



Cumbria Local History Federation

Bulletin 91: Spring 2023



Fox's pulpit photo © CCHT see page 7

Chairman's Chat	2
Next steps in the Community archives project	3
Dry Stone Wall Survey in Asby Parish	4
Religious mystery in Killington and Firbank	7
Members contributions: Alston Moor, Ravenstonedale, Coanwood et al, Upper Eden	13
Upcoming events : Cumbria Mining, Mitchells at Cockermouth, CRA	25
Drigg's WW2 TNT Factory : new commemoration	28
New Investigation at Lowther Medieval Castle	30
CLHF	32

Chairman's Chat

Generally the Federation has been quiet over the winter period. Progress on this year's Convention has been progressing and will be at the Village Hall at Stainton on the subject of mining with a number of prominent speakers already booked. The Hall has excellent facilities with both the main room for the convention and 2 smaller side rooms for displays and the buffet lunch to be served. Booking forms should be out shortly. The West Cumbria Archaeological Society have agreed to help with the organisation and on the day.

We have welcomed two new members to the committee, Les Gilpin and Richard O'Brien. Richard has stepped in to fill John's shoes as treasurer.

From the weekly digest the Liz Kerry sends out it would appear that most groups are now getting back to their normal activities after the Covid interlude and a lot of member Societies are reporting increased activity. If your group's activities aren't featured in Liz's round up and you would like them to, please send her the details.

We have started to roll out the possible use of the Alston Moor Archive Cataloguing system, with it being demonstrated to a number of groups who have expressed an interest in it. If your group has an archive and would be interested in seeing a demonstration of the programme please contact Nigel Mills.

I hope you all have a very enjoyable summer exploring history either locally or on a much wider basis and that the weather is fine for all the planned field visits.

Graham Brooks

Date for your diary

CLHF Convention

Saturday 4th November at Stainton Village Hall

MANAGING LOCAL ARCHIVES Project

This project, which came out of the Cluster Meetings with CLHF member groups and the follow up Archive Management training is progressing slowly but surely. I wish to thank all the groups who responded to my recent emails outlining a proposed archive catalogue and asking for expressions of interest.



The CLHF Committee have now considered these expressions of interest, have seen the catalogue in action at a recent meeting, and decided that it has the potential to positively help any society or group to build an archive, especially those without an existing on-line archive catalogue, to organise and understand their own archive holdings.

The next step is to demonstrate it to the interested groups and explain the system and the processes required to ensure the documents are safely stored and accessed in line with the help and advice received from Kevin Bolton, Consultant, and the Cumbria Archive Service at the training sessions last year.

I will be in touch shortly with those groups who “expressed an interest” and happy to receive enquiries about the project.

Nigel Mills CLHF Committee

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The CLHF Archive Catalogue Project

A range of survey techniques were applied, though not all were used for every wall surveyed. To start, the volunteer team would walk each length of selected wall, identifying wall characteristics. This enabled a survey proforma sheet to be completed, and on the rear of each form a list of age characteristics was compiled.

Age indicators¹:

1. Higher than later walls, up to 1.6-2m below the topstones
2. Wider than later walls, with basal widths up to 800mm+ and width below the topstones 600mm+
3. Composed of sub-rounded field clearance stone or slabs ripped off limestone pavement rather than of angular quarried stone. Some medieval walls have a 'blocky' nature
4. Large recumbent basal slabs or blocks
5. Large vertically-set orthostats, single or paired
6. Basal plinth may be visible
7. Lack coursing
8. Rarely graded
9. Topstones laid flat or at a very low angle
10. Regular through courses are absent. There may be occasional throughs
11. Filling stones between the two wall faces often largely absent or large
12. Early walls are generally straight sided rather than battered
13. Sinuous rather than rectilinear
14. Corners are rounded rather than squared with quoins

For many of the walls a cross-profile was measured and plotted on a proforma graph.

¹ It is important to note that not every variable needs to be met to decide if a wall is 'early', but the more variables that do apply the greater the level of confidence in ascribing a wall to this type or that. It is also important to bear in mind that there are exceptions to every rule.



Figure 3 Volunteers using a specially-designed frame used to measure the wall profile. Photo © David Johnson

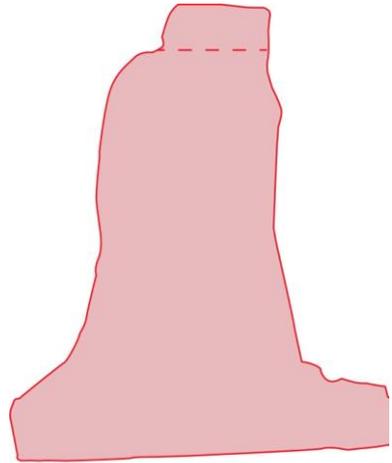


Figure 4 An example of a cross-profile, in this case of a type 2 wall. Supplied by David Johnson

In one case a long-profile was drawn, due to the presence of 29 orthostats in a line, situated in a section 48m in length.

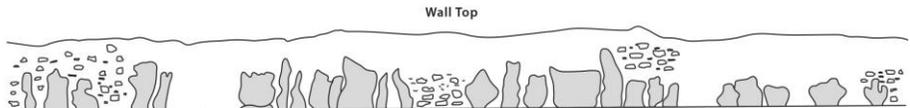


Figure 5 A long-profile of wall no.8 (type 1) showing a series of orthostats. Supplied by David Johnson

In all, 37 wall lengths were included in the survey with the selection designed to incorporate walls of different periods. Five broad types, based on chronology, were recognised in the survey -

Wall types	Lengths	Typology	No. of walls
Type 1	1800m	Pre-conquest/early monastic (usually relict walls or cast bank or walls dominated by orthostats and recumbent blocks)	10

Type 2	7000m	Late medieval/early post-monastic (pre-1700, and in some cases pre-1600)	11
Type 3	35,000m	Parliamentary Enclosure (1849-1874)	9
Type 4	254m	Post 1700, non-Parliamentary Enclosure	6
Type 5	37m	Hybrid ²	1

Table 1 Typology of 37 discrete walls surveyed

This survey is among the most comprehensive archaeological dry stone wall survey undertaken anywhere in the country.

For further information about the survey, the report can be found on our website - <https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/news/dry-stone-wall-survey-asby-parish>

The Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership Scheme is a four-year scheme, primarily funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Through the delivery of 22 projects, we hope to reveal and protect the hidden heritage of the Westmorland Dales, enabling more people to connect with, enjoy and benefit from this inspirational landscape.

Hannah Kingsbury, Westmorland Dales Partnership Scheme.

Researching the Chapels of Killington and Firbank

There are 13 townships whose histories are covered in the forthcoming Victoria County History volume on Lonsdale Ward. Two townships with the most complicated sections on the theme of Religious History were the adjoining townships of Killington and Firbank. This owed to the fact that there was not one but two ancient chapels in the vicinity.

² These are walls that show characteristics of old and new walls; in other words they most likely have very early basal stonework with clearly much later walling above. At some point in the past they were either comprehensively rebuilt or increased in height as stock management needs dictated.



All Saints Church at Killington Photo: © CCHT

The parish church of All Saints stands within the hamlet of Killington. The building originated in the 14th century as a private chapel for the Pickering family, who were lords of both Killington and Firbank for just over 300 years between 1260 and the later 16th century. The chapel stood directly opposite the family seat, Killington Hall, and some of its medieval fabric still survives, including fragments of coloured glass with the Pickering arms. In an article for *CWAAS Transactions* (1938), Alexander Pearson suggested that a medieval stone font, found at High Oaks (Marthwaite) in the 1930s and acquired by the parish church at Kirkby Lonsdale, came from this chapel, having been likely removed during alterations in 1711. No surviving medieval documentation for the chapel has been found.

What is well documented, is that in the later 16th century the inhabitants of Killington and Firbank petitioned William Chadderton, Bishop of Chester, to have their own parochial chapel owing to the difficult journey they faced when travelling to the parish church in Kirkby Lonsdale some six to ten miles away, particularly in stormy weather. In response, Bishop Chadderton granted a licence (printed in Nicolson and Burn's *History and Antiquities*) to 'Killington chapel', which allowed for divine service, the administering of the sacraments, and burial there, with the curate's

salary to be paid by both townships. The lack of a reference to consecration has been interpreted to mean that the licence applied to an existing building, namely, the old Pickering chapel. Killington Hall was later said to have been free from contributing towards the curate's salary, its former owners having 'given the ground' on which the chapel stood.

The licence is usually dated to c.1585. This certainly fits with the period that William Chaderton was in office (1575-95) and the time that the local Pickering connection ceased. The heiress, Anne Pickering, died in 1582, though the family had long been absent from Killington Hall. Within a few years of her death, Anne's son by her third marriage, Francis Vaughan, heir to the Westmorland properties, sold his interests in Killington and Firbank to the tenants, who henceforth held directly of the barony of Kendal. The Pickering chapel would have thus been available for communal use.

The last wills and testaments of Killington's inhabitants, held at Lancashire Archives, helps pinpoint the date of the licence further. Crucially, the will of James Wilson of Bendrigg, written and proved in 1582, specified his wish to be buried 'within my parish church yard of Killington' (WRW/L/R606B/58). Earlier Killington wills refer to burial at Kirkby Lonsdale, if they stipulate a place of burial at all. From 1582, however, Killington became the preferred burial location. Helpfully, Wilson's will also identifies the curate, William Dickonson, to whom Wilson left 3s. 4d.. Several bequests followed in subsequent years, including that of Margaret Sigwicke, who in 1590 left money to the 'lordship of Killington' for the keeping of a 'preacher of the word and gospel' there (Ref. WRW/L/R596A/81). The antiquary, Thomas Machell (*Antiquary on Horseback*), believed that the dedication was to St James owing to the date of the rushbearing. The dedication to All Saints is not recorded before the 19th century.

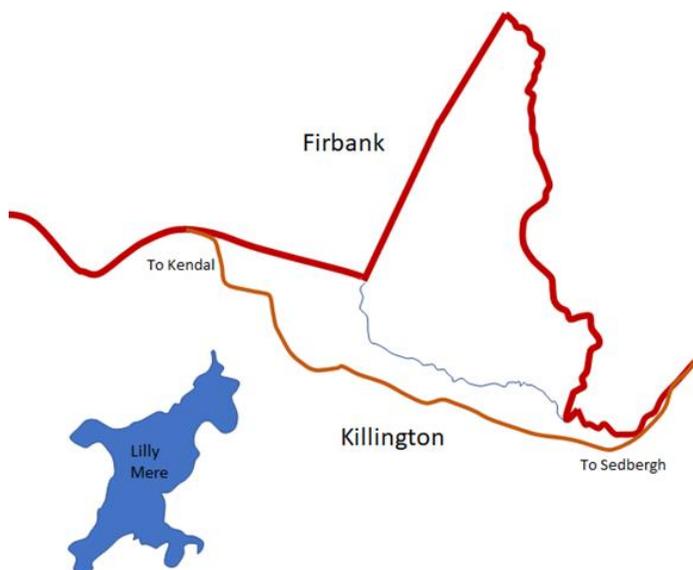


Fig. 1: The Boundary between Killington and Firbank

So far, so good. But there was a second chapel within the vicinity (see Fig. 1). It lay where the boundary between Killington and Firbank takes an unusual form, being a triangular protrusion from Killington into what one might more naturally consider to be Firbank territory. Machell certainly thought so when he visited in 1692. He was told that when Killington 'claimed the ground' on which the chapel stood, the inhabitants of Firbank dismantled the building and relocated it to the top of Firbank Fell 'all in one night'. Evidence of the chapel's former location survives in names such as Priestfield Beck and Priestfield Wood, and in field names such as Chapel Garth, Under Chapel, High Priest Field and Low Priest Field (see Fig. 2). Machell commented that the chapel had stood in the close called Chapel Garth (Chapelgarth). In his printed extracts of Kirkby Lonsdale's Parish Registers, Edward Conder referred to a report of gravestones being disturbed in these fields by ploughing in the 19th century (CWAAS *Transactions*, 5 (1905), 214).

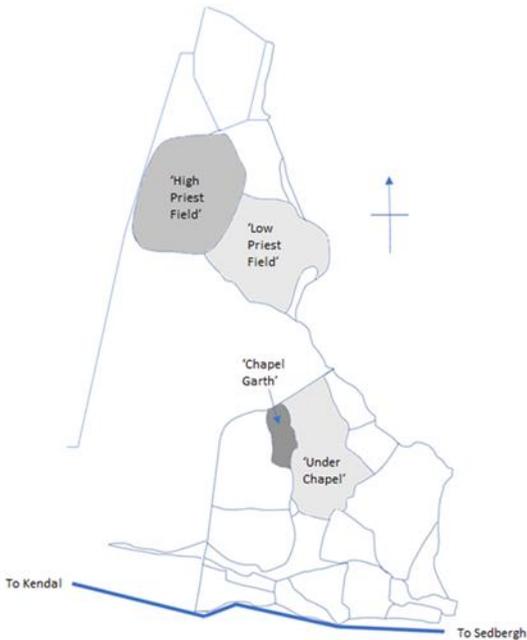


Fig. 2: Fieldnames and field boundaries taken from the Tithe Map of 1841

Frustratingly, Machell gives no date as to when the boundary changed and the chapel moved. The earliest reference found to building called Firbank Chapel was in the will of Roger Hind of Whinny Haw. Written in 1624 and proved the following year, he left 23s. 4d. to 'Frithbank Chapel'

for 'the maintenance of God's service' there, though he himself wished to be buried at Kendal (WRW/L/R56/A/40). The move had occurred by 1652, when George Fox visited and was said to have preached from a rock by the Chapel. This rock has since been known as 'Fox's Pulpit'. The chapel was dismantled in the 19th century, with only the yard wall and a few 19th century gravestones remaining.

The status of the chapel before its removal to Firbank Fell is unclear, especially in the context of the licence being granted to Killington chapel. The inhabitants of both Killington and Firbank applied for the licence, and both townships were liable for the curate's salary. Yet around the same period, Killington and Firbank ceased to be a joint lordship, while the growth of administrative and social responsibilities of individual townships may have precipitated a firming up of boundaries and fuelled proprietary attitudes over the chapel on the border.

One other piece of evidence that has been difficult to fit into the story is that of the Diocesan Population Returns of 1563 (A. Dyer & D. M. Palliser

(eds), *The Diocesan Population Returns for 1563 and 1603* (Oxford, 2005), 92).



Fox's Pulpit photo © CCHT

This identified Killington as one of three chapelries within Kirkby Lonsdale ancient parish. The two other chapelries at that time were Barbon (a medieval chapel of ease) and the unidentified chapelry of St Martin. Middleton, Hutton Roof and Firbank have all been suggested as locations for the mysterious St Martin's chapel. Interestingly, Machell noted the dedication of Firbank Chapel as being to St Martin, with the rushbearing held on Whit Sunday. Both chapels are recorded as having an ancient chapel salary, at some point divided, with Killington's being the larger proportion of the two. Hopefully, future research will fill in the gaps.

Text taken from a talk to VCH Cumbria volunteers February 2023.

Attached Photos:

All Saints, Killington & Fox's Pulpit, Killington

Maps and photos © Cumbria County History Trust

Sarah Rose, VCH Cumbria, Asst. Editor, Lancaster University.

Alston Moor History Society

HISTORY DOES NOT STAND STILL

Alston Moor Historical Society is about to start its New Year programme, and it's a very special year for the Society, but first - to backtrack:

With the onset of covid the monthly talks ceased at first and then went onto zoom, which proved very successful. New members and visitors were able to join in virtually from all over the country, and even from as far afield as New Zealand and Canada, membership increased from about 40 to around 100, with. What was missing was the camaraderie, the socialising over tea and biscuits, the informal chat with the guest speaker afterwards, in short, the grassroots support. We, the committee, felt that loss and wanted to go back to in-person meetings, but we didn't want to disappoint our new members and distant members, so we devised a compromise. The talks will be in person, as in days of old, and recorded to be put onto the Society's website and social media afterwards. This way we hope that no one will feel left out.

This year's programme of monthly meetings is different in that, for a couple of the summer months, evening visits will replace indoor talks, and there is the opportunity for occasional outings to places of regional interest.

The Saturday archive sessions were also mothballed during covid, but opened up again as the situation eased. After a break for winter we'll be opening again. Items of local interest continue to be donated, to be added to our ever-increasing online digital catalogue, to be cared for and made available where they belong - on Alston Moor.

All during the covid lockdown local history was kept very much alive and well via the social media, and it is still flourishing, with old photos and their background stories appearing regularly to evoke memories and inspire general interest, making it a two-way process.

A key part of local history nowadays is a society's website and Alston Moor Historical Society's website in particular has met with critical

acclaim, to look through it is an entertainment in itself. A matter of weeks ago a completely revamped version was put on the internet, with more sophisticated graphics and technological innovations. It's still a work in progress and by the nature of things it will never stand still. Take a look, give us your comments via the facebook facility or e-mail.

Last, and certainly not least, the biggest news is that 2023 sees the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Alston Moor Historical Society. To celebrate this, we are arranging a Golden Jubilee Anniversary Exhibition, or Festival, of 'History in the North Pennines' for the weekend of the 15th and 16th July. As well as exhibits from the Historical Society and other local societies, groups from across the county boundaries are being invited to contribute their own displays to illustrate the history of the whole region. So watch this space, or go to the Alston Moor Historical Society's website for news and updates.

Alistair Robertson

RAVENSTONEDALE PARISH HISTORY GROUP

Tracking down railway history, through 200 years of Newspaper reports

In her third consecutive appearance as the November speaker for the Ravenstonedale Parish History Group (RPHG), Diana Fothergill delivered an original and entertaining talk, entitled 'the South Durham and Lancashire Union railway and some side tracks'. Explaining at the outset that the talk was not intended to be an in-depth lecture on the history of the railway, but was intended to entertain and share Diana's enthusiasm for the interesting discoveries that can be found when interrogating the British Newspaper Archive (BNA).

The BNA is a partnership between the British Library and Findmypast, to digitise the British Library's vast collection of newspapers. The British Library newspaper collection contains most of the runs of newspapers published since 1800. Diana's approach was to refine her search of the vast BNA digital library for relevant newspaper articles that reported

events relating to the South Durham and & Lancashire Union Railway from its beginning in the mid 1800's to its closure in the 1960's.

The talk was structured chronologically, to include reports announcing the intention to build the railway, originally in support of a 'levelling up' policy seeking to link the heavy constructing industries in Lancashire, such as shipbuilding in Barrow, with the industrial mineral resources in Durham, Northumberland and Cleveland (predominantly coal). Over time the route also became an important for passenger traffic, supporting tourism in both the Western and Eastern regions. When the railway closed in the 1960's, newspapers reported that Ravenstonedale had been 'cut off' from the rest of the world.

The side tracks in the title, refer to Diana's experience of using the BNA, where the newspaper has been digitised as a full page, so in searching for references on the given page to a report relating to railway history, Diana would come across other unrelated content that provided an amusing anecdote for the audience.

These anecdotes included a court case in which the plaintiff was seeking reparation for being named as having gotten married, which was a prank and totally untrue. The prank, it transpired, had been published on fictional betrothals on more than one occasion! Advertisements also provided a source of amusement, with products claiming to avert premature death (Pectoral Balsam) and provide the end to female slavery (Harper 12 Tree Soap). As Diana remarked, the advertising standards regarding the truth of claims was subject to little regulation in the early years of the last century. Another side track included an old music hall comic song, regaling the tale of the man with a steam-powered leg, performed for RPHG by Nelson Eddy (1901-1967), thanks to the magic of Diana's phone and Smart Speaker.

The danger inherent with working on and living close to the railway, provided much of the content reported in various local newspapers, with the reporter at the time censoring very little, in terms of the more gory descriptions of injuries sustained in various, normally fatal accidents.

Derailments also provided first-hand experience of averted disaster and dramatic collisions.

One disaster that wasn't averted was the collapse of the Tay Railway Bridge in 1879, which killed an estimated 75 passengers. The Engineer considered responsible for the structural failure was Thomas Bouch, up to that point a highly renowned railway construction engineer, who was earlier in his career responsible for the construction of the South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway, between 1857 and 1861, just five years to complete, despite the route across the bleak, high moorland that led to the familiar name given to the railway of 'the Stainmore railway'.

This was very entertaining talk, drawing from the fascinating resources available from the on-line BNA, which, as the British Library website states, provides researchers and on this occasion, the RPHG audience to 'Discover history as it happened'. There are around 60 million pages of newspaper archive, and the pages identified by Diana, revealed the first hand history of the Stainmore railway, and provided great amusement with the 'side tracks' discovered during the course of her research.

Ravenstonedale Parish History Group enjoys 10,000 years of horse magic

In her opening remarks of her talk to the January 2023 meeting of the Ravenstonedale Parish History Group, Libby Robinson introduced the idea of the 'horse magic' forever associated with the traditional breeders of Fell ponies, which describes their application of knowledge, passed from Father to Son and Daughter over 10,000 years of Fell Pony History.

Libby is the Founder of the Fell Pony Heritage Trust, and her talk demonstrated she is an enthusiastic and passionate advocate for the ponies and the traditions and contemporary role for these unique animals. Libby's interest began during her education in Windermere and the Fell Pony Trust was founded to recognise that to breed the true characteristics of a Fell pony, they have to be bred on the fell in Cumbria.

For a long time now Cumbrian Hill Breeders are reducing in numbers as the younger generations have moved away from the farms and show little interest in the hefted herd of breeding ponies attached to their older parents and grand-parents. The Fell Pony Trust is a Centre in Cumbria, established in 2018 to support the Fell Pony breeders and hefted grazing herds on the Fell, with a hill farm as a hub. The objective for the Trust is to provide an insight to an interesting life and train young people about a way of life, involvement with nature, animals and our farming landscape.

The talk was structured around bringing to life for the audience, the hill bred fell pony calendar, an illustration of the activities that leads to successful breeding and husbandry. Beginning in the autumn, which Libby described as start of the Fell pony farming year. This season includes the gather of ponies, to bring the foals down from the fells for weaning. This time is when the breeders begin training of the young stock, including becoming accustomed to the head collar and other agricultural task livery, while enjoying a diet that is marginally more nutritious than the diet offered by the upper fells, where the family groups of ponies will have spent the winter. After autumn, mothers and what are termed as followers return to winter on the high fells. Followers are the female foals born in the previous year. Gelded males and ungelded males are traditionally not allowed on the fells.

During May the unaided birth of foals in the in-bye land (pastures below the high fells, around the farm), in the spring, was illustrated and the natural instincts of the mothers and brood mares in protecting and nurturing the foals, without any human intervention in the hill farm landscape was explained with many photographs and Libby's lively presentation style.

Photographs also portrayed the physical characteristics of fell ponies, including the structure of the foot, making it pivotal in the very necessary balance and carriage as each animal travels five to ten miles during a day, feeding and caring for the foals, sheltering by the dry stone walls and keeping dry and warm due to the water repellent structure of the fell

ponies coat. Bringing the mares to the stallion takes place close by the farm during the end of the time when the stock are gathered, between May and early July, before the Mares return to the fells, with the foals that were born in the May.

In thanking Libby for an interesting and informative talk, the members of RPHG noted the numbers that underpinned the talk. 30 miles a day – the distance a pack horse could travel in a day, 16 stone – the weight of the pack carried, 18 hours, the time the fell ponies spend eating on the fell, and 10,000 years of hill bred fell pony history.

If other groups would like to invite Libby to present – she can be found at www.fpht.co.uk. For more information on the events and research work undertaken by the Ravenstonedale Parish History Group, please visit www.ravenstonedalehistory.org.uk.

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

We have been very active over the last few months. Still gathering information for our planned History Book and Website. We Hope to have the website ready to go live very soon.

1) Hallbankgate WI talk - Talk at the Belted Will by Richard Macdonald and Tom Park to 23 members about the Cumbrian area within our group. There was much interaction and interest by all who attended, and we had our supper and a pint or two!! As we were in the Belted Will the following list was compiled of any pubs/hotels etc in Hallbankgate that we found prior to the meeting;

- 1841 Rachel Calvert age 26- Publican and Ann Routledge age 40 Publican
- 1851 Rachel Calvert age 36 Innkeeper Kings Arms and Thomas Ruddick age 50 Innkeeper Hallbank Inn
- 1861 Thomas Ruddick age 60 Innkeeper/Farmer at Bank Hall (Hallbank Inn/Cherry Tree Inn)
- 1861 John Bell Innkeeper and Farmer – HBG
- 1871 Margaret Lowes, widow age 33 Innkeeper -HBG
- 1881 No sign of a pub or hotel
- 1891 William Graham age 56 Innkeeper (Hotel)
- 1901 Barbara Teasdale age 40 Hotel Keeper Isabella Teasdale age 36, Temperance Hotel
- 1911 Barbara Teasdale age 50 Isabella Teasdale age 46 Hotel Keepers, Temperance Hotel
- Barbara and Isabella were un-married sisters and Thomas Ruddick's Grand-Daughters 1925 Apartments
- 1921/8 William Colling age 71/5 Hotel Keeper and Farmer, Temperance Hotel, died 1 Feb 1928 age 78
- 1929 Misses Colling Hotel Keeper, Temperance Hotel (daughters of William Colling and Mary nee Walton dec'd)
- 1939 Mary, Martha and Elizabeth Colling Temperance Hotel (Household Duties/Shop Keeper/sub Postmistress

2) Slaggyford WI Talk - Talk by Richard Macdonald and Les Graham to 13 members at the Cairns Memorial Hall, on the area between Eals, Knarsdale and Ayle, Kirkhaugh. Again there was great interaction and interest shown on the day and much interest in our old photos collection. A full list of landlords, tenants etc was compiled for the recently rebuilt and reopened Kirkstyle Inn and Sportsmans Rest at Knarsdale as shown here: Also an indenture of the sale of the pub for £125 in 1857 was copied and printed and framed by our group. This now hangs in the Kirkstyle in pride of place, above the open fire in the bar area.



Upper Eden History Society

The Black and White Canal.

A presentation to The Upper Eden History Society by
Raynor Shaw.

Growing up in Rotherham, Raynor walked and fished along the South Yorkshire Navigation, a canal that was within easy reach of his home. He ascribes his lifelong interest in waterways as dating from these days. At school he recalled having studied British economic history from 1750 to present day at “O Level” and his father introducing him to Coleman’s book, “The Railway Navvies”: all added to a growing interest in the industrial importance of canals. This led to family trips to see examples of their workmanship and noting among others, the Bingley five rise locks on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.

Raynor’s interest in canals continued as he travelled to other countries during his working life. One notable example he gave was when he visited the Grand Canal in East China which was built in the 7th century during the Sui Dynasty. Having come to live in Kirkby Stephen, he came across John Satchell’s book on the Kendal Canal in the library: this inspired him to further investigation. Raynor also bought The Lancaster Canal Trust Guidebook from Lancaster’s tourist information centre. It contained detailed maps with all the bridges and tunnels numbered. He learnt that the Kendal to Lancaster section was 27 miles long before it continued for another 30 miles to Preston. The unofficially dubbed “Black and White Canal”, but more properly known as the Lancaster Canal, acquired its informal name because it carried coal north and limestone south.

All such information gathered, a field trip for our Upper Eden History Society was organized in 2019 to discover what remains of the canals today. Raynor explained that, prior to canals being built, goods were mainly moved about by packhorse each of which could carry up to 300 lbs. One horse pulling a barge on a canal could transport 30 tons. Canals in Britain were generally constructed between 1790 to 1810 but before this, the French in particular were developing such waterways. Francis

Egerton, the third Duke of Bridgewater, had experienced these during his “grand tour” and upon his return to Britain in the 1750s he became determined to begin construction to his coalfields in Bridgewater, Cheshire.

Acts of Parliament were needed to obtain permission before construction could begin. These were duly obtained in 1770 for the Leeds to Liverpool and in 1792 for the Lancaster canals. It took 27 years from the act being passed before the entire Lancaster Canal was opened. John Rennie’s original 1792 route survey, which took the canal down to join the Bridgewater Canal, proposed that the waterway would total 76 miles with two level sections, 41 locks and two aqueducts. The Lancaster to Kendal section has only 8 locks.



The building work was divided in to four contracts with Archibald Miller being responsible for the northern section. The digging groups extracted a trapezoidal trench 20 foot wide and 7 feet deep. This was then lined with 3-inch thick layer of puddled clay to make the channel watertight. Men or cattle were then used to trample the clay. The tow path was constructed on the West bank initially being inclined towards the water for drainage. This was later changed because horses were frequently sliding in to the channel.

Accommodation bridges which carried roads and farm tracks were erected concurrently with the digging. The stone required for the bridges was generally quarried from nearby rock outcrops. On average three bridges were built per mile. Stone for culverts and locks was also required leading to a huge demand for skilled quarrymen and masons.

The major structure on the route was the Lune aqueduct which is 664 foot long with five arches 50 feet high and 70 feet in span; the cost was over £48,000. Today it is a Grade One listed building. The cost of this viaduct was nearly three times over budget which meant that there were insufficient funds to construct the Ribble viaduct. Consequently, a wooden bridge was built over the Ribble and a tramway was constructed to join the southern section at Walton Summit. This involved unloading the barges into wagons which were then pulled by horses. The cargo was then reloaded into barges at the other end. As a result, the Lancaster Canal was never fully connected to the national network.

The Kendal link was opened in two sections. Preston to Tewitfield in 1797 whilst the last 14.5 miles to Kendal did not open until 1819. This route was re-aligned to pass near to the gunpowder works in Sedgwick. In order to achieve this, the 378 yard-long tunnel at Hincaster had to be constructed. The tunnel did not have a towpath so the bargees had to lie on their backs and walk along the tunnel roof, a procedure known as 'legging'. The diversion to the gunpowder works, also required that the Sedgwick aqueduct had to be built. This was the first skew-type aqueduct in Britain and is now a scheduled ancient monument.

The arrival of the canal in Kendal had a major influence on the fortunes of the town, bringing in coal for the gas works and taking away wool and limestone. The lake behind Killington Services on the M6 was constructed in 1819 to supply the canal with water. Whilst sections of the canal were mainly sold on to railway companies, parts of the canal continued to carry coal up to 1944. In 1955 the vast majority of British canals were closed by act of Parliament.

Impressively thorough and extremely well illustrated, Raynor's masterly presentation was imbued with a genuine passion for his subject.

Tricia Jagger.

Postman's Paths



Alan Cleaver on the Postman's Path at Lorton.

Alan Cleaver, a member of Lamplugh Heritage Society, is hoping to publish a book early next year featuring Postman's Paths. These were the routes taken by rural postmen from the mid-19th Century until about 1976. CLHF members have previously helped Mr Cleaver with information about some of the routes in Cumbria but he is expanding the scope to cover Britain and has signed up with literary agency DunnFogg.

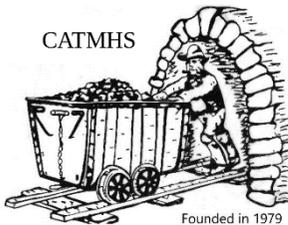
Mr Cleaver, 63, of Whitehaven, said: "These routes stretched 15 to 20 miles through the countryside, following public footpaths, enabling the postman or woman to deliver letters, parcels, newspapers and medicine to farms and remote cottages. On one level, they are simply nice walks but I also feel it's important to record the social history behind them: how the postal system in Britain developed and the often difficult lives of the people who worked as posties. Some routes could be carried out on bike but others had to be walked or completed on horseback."

A previous appeal for information resulted in Jean Scott-Smith of Shap Local History Society sending him details of the postal route west of Shap; a tough 18-mile trek into the Swindale Valley, over the fell and

back through Wet Sleddale valley. Jean had copies of the Route Instruction cards and introduced Alan to Stuart Lewis, 73, who was the last rural postman to walk the route. Mr Cleaver said: "Stuart told me how heartbroken he was when his bosses told him in 1976 that he would no longer have to walk the route and would be given a van instead. He loved his walk even though he had to do it in all weathers. It would be lovely to create this as a long-distance footpath for people to walk - but they'll have to be quite fit!"

The book will hopefully be published in early 2024.

The Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society (CATMHS)



The Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society (CATMHS) will be hosting the NAMHO conference in July. This conference comprises a long weekend of lectures, guided walks and underground trips celebrating '5000 years of Mining and Quarrying in The Lake District'. Subjects

covered range from the Langdale Axe Factory right up to the present day at Burlington with everything in between. The event will be based at Grasmere Village Hall between 7th and 10th July 2023. Both Friday and Saturday evenings offer an opportunity for socialising and networking with food and drink. CATMHS encourage anybody and everybody with an interest in the industrial history of The Lake District to find out more at the Conference Website which can be found here:

<https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.namho.org%2Fconference&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cd6cf3aa3721d47fda3dd08db0a88011e%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638115351464218311%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luZmZiLCJBTiI6Iklk1haWwiLCJXVC16Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=vv4%2Bsq2ble%2Bxt4MbwKvSQFEmYFDltbr%2BG0Sq8wSPcPU%3D&reserved=0>

The organisers can be contacted via e-mail here: namho@catmhs.org.uk Chris Cowderly

MITCHELL'S AUCTION COMPANY, COCKERMOUTH

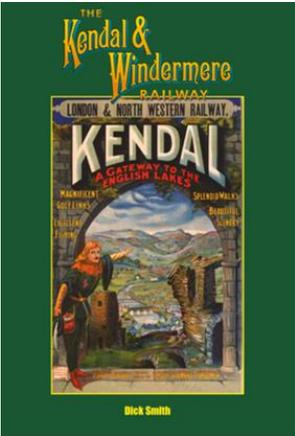


2023 marks 150 years of auctioneering in the town. Robinson Mitchell, founder of the Company, began selling in a small way, holding sales on Main Street of furniture, wood, and a few animals back in 1865. 1873 saw the Incorporation of the Company, believed to be the first purpose-built livestock mart in the country, and the years since then have brought a massive expansion in business to cover Livestock, Land and Property, as well as Antiques & Fine Arts sales. The Company moved from its Station Street premises to its present out-of-town site. To mark the importance of Mitchell's in the prosperity of the town of Cockermouth over the years, a new publication is soon to be printed, giving a full account of the history of the Company. Additionally, there will be a small exhibition at the Antiques & Fine Arts Salesroom in Station Street, during the week commencing 26th June (dates and times to be finalised) produced by the Heritage Group of Kirkgate Arts & Heritage, which will feature many personal items belonging to the Mitchell family. The posters produced for the exhibition will also be on display at this year's Cockermouth Show. The Heritage Group hopes to be able to identify and interview people with memories of Mitchell's and farming life in the area.

Gloria Edwards
Cockermouth Heritage Group

Cumbrian Railways Association

Cumbrian Railways Association publishes new Kendal & Windermere Railway book



The Cumbrian Railways Association (CRA) is delighted to announce our latest book -The Kendal & Windermere Railway (Second Edition).

To coincide with the 175th Anniversary of the completion of the line from Oxenholme to Windermere, author Dick Smith has written a second and much enlarged edition of his original book telling the fascinating history of the Kendal and Windermere Railway.

Published by the Cumbrian Railways Association, this edition includes a new introductory chapter: 'The world the Railway changed', and two other new chapters. One deals with the succession of proposals to extend the railway beyond its present terminus at Windermere, the other looks at the railway connections with Croppers paper mills in the Burneside area.



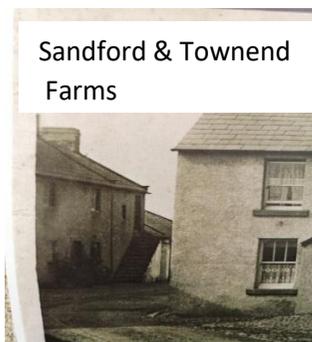
Richly illustrated using photos from the CRA and other archives - several not published before - the book also includes specially drawn detailed signalling diagrams of the Windermere branch in the years before it was reduced to a single track.

As CRA Chairman, Philip Tuer, says: "An updated publication about the Windermere line is especially appropriate in the year of its 175th anniversary. This new book follows other recent successful publications by the CRA and shows that there is a strong interest in the railways in and around Cumbria, their people, places and history."

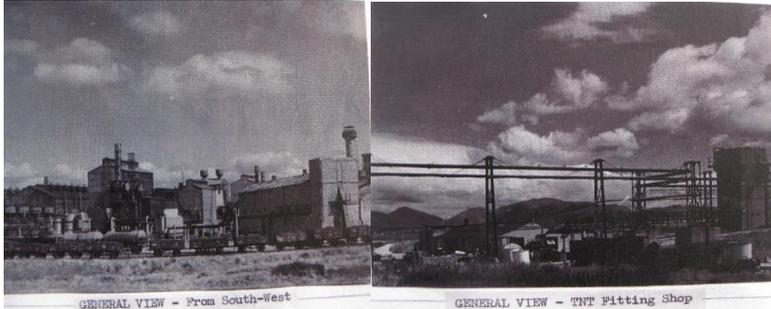
Priced at £16.50, this A4 104 page laminated card cover book (ISBN number 978-1-914248-00-9) is available for on line purchase and mail order via the Association's website: www.cumbrianrailways.org.uk, or from selected booksellers.

A new Commemorative plaque outside Driggs's former WW2 TNT Factory

When in 1938 Germany marched into Poland preparations for Britain's defence began. The Drigg Royal Ordnance Factory 39 was to be a TNT chemical plant. Land was acquired from Drigg to Seascale on the coast side of the railway. Four farms and the hamlet of Wray Head were purchased as well.



The Demolition and Construction Company started work in early 1940, using up to 4000 workers. A new road was laid to the beach for the Military which guarded the coast. The inflammable toleane was stored at Wasdale lake. Other essential Chemicals such as coal, ammonia, nitric and sulphuric acid travelled by rail to the marshalling yard near Seascale.



On the 5th July 1941 weekly production was 200 tons rising to 500 tons in April 1942. Once Drigg construction was complete they started building a TNT factory at Sellafield. Workers were billeted with local families in Whitehaven, Egremont and Cleator Moor. Production was dropped to 300 tons per week after VE day 8th May 1945 and stopped a few days after VJ on the 16th August 1945.

Five people lost their lives operating the Royal Ordnance Factory and a new commemoration plaque was placed in January 2023.

The new plaque wording. 'This Oak was planted on 6th June 2010 by Joy Hutchings who was the daughter of Mr Anderson the TNT Factory Manager at Drigg. It was erected to remember those who lost their lives building and operating the TNT Factory at Drigg.

RICHARD ASHBURNE 1941.

WILLIAM STEELE 1941

WILLIAM DARBY & His FIANCÉ ADA BAWDEN

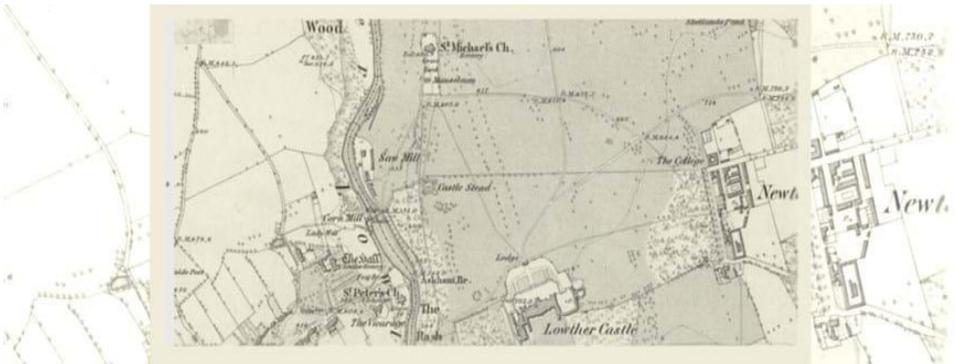
1943

JOHN TUNSTALL 1944'



Alan Bell, Drigg LHS.

New Investigation of the Medieval castle at Lowther



The remains of a medieval castle and village at Lowther (Cumbria) will be the subject of a new archaeological investigation in summer 2023, thanks to funding from the Castle Studies Trust.

The project aims to reveal how the Normans conquered and colonised the region and what this process was like for inhabitants, and to chart the origins of the Lowther estate.

Preliminary work suggests that the remains of Lowther's medieval castle and its adjoining village may date to the late eleventh or early twelfth century. If so, the site might provide rare evidence of the conquest of

Cumbria by King William Rufus and his brother, King Henry I – a generation after the Normans seized control of the rest of England.

The project is led by Dr Sophie Thérèse Ambler, a Reader in Medieval History and Deputy Director of the Centre for War and Diplomacy at Lancaster University. The archaeological investigation will be run by Allen Archaeology, together with students and staff from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

The team will conduct a geophysical survey and open trenches across the earthworks of the castle and village. Their goal will be to uncover evidence of when the castle was built, its relationship to the adjoining village, and how the site changed over the centuries. The investigation will run for a month in the early summer of 2023.

The remains of the medieval castle and village lie immediately north of Lowther's nineteenth-century castle. Overlooking the Bampton Valley on the edge of the Lake District, the picturesque ruins of Lowther's later castle and its extensive gardens are one of the region's most popular visitor attractions. Visitors to Lowther Castle and Gardens will be able to view the excavations.

Unlike the rest of England, Cumbria was not conquered by the Normans in 1066. The region was historically part of the Kingdom of Cumbria, which stretched from Strathclyde across the Solway. Then, while the Normans were conquering lowland England, the area from Lowther northwards was conquered by the Scottish king Máel Coluim III.

Cumbria was only annexed by the Normans in 1092, when William the Conqueror's son, William Rufus, led an expedition to the area. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the king then 'sent many peasant people with their wives and cattle to live there and cultivate the land.' But for following generations Norman rule over the region remained patchy compared to much of England.

Sophie Ambler of Lancaster University

New Committee members



Les Gilpin is a retired Software Support Manager, originally from Cark-in-Cartmel but now living near Burgh by Sands after working for over 35 years in South Wales. Les' interests include Cumbria's Railways, Industrial History and Local History.

As a member of the Cumbrian Railways Association, Cumbria Industrial History Society and the Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society Les has written four railway titles for the CRA and was involved, many years ago, in the production of a Village book for Lower Holker. I'm still working on a proper history of the Corn, Cotton and other mills and industries at Cark.



Dick O'Brien is Secretary of the Renwick and Kirkoswald Local History Group and is the new Treasurer for CLHF.

He has lived in Cumbria since 1994. He lived firstly in Kirkoswald and, latterly in Renwick.

He is now retired from a career in social work and worked as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors in the area of Social Care with Ofsted.

He gives talks on the Pilgrimage of Grace and on the Plague Outbreak in 1597 in Cumbria. He is involved in local environment and U3A activities.

CLHF Contacts

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