance Survey maps, and organisations from which additional information may be obtained.



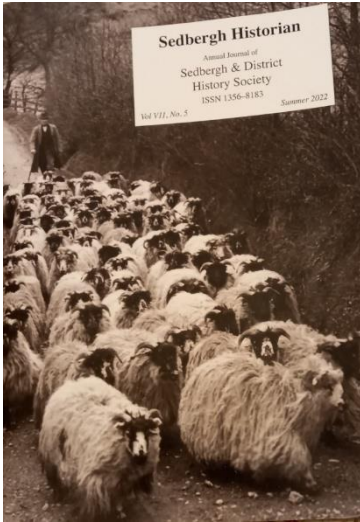
Parties with similar interests in other locations are strongly encouraged to view this excellent guide as a role model and the CVBG is to be warmly commended not just for designing in this format, gathering the information, and producing the illustrations, but also for managing the publication process through to such a successful conclusion as part of the Heritage Action Zone for Appleby and fully funded by the project. Copies are available from M. Turner, CVBG Secretary, 4, Connor Ave., Carron, Falkirk FK2 7FS or [miketurner4@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:miketurner4@hotmail.co.uk) Pay by BACS please, CVBG Acct. No. 71407368; Sort Code 40-26-17, with name as reference.

Peter Roebuck

## ***Sedbergh Historian summer 2022***

### ***Annual Journal of Sedbergh & District History Society***

Summer 2022 ISSN 1356 – 8183      Cost £8 incl p&p      From  
Sedbergh & District History Society at 72A Main Street, Sedbergh.  
Cumbria, LA10 5AD



The 2022 Annual Journal of Sedbergh & District History Society deals largely with the continuing histories of various notable families of the region including those within the flourishing Quaker community of times past. Inevitably with families comes the homes in which they lived and these were the traditional and later buildings of the region. Articles have been submitted by Kevin Lancaster, on the Washington family who were ‘off comers’ to Sedbergh in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and grew into one of the influential and

industrious families in the region before finally dying out in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

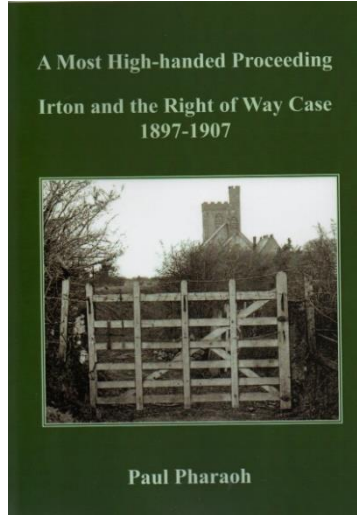
Enid Thompson, in a continuation of the article she wrote for the journal in 2021 edition, traces the lines of the Airey, Baynes and off-shoot families and the traditional properties in which they lived. Sadly, Enid died shortly after she submitted her article and a tribute is paid to her enthusiastic and meticulous research on the Sedbergh area for the society over the years.

In another continuation article Lyn Clauson has written about the adult and later life of her grandfather John Gardner. However, the lead in article of the journal by Anthea Boulton and titled ‘Observations On The Dialect of Dent’, bucks the trend of this issue by using the voice of local people who take us to times past with terminology used everyday at one time but which is now slowly fading out of use.      Chris Craghi

***A Most High-handed Proceeding***

***Irton and the Right of Way Case 1897-1907*** by Paul Pharaoh

ISBN 978-1-912181-51-1 Published by Bookcase, Carlisle Price £15



Not for the first time has this scenario of major landlord against community over believed rights of way taken place, particularly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and this one has all the drama one might expect in a land dispute. Irton lies on the western fringes of the Lake District at the mouth of Eskdale and when the lord of the manor decided to cut off ancient footpaths that led across his land to the parish church the local parishioners were not about to lie down and concur, particularly after several successful prosecutions against individuals had taken place. No one though could have envisaged that the dispute would take ten years and several court cases to resolve – in this case in favour of the parishioners. Described by others as a fascinating social history and a monumental contest between parishioners and the lord of the manor, the ultimate decision had far flung advantages in the case for opening up the countryside in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in favour of the right to roam across what are now designated public rights of way. This a detailed and lively account of the dispute and a shining light for those of us who have ever thought about giving up on a project.

Chris Craghill



Cumbria Local History Federation, CLHF, is seeking to increase the number of people on its Committee to help deliver a more varied “service” to their membership. These include website contributions and updating, an annual Convention, Cluster meetings with Cumbrian local history groups, training in specific skills needed to read and understand sources, archive development, finance and fund raising and general support for anyone interested in understanding and researching the local history of Cumbria.

It is an opportunity to become involved in the wider local history community and meet with other similar interest groups, individuals and organisations. We work together as a team sharing enthusiasm and responsibilities so no-one will be over worked!

The Committee meets about five times a year at a convenient venue somewhere in Cumbria, currently in Shap, but this can vary.

Please consider joining us and sharing your interest and skills Cumbria wide. I am happy to answer any questions or queries you may have.

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