



Cumbria Local History Federation

Bulletin 100 –Spring 2026



100th issue

Chairman's Chat	2
Federation business: The story of the 100 th Bulletin, Archives, How to Day	3
Special feature: Ambleside Oral History Group 50 th Anniversary	9
News from groups: Hawkshead GSF, Renwick, Coanwood et al., Arnside Archives, Millom LHS, Cumbria Family History, Cumbria County History Trust, Kendal Heritage Partnership	13
Stories of Migration ; Flookburgh to Canada Hawkshead to London	28
Obituary: Michael Mullett	37
Book review and notification of new publications:	38

CHAIRMANS CHAT

Welcome to another Bulletin and one that represents the great success of the Cumbria Local History Federation. This is Bulletin number 100 and has been keeping you all informed of what's going on across the county of Cumbria for 34 years! That's quite an achievement and I for one am grateful of the insight and forward thinking of those setting up the federation all those years ago. I'm also grateful to Ruth, our editor, and only the 8th in this post.

I think it remarkable that we can maintain a membership of around 60 groups interested in Local History plus around 30 individual members in the Federation. One of the latest groups to join is Hawkshead Grammar School, one of several museums among our membership. We also have Ambleside Oral History Group which is celebrating its 50th year and, dare I say, one of the leading Oral History groups in Britain.

As I write this piece, the Federation are about to hold its latest How To Day. A workshop this time, held at Cartmel and covering Enclosure of the commons. I'm really looking forward to this. If you have any ideas for future How To Days where we can focus on specific types of research then feel free to let me or any of the Committee know!

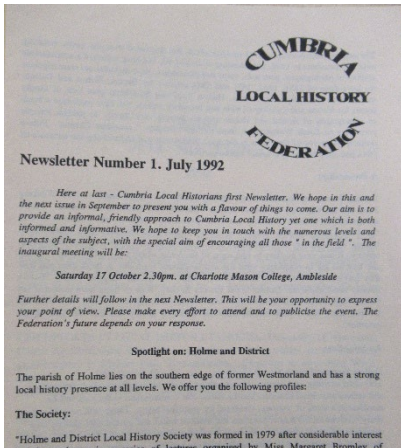
During the year the Committee are also going to be planning more regional 'Cluster' meetings to share ideas at an organisational level and for the Committee to gain actions you'd like the Federation to offer guidance. We have a specific area under consideration but more of that in a couple of months.

As Easter is upon us and, hopefully, the longer days cheer us, we can look forward to Local History, whether its attending your Group's talks, visits and other activities. Most importantly carry on with your research, whether its an individual project or one organised by your Group. And don't forget to support the county's museums and other historic visitor attractions. There are lots of opportunities for finding out more about your local history on our doorsteps!

Les Gilpin

The story of the CLHF Bulletin

100TH issue in 2026



In the beginning, in 1992, the bulletin was produced by a Chair/Editor from handwritten material which arrived at the Editors house through the letter box in the front door. The issues were distributed 3 times a year and each issue was 4 pages long. Half of the material included was dates for events and meetings.

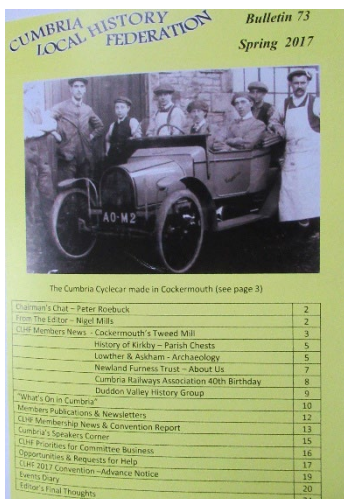
Fast forward 34 years and the bulletin still appears 3 times a year but has expanded to between 28 - 44 pages

per issue. It is available for electronic distribution as well as hard copy and is fully illustrated. Electronic distribution means it can easily be read by over 1,000 people if circulated by each Group's chair.

The changes above came about largely because of the internet which by 1997 was in use by an increasing number of members and the CLHF had a primitive website. The length of the bulletin increased to 12 and then 16 pages but still with upto 4 pages of dates of meetings. With email and internet communication between the Editor and membership is easier, more articles are received and longer Bulletins result.

There have been 10 editors to date. Peter Robinson of Grange was the first from 1993-99. Nigel Mills of Cartmel edited the greatest number of issues – 21 over an 8 year period. The front cover was canary yellow until 2017.

Recently CLHF Membership has remained stable although with different societies and individuals involved. By 2005 the CLHF had 51 group members and 53 individual members, by 2018 there were 55 groups and 49 individual members and currently we have 60 groups and 30 individual members.



There's a fairly regular format starting with the Chairs chat which gives an overview of important local history matters and CLHF committee activities. Society contributions are 'the life blood' and keep us all in touch sometimes providing inspiration while individual research reports enriching what we know. Book reviews have been a staple since 1992.

The aim of the CLHF and Bulletin is to 'provide a means of liaison between organisations interested in Cumbria Local History and a forum for exchange of ideas

and information' and the aim seems to be well met.

In the past there has been some challenges getting members to contribute; In 1994 the editor complained 'what makes you think I receive any letters or contributions?' And by 1997 was threatening 'to fill up any space with his own wafflings' but as membership has increased the Bulletin has thrived.

One early group to contribute an article were Ambleside Oral History group in 1993 so it's great to be able to include their 50th celebratory piece in this current issue. In addition Cumbria Family History Society are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year.

New Editors bring new ideas. One previous editor commented 'it's a brilliant way to build up contacts in Cumbrian Local History and to learn what local groups are up to.' which I can fully endorse.

If anyone would like to consider being the Editor please get in touch, I may have a few more editions in me but one thing this review has demonstrated is that no one goes on for ever and it's always good to hand on the baton from a position of strength.

Ruth Lawley, Bulletin Editor.

CLHF Archives

Looking for a readily accessible home for your archive?

The CLHF is offering a digital database or Archive Catalogue in which to store, view and save your archive documents for minimal cost. Not quite a website but it uses a unique domain of your choosing, usually derived from your group's name. Viewing is open to all or password controlled for your members only. Please see below for comments from two CLHF groups already using the catalogue.

If you want to know more please email me on [nigelmillsp@gmail.com](mailto:nigelmillsp@icloud.com)

Lorton & Derwent Fells LHS are using the CLHF Archive Catalogue at derwentfells.org.uk as a digital archive, mainly to give free public access to all their publications, from the first *Newsletter* in January 1994 through to the latest *Wanderer* of February 2026. You can search for an issue and download it, or word-search all the contents of the publications for a particular subject of interest.

One feature of the archive catalogue is that it can be used as a reference for a publication. For example the full web reference for the latest *Wanderer* <https://derwentfells.org.uk/showrecord.php?refe=PBWD/0059> if you go to that address you can read or download the document.

Also the Society is using the archive catalogue to archive digital version of society records, such as the annual reports and accounts. Only a small part of the Society's digitised photograph collection has been made available so far, but there is much more to come when time permits.

Contact Derek Denman at dererndenman@btinternet.com for more information.

Ravenstonedale Parish History Group

RPHG decided to take up the chance to compile a database catalogue of our Parish archive mainly because since the History Group was formed in 2010 we have been given several collections of local photos. Some have been donated and some are lent to us so we can copy them. Donated

photos are kept in archive- standard albums and sleeves that we can show members and visitors to the Parish archive. We also keep digital copies of those on our History Group laptop and backup, but these copies are also not available to people who cannot visit the archive room.

Only paid-up Group members can access the new archive catalogue to search the records, and we have two members who share the admin and editing duties. Currently we are entering records from a digitised collection of over 150 slides we have been given. We also hope to get the current spreadsheet catalogues of our paper-based archives, including maps, paintings, books, school yearbooks and magazines, on to the online catalogue in the future. Again, the spreadsheets which list these items are not accessible to members unless they visit the archive room in person.

We are very positive about the archive catalogue but as usual, time to add items is the problem. Members seem happy too. We do have a lot of data to load on to the database in the future which is being preparing from our current spreadsheet catalogues.

We are very happy with the CLHF Archive Catalogue, and Tim (Catalogue designer) was a great help when we set it up. Our members who have looked at it are interested to see what we have in the archive too. We speak about it at each meeting, we featured it in our annual newsletter and we have a paragraph about it on our website, and the two sites are hyperlinked both ways.

Jackie Wedd, RPHG

Save the date

**CLHF Convention Saturday
October 10th 2026**

‘How to’ explore Enclosures in Local History Research held at Cartmel Village Hall, February 28th 2026



This ‘How to Day’, the fifth organised by CLHF, was about Enclosures in Cumbria. The morning session focussed on the process of enclosure and the in the afternoon some of the impacts were considered.

The wide experience and enthusiasm of the participants and the practical sessions with

enclosure maps of Cartmel and Croglin ensured a lively day with plenty of discussion and sharing of information.

The day was opened with an introductory lecture by Sarah Rose of Lancaster University who gave an excellent overview of Enclosures both pre Parliamentary Enclosures and during that process.

Drawing on her experience from Victoria County History Sarah gave examples of early informal enclosure which can be evidenced by field patterns and archaeological findings- there is rarely a paper trail. Formal enclosures may be identified through indentures from archives and other sources.

By the time of Parliamentary enclosures there is an abundance of information with a paper trail of acts and maps. Between 1750 and 1860 over 5000 acts were passed. 70% of the maps made survive and provide rich pickings for local historians with field boundaries, owners names, public quarries included on the maps. The main aims of enclosure were to

improve productivity, avoid overstocking, encourage drainage and reclamation of land.



The parliamentary enclosure process was illustrated with a case study of Croglin in North East Cumbria by Ruth Lawley. A practical session using three large maps of Croglin Enclosure familiarised participants with the work of 19th century surveyors.

Phil Rowland of Cartmel History Society expertly outlined the vast array of materials available to facilitate study of enclosures in his case study of Cartmel peninsula. This led on very well to the afternoon session which started with an in depth study of Cartmel enclosure maps and the road access within the enclosed commons. This helped to illustrate the reasons for road improvement, posing the question of 'how the farmers took their sheep to market?' Access into the peninsula from the outside was also considered. In 1782 Mrs Fletcher Rigge refused to live in the Cartmel district because of the fearful route across Bleacrag Bridge, with its sinister gallows association and up Tow Top Hill to High Newton.



The day concluded with consideration of further impacts of enclosure such as the embankments and reclaimed land at the southern tip of the Cartmel peninsula and legal cases such as occurred at Casterton in Lonsdale Ward.

Congratulations to Ambleside Oral History Group 50 years old!

Ambleside Oral History Group (AOHG) celebrates its 50th anniversary this year since the Group's first recording in 1976.

AOHG's Archive contains over 550 recorded interviews and transcripts, amounting to many hundreds of hours of volunteer time spent processing them. But was it all worthwhile? Does it enrich our community?

AOHG was founded by Ambleside Librarian, Cynthia Thompson, in 1976. She first learnt about 'oral history' while attending a lecture at Charlotte Mason College. She instantly saw that oral history was an excellent method of collecting memories of the area's dying industries, such as bobbin-making and charcoal burning. With a small grant from the Curwen Trust, Cynthia and five others, myself included, made our earliest recordings on an ancient BBC reel-to-reel recorder, soon replaced by smaller cassette recorders. Interviews were painstakingly listened to and transcribed in longhand, to produce a transcript.

AOHG's first interviewee was Mrs Edith Benson, aged 99, whose earliest memories recalled her schooldays in the 1880s. The oldest interviewees took priority, describing hiring fairs, horse gins, ploughing with horses, milking, drystone walling, lambing, sheep dipping and shearing, as well as life in the farmhouse and dairy for the maids.

We listened to life in the 1890s described by huntsmen and coalmen, blacksmiths, poachers and plumbers, builders, bakers and boatmen. Young women laboured inside the big houses as scullery maids, housemaids, nursemaids, and cooks. There were always jobs for girls as seamstresses, shop assistants, waitresses and laundry workers, but aspirations were low, and daughters were usually needed to help at home in large families.

In 1907, Ambleside opened its first Grammar School, funded from a bequest made in 1723 by John Kelsick to help promising pupils to reach their potential. Many children thrived very happily at Kelsick, others less so, with poorer children obliged by families to leave at 15, to bring in a wage.

Families of ten or more were not uncommon and during WW1, and mothers were often the sole breadwinners after their men joined up. Carrs Flour sacks were cut up for children's shirts or pillow cases, and grandmothers helped while mothers worked. Sixty-nine fathers, sons and brothers in Ambleside never returned, and those that did come home bore the physical and mental scars for years. Whole families caught Spanish Flu from returning 'heroes', and to spare the very sick, straw was laid, to deaden the sound of passing traffic.

Morale was low after the Great War. Some of the grandest Victorian mansions with big estates were sold off or split up after their industrialist owners were bankrupted in the Stock Market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Estate and forestry workers were left unemployed, and although jobs still existed in local slate quarries, accidents and fatalities were rife. First aid wasn't helpful – "Accidents were a killing job" as an elderly nurse commented grimly. She'd been left a widow with young children, without welfare support or pension, so she worked all day, then sewed mens' rough workshirts each evening.

By the 1930s, paid holidays for workers brought hordes of them arriving by bus to go hiking on the fells, staying in youth hostels. Fearless young rock climbers made for the crags by bike, attempting daring new ascents using the most primitive of equipment, such as ropes made from washing lines.

Entertainment in the 1930s could fill every evening. People enjoyed cinema, light operetta, amateur drama, bell-ringing, dance-band troupes, Scouts and Guides, cricket, choirs, and the Town Band. The Prince of Wales came to inspect ex-WW1 servicemen in the centre of Ambleside. However, he was seen to wipe his nose on the back of his hand by one incredulous little boy: "Fancy him not having a hankie!" he remembered fifty years later.

The outbreak of WW2 brought hundreds of child evacuees to Ambleside, as entire schools from Newcastle and Liverpool moved pupils to the safety of Ambleside. School facilities were shared between local pupils and evacuees, and lessons went part-time. In 1942, art students and their lecturers from the Royal College of Art in London were evacuated to Ambleside, where lectures continued in hotels and halls. Deprived of

London's great classic art, they painted local landscape, and in 1944, Gordon Ransom, an RCA lecturer, painted the famous Rushbearing mural in St Mary's Church, depicting 61 local children.

Postwar life was drab and rationing continued into the 1950s. In 1951, the Lake District was designated as England's second National Park. Newly appointed Rangers and Wardens' first task was to clear the backlog of litter and rusting tin cans, dumped by hikers 20 years previously!

The growing economic prosperity of the 1950s saw the growth of private car ownership, which caused the area's first traffic jams. Hotels, guest houses and bed and breakfasts all flourished and the young Queen Elizabeth paid a Royal visit, arriving in the rain at Waterhead by steamer.

The 1960s brought black and white televisions into millions of homes, and TV advertising highlighted the luxury of package holidays to the sun. This impacted on local tourism because holidaymakers started booking fortnights abroad for their main holiday, taking much shorter breaks in the Lakes.

The opening of The Lakes Comprehensive School in 1965 was of major consequence. Children who were once destined to leave school at 14 could continue their studies, progressing to GCEs and sixth form, and on to college or university. With new career prospects, this younger generation were dispersed from home and employment in family businesses.

One of the most visible problems emerging in the 1980s was the wear and tear caused to footpaths by thousands of walkers. The constant tread of boots on popular routes caused paths to widen into tracks, visible even from space. This initiated a growing awareness of the fragility of the landscape and its ecology, and the importance of protecting the environment.

Between 1970-2000 small communities witnessed big changes. Economic prosperity brought higher salaries and greater personal wealth. This in turn attracted visitors to buy up local houses as holiday homes, or holiday lets. These were only occupied for a few weeks a year, and villages became de-

populated, with fewer local families, falling school rolls and reduced bus and other services, all of which continues today.

Foot and Mouth closed the countryside for months in 2001, and though incidence was quite rare in our area, the economic impact was severe. The controversial hunting ban in 2004, and the 10mph speed limit on Windermere in 2006, left local opinions widely divided. On a happier note, the new century also brought generous Heritage Lottery Funding to digitise AOHG's disintegrating old tape recordings.

Climate change, storms and floods begin to define the 21st century, and contemporary recordings now reflect changes in landscape, nature and even the appearance of the fells.

When Covid hit so suddenly in 2020, AOHG determined to record its extraordinary impact while still fresh in people's minds. We interviewed volunteers who organised community help, or delivered hot meals to the housebound, and we listened to those for whom isolation was an unsupported struggle, such as new mums, the elderly alone at home, and others working from home, including GCSE students. Once it ended, teachers described how isolated young children had to be shown how to play together. However, the foundations of community life, from churches to health services, friendship groups, foodbanks, clubs and communal activities returned unharmed.

AOHG has helped us document changing and emerging social patterns. However, the greatest reward of all has been the privilege of meeting and listening to so many memorable people, who helped develop and shape our community, and shared their life histories with us.

Is there still a role for Oral History? We think so.

www.aohg.org.uk

All transcripts are freely available to read online. To locate a specific topic, name or place, enter it in the website's search facility. AOHG also give illustrated talks to groups on a choice of topics, as listed on the website.

Hawkshead Grammar School Foundation: new member

In 1585 Archbishop of York, Edwin Sandys, one of Elizabeth I's reforming bishops, obtained Letters Patent from the Queen to found Hawkshead Grammar School in his birthplace. It was one of many grammar schools established across England after the Reformation to encourage the spread of literacy and promote the 'new religion'.



Sandys endowed the school with enough land and property that the education could be free, and for at least 100 years it was known as 'the free school of Hawkshead'. In 1675, Daniel Rawlinson, former pupil and wealthy London vintner (and great-grandson of Daniel

Hochstetter, the founding German partner of the Mines Royal in Keswick) paid for the school to be rebuilt in stone, and this is the building you see today.

The museum is most well-known for educating William Wordsworth, but what is less well known is that the schoolroom has barely changed in 350 years. The same oak desks and benches line the walls now as in Rawlinson's day, and generations of boys have left their marks: each desk and bench is deeply carved with names, initials, dates and doodles. See image.

In the 1760s, a new young energetic Headmaster, James Peake, raised standards, particularly in mathematics, and the reputation of the school grew, attracting boys from across the north of England. This was what brought the Wordsworth brothers to Hawkshead, inspiring a hopeful young poet to follow his dreams. At the height of its success, the humble 3-room school was bulging at the seams with 100 pupils from ages 8-18. They lived a free and happy life, roaming the hills and lakes in '*games confederate*'.

In the 1800s, as the Industrial Revolution gained pace, the importance of Hawkshead as a market town declined, and the school's fortunes with it, closing in 1909 with only 6 pupils. For most of the 1900s 'Wordsworth's Schoolroom' was shown periodically to visitors, but it was only in the 1980s that the whole building opened as a museum.

Since COVID, the museum has been under new management and has been redeveloped. Each year we create a new temporary exhibition and refresh the permanent exhibitions on Wordsworth and the school history. We have a small but dedicated team with a mix of skills and interests, and our goal is to share the stories of Hawkshead Grammar School far and wide. Historically, documentation has been very scant, and much of the school history is missing, most importantly, details of former pupils. One goal is to find more pupils, and we benefit from many tips from visitors seeking ancestors or local historians conducting research. We have our own inhouse enthusiastic researchers but as anyone who has dealt with ancestor research knows, there are many dead ends and unresolved mysteries! If you know of any former pupils or of stories about the school, please do get in touch.



In 2021 we launched the volunteer-driven library conservation project. The library is the hidden gem of the school, 1600+ books dating back to the 16th century and described by a historic book conservator as *'an extraordinary survival of a grammar school library that remains in the building in which it was used for over three centuries'*.¹ The aims of the library project are: to create a digital catalogue of bibliographic, provenance and condition details; to

¹ Bendix. C, 'Conservation Report on the Books at Hawkshead Grammar School Foundation', (unpublished internal HGSF report, 2020)

identify and carry out book repairs, and to develop a body of knowledge about the collection that enhances the school story and inspires future exhibitions.

In 2025, receipt of a 'Thrive with Arts, Culture and Heritage' grant via Westmorland & Furness Council enabled acquisition of four museum-



grade display cases designed to exhibit books, a huge improvement on previous display spaces which were not secure or environmentally suitable. [DISPLAY CASE IMAGE] Future exhibitions can

now incorporate almost any book from the collection, and we are very grateful to W&F Council. Our new 2026 exhibition, 'Wordsworth's friends', brings together the stories of Wordsworth's classmates with the books that they donated, read and scribbled in.

The museum is open from April-October, 5 days a week during term-time and daily during school holidays. Entry charge is £6 per adult and is valid for a year. The library is open if volunteers are present, usually Monday and Friday mornings, and visitors are welcome to look in and chat to the volunteers about their work. We also hold special Open Library events, e.g. during Heritage Open Days, with librarian talks and highlights from the collection. This year, for the first time, we are planning a series of monthly evening talks, the first of these is from historic book conservator, Caroline Bendix, on Monday April 27th and will cover the history of libraries.

See our website www.hawksheadgrammar.org.uk for dates and information on events and opening times.

Joanne Heather, Director of Hawkshead Grammar School Foundation

Renwick and Kirkoswald Local History Group

Our meeting in January greatly enjoyed Barry McKay's talk on the '**Chapmen**', pedlars and hawkers who were so important in rural communities from the 17th to the early 19th century with their bags/boxes of household goods, ribbons etc.



They went from village to village and also sold at fairs and markets. 'Chap' has roots in the Dutch word for 'cheap' and can be still seen in lots of English town districts, as in 'Cheapside' or 'Chipping'. The slang term for man, "chap" arose from the use of the abbreviated word to mean a customer, one with whom to bargain. They were also ballad singers and there were 550 chap

books in England. Penrith had 2 printers, 1 of which was a woman. Chapmen had to be licenced and in some ways were just above being legal beggars.

Agriculture in World War 1 was the focus of Richard Pestin's fascinating talk in February.

Richard highlighted the huge impact of submarine warfare – by 1918 25% of the Allied merchant fleet had been sunk. - and the pressure this placed on productivity. The Navy was slow to create a convoy system but which eventually was highly effective.

There was significant progress on mechanisation to improve the food situation which had been hard hit by U Boat campaigns. Massive changes were created including the munitions production site at Gretna, training of vets to manage the 165,000 horses in the

Army, the decline of hiring fairs, Government regulation of agricultural wages and guaranteed prices. Beacon Edge was largely cut down to make room for trees, used in trenches and as pit props. POW camps sprung up in Kirkoswald, Rowrah and Langwathby.

Dick O'Brien

Coanwood Featherstone Lambley History Group Events planned

Whitley Sheilings and a Large Sink Hole -Walk and Talk Sunday 12th April

Alastair Robertson will lead us on a walk from Gilderdale/Epiacum, Kirkhaugh to the Whitley Sheilings, about 1.5miles each way (before the ferns grow too high!!) While there we can investigate a very large sink hole close by.

This is **Free** to South Tynedale History group members or a £5 donation if not a Group member. Either bring a packed lunch or we can have refreshments in the Nook at Epiacum on our return. Please let me know if you are interested in being added to the list of attendees. PS dogs will be allowed, strictly on leads as its lambing time.

Alston Engine Sheds and Signal Box visit /tour at Alston Station on Saturday May 23rd 12.15 pm

Free to Group members £5 to non members, plus optional Steam Train ride timed to fit in with the tour/visit

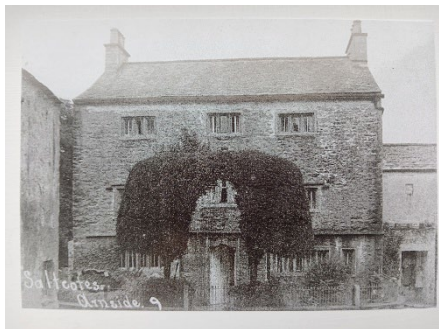
Guided Tour of Warwick Mill at Warwick Bridge, Cumbria, 2pm Thursday 18th June 2025

Approx £8 per person including Tea/Coffee and cake. Reduced Members rate

Richard Macdonald, Chairman CFL History Group

Arnside Archive Group: Cataloguing The Willacy Collection

The Arnside Archive Group is a volunteer organisation housed in the Arnside Educational Institute. Our archive originated from a large collection of artefacts assembled by late local historian Dennis Bradbury. <https://arnsidearchive.org.uk/>



We offer an open invitation for anyone to drop in for advice, to research or to donate items of interest. For eighteen months from late 2023, Dave Willacy 1942-2025, became a weekly visitor. Dave was a long standing Arnside resident, with an impressive family tree. He was a descendent of the Sauls, one of the earliest local families who

owned many notable buildings in the village, including Saltcotes Hall(see image), Lawrence House and Beechwood, some dating from the late 1600s. He had also been a longstanding Chair of the Parish Council and had an encyclopaedic knowledge of village life.

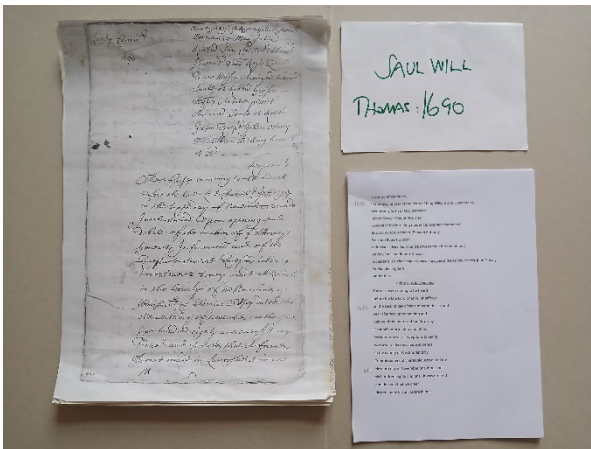
He and his late cousin had collated their family history and on a week by week basis, Dave started sifting through this material and bringing it to us for safe keeping. It is the largest collection we have received, and we soon realised that it was going to be a mammoth task. One volunteer Jude Bratt sat with Dave each week documenting his donations and crucially taking notes on their significance and relationship to other items.



Sadly, Dave passed away in early 2025, which was when we started putting the eleven large box files, maps, and artefacts, which had been stored in the chronological order they arrived with us, into a more coherent archival collection. Jude was joined in this work by two new volunteers Thirza Jago and Pat

Emmerson. The rest of the volunteers are assisting with data management and exhibition preparation as each file is completed

One of the team had a particular interest in discovering more about the history of Saltcotes Hall and the Saul family who built it. This gave a significant focus, so they decided to begin with compiling a record of all the documentation relating to the Saul family. The Sauls had been in Arnside since at least the seventeenth century, but their family line died out in 1941 on the death of William Washington Saul. His sister Annie Olivia, died at the age of 93 on 28 February 1967: she was the last of the Sauls of Arnside and Dave Willacy's grandmother.



One challenge was to understand a will of 1690, which was written in Jacobean script and contained terms with specific legal meanings, so their school Latin was no help. They consulted retired archivist Nicolas Webb whose expert

help has enabled the team to learn a great deal in the process. They have been fascinated to puzzle out in such detail the story of just one family member.

We are all now looking forward to finding out more about this interesting individual and his extensive family, as well as exploring the many further documents yet to be catalogued.

Our ambition is to have made sufficient progress throughout this year to feature The Willacy Collection at our autumn exhibition of October 3rd.

Janet Hargreaves , Arnside Archives

Millom and District Local History Society Memories of the late Duane Farren, Local historian from Millom, live on a year after his untimely death



Raft Races at Millom

There has been a fantastic response to around 250 old photos of Millom and Haverigg that have been shared on the Facebook group of MDLHS Sharon Farren, wife of the late Millom local historian Duane Farren, donated several hundred slide photographs which Duane had accumulated over many years. A call was put out for help to digitise them and local Neal Hartley responded. These were then shared on the History Society Facebook group resulting in many Millomites reminiscing about past events such as the floods in Haverigg before the defences were built.

Photos from carnivals, raft races, the old iron works before they closed in 1968, HMS Ajax being towed into the old pier for demolition, the old paddling pool at Haverigg, brought forth shared memories. On March 3rd alone, over 8,000 people viewed the photographs.

The Society have just published their second book, The Prehistoric Footprints of Millom, dedicated to Duane. In 2017 he discovered ancient footprints on the Duddon foreshore and monitored them until his death. His wife, Sharon, found two memory sticks with hundreds of images of human and animal footprints which can be viewed on the Society's website. A new monitoring group has been set up and it is hoped to encourage academic research to date the footprints. It is anticipated they come from Mesolithic to Medieval times, similar to the ones found at Formby beach but there are definitely footprints which date to the Bronze Age or earlier because that is when the aurochs, a huge ferocious, cow, was hunted to extinction in Britain - the archive includes many of their footprints as well as wild boar, red and roe deer, wolf and beaver.

Copies of the book, £10, can be bought from Suttons Bookshop, Ulverston, Frame It and Millom Heritage and Arts Centre, Millom, with profits going towards further research.

Jan Bridget, Millom and District Local History Society

**Congratulations to Cumbria Family
History Society on its 50th
Anniversary !**



New Cumbria FHS Website Cumbria Family History Society was founded very nearly 50 years ago to support family historians researching ancestors from the ancient counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, and the Furness region of Lancashire. We have had a website for many years, but the present

incarnation <https://www.cumbriafhs.com> (version 3) was launched 1 year ago.

We decided to take the management of the website back in-house after a brief period of maintenance (and redesign) by a professional web design company. The main reason was to reduce the onerous ongoing costs for maintaining and updating the system. It also gave back full and immediate control of content and changes.

We achieved this by using free development tools and Google applications, principally Google Sites, which amazingly also provides free hosting. There are some other services for which we pay a modest subscription, such as Heyzine for hosting our Newsletter archive (in “Flipbook” format), and Tiinyhost for hosting Edenlinks which is a very old Internet-based collection of transcriptions and indexes for Westmorland historic data sources, that the Society rescued many years ago when its maintenance ceased.

We retained the old layout and colour scheme with a similar look and feel, but as we no longer had professional IT competence to maintain the site, it was necessary to simplify the functionality. For instance, there is no longer a facility for members to maintain their Society membership records in real time. This was not a feature that was greatly appreciated by most of our members, who in any case can always contact the Membership Secretary directly. Many members encountered problems with creating and resetting their passwords. In fact, there were so many queries and complaints about access (and confusion over passwords for previous systems), that for the new version we resolved to create a system that does not require user passwords. There is still member-only content, e.g. our newsletters, but this is protected by file passwords. These are communicated to our members via our newsletter or by email.

Prospective members can still join electronically and pay by credit/debit card using the excellent Parish Chest service from Family History Federation. This is also the case for subscription renewal by existing members. Our Shop - the entire inventory of transcription and index publications (including downloads) is also hosted and available via Parish Chest. All our subscription and publication options are deep-linked from our website, but we have no technical responsibility for any transactional or financial processing, which reduces the risk to the Society, and simplifies data privacy considerations for us.

We provide a calendar for our upcoming meetings, and a booking form, but we no longer have a fully-integrated booking system. Our members can link to externally-hosted recordings of our previous Zoom events (password protected).

There is also the facility for displaying Society news and announcements, and there are many pages and subpages about the Society, and advice on sources and techniques for researching Cumbrian families. In addition, apart from this static content, we also have some more advanced features. For instance, we have an interactive Parish Map, which shows all parishes in the modern county of Cumbria, and how they relate to old county and diocesan boundaries. Each parish name is clickable, which gives more detailed information and sources. This data compilation is no longer managed in-house, but instead we link through to the excellent Genuki service for the respective Cumberland, Westmorland or Lancashire parish page.

The most useful advanced function is the Cumbrian People Finder. This gives access, in a few clicks, to an index of over 630,000 dead Cumbrians. I say dead Cumbrians, as obviously we cannot list living Cumbrians for data protection reasons. The majority of the records are related to deaths;-burials, grave inscriptions, newspaper death announcements, and wills.

The sources are

- Copeland Baptisms 121k records
- Copeland Marriages 64k records
- Copeland Burials 80k records
- Westmorland Burials 128k records

- Carlisle Wills *exclusive* (updated v3.4) 105k records
- Carlisle Journal Transcriptions (updated v3.4) 43k records
- Carlisle Patriot Transcriptions 42.5k records
- Westmorland Hearth Tax 1674 6.9k records
- Westmorland Window Tax 1777 3.2k records
- Westmorland Census 1787 7.5k records
- Carlisle Solicitor Documents *exclusive* 6.5k records

We cannot hope to compete with platforms such as FamilySearch or Ancestry for the number of records that we index, but *all* our records relate to Cumbria. Most result from transcriptions or indexes made by our members, and some are exclusive. The Wills are especially useful, as these include all individuals mentioned in a will (and not just the testator).

There have already been 4 updates since the launch, and there are more datasets in the pipeline. The interface for PeopleFinder has also been further improved by innovative work done by one of our members to group algorithmically surname variants together. There are almost 30000 surnames in the index, This greatly reduces the number of names that users have to look up. For instance the name AIREY now has 23 variants. Before, it was necessary to do 24 separate searches. Now, for one click, the number of individuals retrieved has gone up from 799 to 1321, and they are displayed together in the same table.

The Society no longer publishes directly C19th newspaper transcriptions done by our members (though some are indexed by PeopleFinder), but instead we embed the GENEALOGY-CUMBRIA Google Group <https://groups.google.com/g/Genealogy-Cumberland> which covers well over 25,000 transcriptions in our website. In addition, the same transcriptions have also been posted on list-cumbria <https://list.cumbriafhs.com/mailman/listinfo/list-cumbria> , a mail list server maintained financially by Cumbria FHS.

The website has been well-received by our members, and continues to be updated continuously, to keep content fresh. We have plenty of ideas for future developments. The most visual change in the coming months will be a rebranding to mark our Golden Jubilee next year.

David Huddart (webmaster@cumbriafhs.com)

Cumbria County History Trust

A letter from Angus Winchester re CCHT to all members of the Cumbria Local History Federation,

The launch of *Westmorland Vol. 1*, the first 'red book' from the Victoria County History of Cumbria project took place last September. That volume, covering Lonsdale Ward, is a landmark book, not only for being the first ever Victoria County History volume for the old county of Westmorland but also being the 250th red book for the 128-year-old national VCH project.

Before his tragic and unexpected death last month, Sir Roland Jackson, chair of the Cumbria County History Trust, was planning to write to those who attended the launch. I have stepped in as Acting Chair until the AGM next month and am fulfilling his intentions.

We have at least fourteen more volumes to complete the Victoria County History of Cumbria, providing an encyclopaedic history of every parish in the county. We are ambitious to complete the work on two more red books in the next five years but researching and writing each red book costs around £100,000. We would like to thank all our members and donors for their support so far, including the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society, Lancaster University, Historic England, Hadfield Trust, Kirkby Trust and the Fahy Fund.

I invite you to take this opportunity to join the Cumbria County History Trust, to pledge your support for the VCH Cumbria project and to help us to raise the visibility and awareness of this important local charity. To find out more about our work please explore the Trust's website (<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/>). Please do spread the word to any family, friends or colleagues who might be interested in supporting the VCH Cumbria project. By increasing our membership, you will be helping the completion of the volumes currently being researched (for Lancashire-over-the-Sands and for north-east Cumberland) and you will be making a long-lasting difference to the viability of the VCH Cumbria project into the future. (<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/support-us>). Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss the work of the CCHT and VCH Cumbria further.

Angus Winchester

Professor Emeritus (History), Lancaster University

KENDAL HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP

Kendal Heritage Partnership (KHP) had its second meeting on 21st January 2026. The substantive items considered at the January meeting are reported on under 1, 2 and 3 below.

1. Future of the Kendal Town Museum (report by Louise McKenna and Charlotte Hawley, W&FC)

W&FC is actively considering the options open to it to ensure the long-term future of the Museum with secure funding. The current Management Agreement with Kendal College is due to come to an end in 2027 and W&FC (who own the collection but not the building) are in active discussions with the College on this. A decision by the College is expected by Easter. All options will be considered by the Council and a paper on these will be presented to the next meeting of the Partnership in June. Currently, the Museum is working on a project with Joe Rigby to link the Harrison Collection with the Nandi community in Kenya.

2. Future of the Kendal Archive Centre (report by Louise McKenna and Robert Baxter)

Louise McKenna from W&FC reported on recent Council decisions with regard to Kendal Archive Centre, run by Cumbria Archives. Given the state of the current accommodation in the County Hall, it is considered to be no longer sustainable as a repository or as a working place for staff. The Council have therefore decided to re-locate the Centre's Search Room on a temporary basis for a further two years to Kendal Library. Prior to this, the service will close temporarily for about three months later this year in order to carry out emergency work. Once the Search Room has re-opened, a full-scale consultation with partners, key stakeholders and depositors on the long-term future of the Centre will take place and a specialist archive consultant will be engaged to support this work. The importance of keeping the collection and service in Kendal was recognised.

3. Sow, Grow, Harvest (discussion facilitated by Helen Stalker)

A focused discussion using the Sow-Grow-Harvest framework was held. The session showed a clear set of priorities for strengthening Kendal's heritage ecosystem. There was strong interest in exploring contemporary collecting, digital innovation, and potential combined models for at-risk assets. The group highlighted the importance of improving the public realm, diversifying income, nurturing volunteers, and ensuring young people and community voice shape future offers. The Partnership articulated a shared ambition for a more connected town, a renewed stewardship model, and a revitalised heritage offer rooted in real community stories. There is a desire to pass on a stronger, more confident heritage identity, and to build momentum toward opportunities such as UK Town of Culture.

4. Other reports/updates

Other reports were made and included the following items:

- **Lakeland Arts** – Lakeland Arts has been successful in its application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for **phase one** funding to redevelop the Lakeland Museum. Funding for this first phase is £244,000, which will enable LA to build the necessary organisational capacity and develop a capital plan towards an application for subsequent funding for a new Lakeland Museum (which could amount to £12-15 million). In the meantime, it is intended to open up the LM collection through digitisation and community engagement. The Barbara Hepworth sculpture will be coming back to Abbot Hall in the Spring.
- **Stricklandgate House** – Stricklandgate House are in the process of applying for **phase two** funding of their NLHF bid to transform the historic building into an enhanced community facility. The bid is being submitted in February and a decision is expected in June.
- **Kendal Parish Church** – the Church is now well into phase one of its NLHF project, with planning permissions granted for the work to the tower and chapel roof, and the interior work to create performance and exhibition space. The celebration of heritage would be a key

element to the latter. Their Phase 2 bid is likely to be submitted later this spring.

- **Quaker Tapestry Museum** – Jenny Pearce reported on the recent closure of the Museum and efforts to raise funds to re-open it and ensure its long-term future. A Quaker Tapestry Futures Appeal has been established for this purpose. Those wishing to support this appeal can contact Ros Batchelor, Quaker Tapestry Collection Trust Treasurer at: qtct@quaker-tapestry.co.uk.
- **Kendal Town Collection** – work was ongoing to bring more of the collection to a wider audience. Simon Unsworth would be coordinating Heritage Open Days (September) with other providers in the town.
- **Kendal Town of Culture bid** – Councillor Craig Russell reported on progress with the town's bid to become the UK's Town of Culture. A submission for initial funding would be made by the end of March.

Other contributions were made by Kendal Civic Society, Cumbria Tourism and the Lakeland Canal Trust.

5. Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 4 June. Possible items for the meeting are Kendal Town of Culture bid and a discussion on the Public Realm (to include Kendal Futures)

J Anstee, on behalf of Kendal Local Heritage Partnership.

Editors note: Migration

Continuing the focus on Migration and its impact on Local History I am pleased to include 2 articles in this issue. One is from Pat Rowland at Cartmel who says 'We receive lots of enquiries from people around the world who have discovered our website and it helps us to research deeper into local families and expand knowledge of our area'. The second from Joanne Heather at Hawkshead Grammar School is about a successful regional migrant with ancestors who were migrants themselves.

Edward and William Hall of Flookburgh and Canada



Edward and Jane Hall

We have recently been given information by Ann Stevens of Canada about two members of the Hall family, her husband's relatives, who emigrated to Canada from Flookburgh in the early 20th century.

In 1903 Edward Hall senior who was 54 years old emigrated, leaving his wife Jane and their children living in Flookburgh. He arrived at the port of Montreal, Canada on 20 June 1903 having sailed on the ship named Lake Manitoba from Liverpool.

Until 1900, the Canadian West was largely under-populated, so the federal government began a program offering cheap land to would-be settlers. To gain land, people who wished to homestead had to apply at the local land agency office and meet certain eligibility requirements. These included being male, a British subject (or intend to become one), and being of a required age. For \$10, an applicant could apply to homestead a quarter section, which was 160 acres. After that, the homesteader had three years

to "prove up" their claim. The improvements that were required changed over the years but typically included the construction of a house and fences, and the planting of crops on 40 acres of the land and it had to be occupied for a set amount of time, usually 6 months per year. If successfully "proved up", the settler could apply for a patent, which gave him legal ownership of the land. As well, a homesteader could apply for an adjacent quarter for \$3 per acre.

In 1905 Edward purchased land which would become a homestead in the Okotoks area of Alberta (just south of Calgary), to the west of a small settlement on a river crossing. Okotoks was established in 1882, as an agricultural settlement and the houses were built of wood. A station was built in 1892 as it was on the route of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Oil was discovered in 1914 and Okotoks expanded to become a regional distribution centre.

In his sworn statement dated February 1914 in his application for a patent under The Dominion Land Acts he said he purchased land at Okotoks on 21 September 1905 and took possession in January 1906. He stated that he was a widower with one son (which was not true). He lived on the land from June 1906 until 23 Dec 1913 when all the buildings burned down (a common occurrence in the area). He stated that in the first year (1906) he broke 10 acres and farmed them in 1906, 1907 and 1908. Included on the application were animal numbers and details of the house (frame measured 12 x 14 and it was valued at 10000 dollars) and land (fenced and cross fenced and the value was 15000 dollars).

	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
horses	10	12	15	16	20	22	29	29
cattle								
hogs	4	7	8	9	10	10	20	48

Son William, who was born in 1885, also emigrated to Canada and in 1908 joined his father at Okotoks. In 1909 William visited his family and returned to Canada in 1910. Whilst sailing back to Montreal aboard the Empress of Britain he met Alexandrina who was from Aberdeen, Scotland. She had work organised in Toronto, Ontario. She worked there until 1913, because she was required to reimburse her employer for her passage, but during this time they corresponded. When she had met her obligation William sent her the train fare, and she travelled to Calgary, Alberta where they married the day she arrived, 28 Nov 1913.



Alexandrina and William on their wedding day. Alexandrina was married in her travelling clothes.

Presumably they planned to live on Edward's homestead but it burned down less than a month later, 23 December 1913. They worked for the next two years at a cattle ranch probably until they had enough money to rebuild the farmhouse and buildings, before they returned to farm on Edward's homestead. The family remained on the homestead until 1929, and it must have been challenging because to supplement his farm income, William hired himself out to other farms to do threshing. There was no phone, and the closest store was in Okotoks. The oldest children rode a pony to school with books and lunches strapped onto the saddle. As the family grew, it became necessary to take a horse and buggy or sleigh to transport the children to the rural school, known as Big Rock School. The family of eleven, including nine children, eventually moved into the town of Okotoks and Isabelle, one of their children, described the house "...a white frame house, set well back from the road, amongst elm trees. It didn't have indoor plumbing; we got

water from an outside well." At Christmas, and other times as well, William's family in England would send boxes of clothing for everyone. The clothes would often have gold coins sewn into them and there was great excitement in the family when the boxes arrived. Jane and William's other siblings remained in Flookburgh.

William and Alexandrina outside their home in Okotoks.



William Hall remained in Okotoks, Canada and died in 1953 aged 77 and his wife Alexandrina died there in 1984 aged 95. They are buried at Okotoks.

Back in Flookburgh William's mother Jane was buried on 27 Oct 1932. In her obituary it said she had two sons in Canada. Probably the other son who went to Canada was Edward junior, who was born in 1884, but we have no details. William's father Edward Senior was buried at Flookburgh too on 16 August 1938. It is not known when he returned to England.

Pat Rowland, Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society

Daniel Rawlinson – A Cumbrian Migrant

Daniel Rawlinson was the second most important benefactor of Hawkshead Grammar School after its founder, Edwin Sandys. Descended from migrants, he migrated from Hawkshead to London where he found greater success and wealth than he likely would have at home. He used his wealth and connections to support his birthplace and give thanks for his education and start in life.

Rawlinson was born in 'Graisdale' in January 1615 and baptised at Hawkshead, the third son of Thomas Rawlinson and Susanna Steinberger.² Daniel's grandfather, also Thomas, was likely the Thomas Rawlinson appointed as an initial school Governor in 1588, one of 5 yeomen appointed to the role.³ He had a tenement at 'Grisdall' and an inventory worth £180.18s.4d. when he died in 1591, leaving 3s.4d. towards 'buying of a Dyctionary to the Schole'.

Susanna Steinberger was a granddaughter of Daniel Hochstetter who migrated to Keswick from Augsburg, Germany, to run the Company of Mines Royal at Elizabeth I's request.⁴ Hochstetter's daughter Anna Maria married Mark Steinberger, mine foreman and the son or nephew of another German founder. A year after Susanna's birth in Keswick her mother died in childbirth, and Mark Steinberger remarried an Isobel Sandys of St Bees. Susanna perhaps met her future husband through the Sandys family at Esthwaite, the German miners working the Coniston copper mines in the 1590s, or via the marriage of a Hochstetter aunt to Allan Nicholson of Hawkshead Hall.⁵

² David A. Jackson 'The Rawlinsons from Furness Fells' (2023), p.21 and <https://www.cumbrianlives.org.uk/lives/daniel-rawlinson.html> accessed 22.02.2026

³ H.S. Cowper 'Hawkshead' (1899), p.471

⁴ J. Fisher Crosthwaite 'The Colony of German Miners at Keswick' tcwaas_001_1883_vol6_0036, p.344

⁵ W.G. Collingwood 'Germans at Coniston in the Seventeenth Century' tcwaas_002_1910_vol10_0011, pp.370-5.

Daniel probably attended Hawkshead Grammar School from ages 8 to 18. Per Edwin Sandys' founding statutes, the school day was long, 6am-5pm in summer, with teaching largely in Latin, learning orally by rote. The schoolroom was lined with six wooden forms or benches, and students moved 'up' a form as Latin proficiency improved. Daily life included morning and evening prayers, psalms sung before dinner, and Sunday church. Hawkshead was flourishing as a wool market town supplying Kendal, having secured its charter via Adam Sandys in 1608.⁶

In 1633, 18-year-old Rawlinson migrated to London—a common move for country boys "of the middling sort" — to apprentice under female vintner Ellen Spillman.⁷ The transition from the remote North to a bustling capital filled with dense crowds and noisy spectacle was stark, however Rawlinson seems to have thrived, marrying Margaret in 1637 and becoming a freeman in 1639.



He leased the Mitre tavern on Fenchurch Street which became his home and business for the next 40 years. A staunch royalist, he famously draped his tavern sign in mourning cloth upon Charles I's execution.

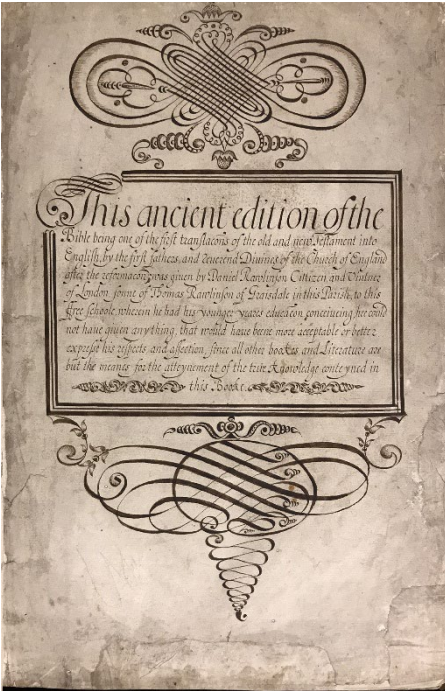
Despite this, his business survived the Interregnum, but he must have rejoiced at the Restoration. At this point, he starts to appear in Pepys' diary, offering us a closer perspective. Pepys, who was nearly 20 years Rawlinson's junior, appears to have gone to him for investment advice and secure cash storage as well as spending convivial evenings drinking in The Mitre. In Charles II's booming London it was a good time to invest.

Image : Daniel Rawlinsons trade token for the Mitre worth one farthing

⁶ Cowper 'Hawkshead' pp.470-5 and p.99

⁷ Jackson 'Rawlinsons', p.24

The Mitre stood near the Royal Exchange and the East India Company on Leadenhall Street. Well-connected in mercantile circles, Rawlinson left £2,500 in EIC shares to his children, urging them to keep them "which I esteem will be for their best benefit and advantage" - advice borne out, as the stock rose significantly.



Sadly, his good fortune changed in 1666. Those who could afford it fled London during the plague; Pepys records that Rawlinson took his household into the country. By summer 1666 the worst was over and they returned but in August Margaret and two servants contracted 'the sickness' and died.⁸ Four weeks later the Great Fire swept through the city and destroyed The Mitre. A year later Pepys sees him in Fenchurch Street 'looking over his ruins there', but like many he quickly rebuilt and by 1668 the doors had re-opened.⁹ Perhaps due to this close brush with death, Daniel

focused his later years on philanthropy. He left a substantial legacy (£9,500 today) for the 'poore Children kept at Christ's Hospital', reflecting his belief in the value of education. Pepys was a Governor of Christ's Hospital, as was mathematician Sir Jonas Moore and Treasurer William Gibbons, and the latter two donated books to Hawkshead School Library. This reciprocal giving strengthened relationships and was typical of the period.

⁸ <https://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1666/08/06/>, accessed 15.02.2026

⁹ <https://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1667/09/08/> accessed 15.02.2026

Image : Inscription in the Bishops Bible donated by Daniel Rawlinson, the first book donated to the library

He had long provided apprenticeships for Hawkshead boys.¹⁰ In 1667 his elder brother Robert died, and Daniel arranged apprenticeships for his two teenage nephews, one of whom later became manager of The Mitre. He bought Robert's land in Grizedale, probably the family land, and ten 'fee farm rents...in the Lordship of Ffournes'. In 1669 he gave £100 to the parish, (£19,000 today), to benefit the school, the minister and the poor. His legacies supported Satterthwaite Chapel of Ease and established Monday services at Hawkshead Church to coincide with market days.¹¹

However, by far his most enduring legacy is Hawkshead's library. He 'crowdfunded' this, asking family, friends and business acquaintances to donate books, which created an unusual collection that reflects the donors' interests. Some 20% of the titles are untypical: mathematics, geography, commerce, all perhaps chosen to inspire boys towards a commercial rather than clerical career. The donors were largely from London and Hawkshead, some connected to Pepys or the Royal Society, some with mercantile interests. Cumbrian donors, including family, clergy and gentry like Sir Daniel Fleming or Thomas Preston of Holker show that Rawlinson maintained ties to his birthplace despite years in London. In 1675, he also financed the school's reconstruction in stone—the building that serves as the museum today.

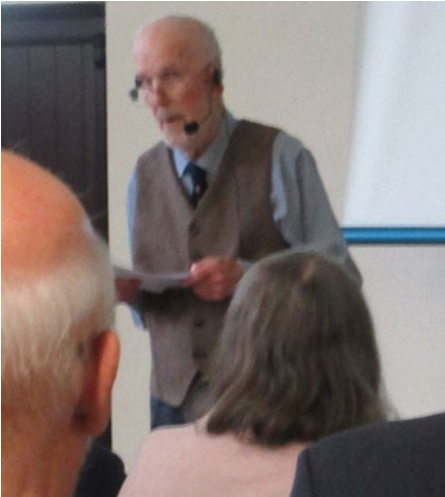
More about Daniel Rawlinson can be found in the 'Rawlinson 350' exhibition in the museum guide on Bloomberg Connects, or by visiting the museum.

Joanne Heather

¹⁰ Jackson 'Rawlinsons', pp.25-26

¹¹ Cowper 'Hawkshead', p.556-7

Michael Mullett Obituary



The committee of the Cumbria Local History Federation is very sad to report the death of Professor Michael Mullett Emeritus Professor of History at Lancaster University on February 10th 2026 and we, the committee, extend our deepest sympathy to Lorna, his wife, who until very recently was a CLHF committee member and to his family and friends.

Michael, a committed Roman Catholic, was part of the Department of History at Lancaster from October 1968 eventually becoming Professor of Cultural and Religious Studies until his retirement in 2008 when he became Emeritus Professor.

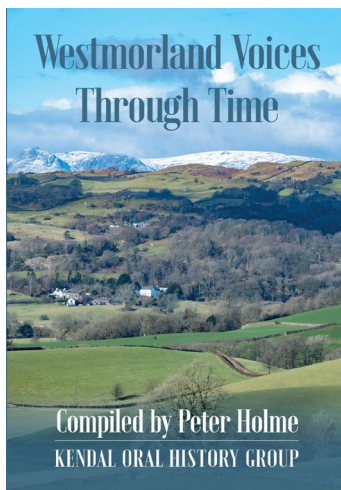
On a personal level in the 1990s I was lucky enough to be taught Quaker history by him when I was a part time student at the university studying for my Diploma in Local History and well remember his thorough diligence and warm humour when handling a small group of mature students. He even found time to help me with my possible Mancunian Jewish family history.

In retirement Michael was very much part of the local history environment especially in the area around Penrith, where he lived. He was a prolific author, astute conference organiser and accomplished speaker and lecturer. He will be very much missed on the Cumbrian history scene. His very last talk was at the CLHF Autumn Convention 2025.

A Requiem Mass was held for Michael on 24 February at St Catherine's Church, Penrith.

Christine Craghill CLHF committee member

Book Reviews



This is a fascinating collection of 100 articles from people born between 1888 and 1939. The interviews are undertaken by volunteers of the Kendal Group.

Kendal Oral History Group was founded in 1987 and since then a committed group of volunteers have created one of the largest oral history archives in the region.

This book captures so many common features of ordinary peoples lives mainly in the first half of the 20th century. General themes include things such as the state of housing often with 'no electric and no hot

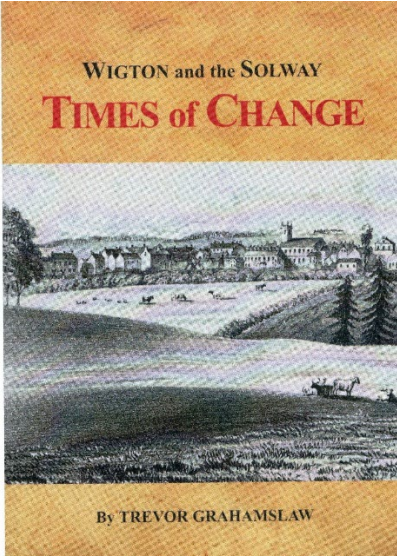
water' and the reality of farming without big machinery. There was general excitement at the time of the world wars when life changed. Opportunities such as a young lady who left home in 1943 to join the RAF, or the lad who left home in September 1939 and returned in November 1946 having travelled far and wide. Or the young man who resented being sent to help on a different farm to his own families, tried repeatedly to sign up but eventually completed his farm service elsewhere.

Another common theme are stories about first jobs whether its in a laundry or a foundry (Kendal used to have four) , farming or the Co-op, a teacher or a doctor. Then there are little treasures such as young Percy who worked for Alfred Wainwright at the council. Or the memorable tale of grandpa having his leg amputated in the parlour.

A book which captures some of the richness of life in those times as lived by real people. The text is well illustrated with old photographs.

This book can be purchased at local bookshops or order via post. If you have any queries please email: kendaloralhistory@gmail.com

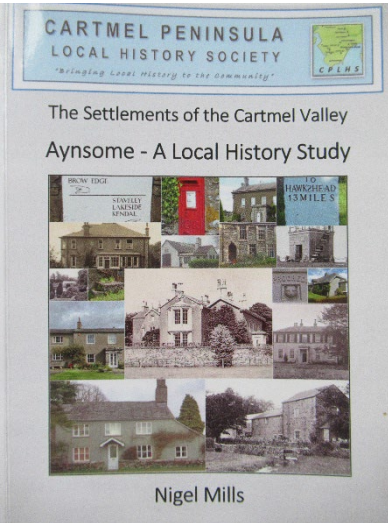
Ruth Lawley



**WIGTON AND THE SOLWAY:
TIMES OF CHANGE**

Trevor Grahamslaw
(Flosh Publishing, £30)

Reading a handful of letters written by Jane Matthews of Wigton Hall between 1791 and 1820, Trevor was drawn into the world they detailed. The letters are filled with social visits across the county from Allonby to Gilsland, with news gleaned of health, wealth and work but also novel reading (Jane was a big fan of Ann Radcliffe's bestselling novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho*) and even duck breeding. Trevor puts these letters in context by exploring how Wigton's history of governance and settlement leads up to their writing. The bulk of the study then examines different elements of the Wigton of Jane's life, from the textiles industry to elections, riots and policing to leisure, travel, festivals and sports. These eclectic topics are rich histories in themselves. Short, concentrated biographies of key figures in Wigton's social world appear at intervals, with profiles of James Lowther and John Christian Curwen helpful in animating a discussion of the day's politics. A second source which adds depth to Trevor's history is a private diary written by Skirwith Abbey's Mary Yates (Jane's sister's mother-in-law) between 1794 and 1801, brimming with lively insights on seabathing and cardplaying but also geology and meteorology. Archival paintings, sketches and newspaper articles make the book a visual feast.



Aynsome a Local History Study

126pp illustrated This study by Nigel Mills is a detailed account of the small settlement of Aynsome in the South of Cumbria. It is the culmination of much work both exploring the district, talking to locals and researching at archives and online sources. It is a fine demonstration of what can be achieved with determination and skill and may enrich the experience of anyone living in or visiting the area.

I personally found the story of the Aynsome laboratory fascinating, another example of determination. Many of us spend time accumulating information about our local areas, few manage to make it available to others in a published format. Ed.

Contact nigmillspp@gmail.com £12 including p&p



Cumbria Local History Federation

CLHF WHAT'S ON MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Most of you know that we send out a monthly newsletter which lists the meeting our member groups are holding that month. If you don't receive this newsletter but would like a copy each month please send you email address to solwaypast@yahoo.com.

For member groups if your meetings are not advertised and you would like them to be please send me an email with date, time, title, speaker, venue and any charge for visitors.

Notices need to be received by the 14th of the month before. Or send your programme for the year and this will be added to our website events page as well as in the newsletter.

Graham Brooks solwaypast@yahoo.com

CLHF Contacts

To contact the CLHF Committee please see www.clhf.org.uk

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Membership and events listing please e-mail solwaypast@yahoo.com