

# *The Journal*

## Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society

Brackenthwaite    Buttermere    Embleton    Loweswater    Mockerkin    Pardshaw    Wythop

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*Iredale Place, Loweswater, in the 1950s, from the Pat Evans archive*

## *The Journal*

Welcome to issue 43 of the Journal. Again it has been a pleasure to receive a number of interesting articles from members for this issue, and I am sure that everyone will find something of interest in these pages. The 2008 Bradbury lecture, given by Dr Michael Winstanley of Lancaster University on the buildings of Cockermouth, has by chance led to his discovery of a Lorton-born woman, a farmer's daughter and Lorton School alumni, who went on to achieve remarkable success as a pioneer in the field of the education of young ladies in the later nineteenth century. Her school's inclusion in the Victoria County History of Middlesex must surely be proof of her importance. It has been my privilege to work with Michael and to contribute to the research and writing of the story; a fascinating tale which we have been able to reconstruct almost wholly from material available on-line. How research has changed since the last century.

Thanks also to Walter Head for his record of the memories of the Lorton Home Guard. Whilst humorous anecdotes are always remembered, this must have been the light relief for the people who played an important part in providing some security at a time of great danger.

Contributions of all sorts would be appreciated for the next issue, though particularly welcome would be articles from the outer reaches of our area, away from the central metropolis that is Lorton.

### **The Pat Evans archive.**

The Society and our archivist, John Hart, have been pleased to receive from Pat Evans of Workington, the collection of material that Pat gathered from the 1950s about Loweswater and its environs. Pat was co-author, with Sheila Richardson, of *Tales of a Lakeland valley, Loweswater*, published in 1996, and many of the photographs that we now have were used in that book. The collection is now in our archive, and the photographs are now also available in digital form on the archive computer. Thanks to Michael Grieve



**The inglenook at Spout House, around 1960**

for using his skills to copy some very old slides. If you wish to see this material, which includes disappeared landscape features in the Loweswater Fells, please contact John Hart on 01900 823534. Our cover photograph of Iredale Place in the 1950s comes from the Pat Evans archive. While all seems rural simplicity, closer examination reveals that the miracle of television has come to Loweswater through a large Band I aerial strapped to the chimney, a 6dB yagi I believe, indicating that the single BBC channel just made it this far. I like to think that advice and installation might have been supplied by the late Charles Williams of Cold Keld, who owned a television and radio business in Workington at the time.

*Derek Denman, Editor*

### ***New Membership Secretary***

We are most grateful to Anne Asquith who has agreed to act as the Society's Membership Secretary. Anne is now in charge of membership records, collecting subscriptions, etc. Any enquiries on membership should be directed to Anne on 01900 822969.

*John Hudson, Chairman*

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## ***The Lorton Home Guard***

*by Walter Head*

On 26<sup>th</sup> August 1939 Britain signed an alliance with Poland. On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939 Germany invaded Poland, which resulted in Britain issuing an ultimatum to Germany on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939 requiring Germany to withdraw all troops from Poland. Failure to do so resulted in war being declared.

By 1940 an invasion of Britain by German troops was a possibility. On 14<sup>th</sup> May 1940 Sir Anthony Eden, the Secretary of State for War, made a radio broadcast in which he appealed for male volunteers aged between 17 and 65 to join an organisation called the Local Defence Volunteers, LDV, to help defend the country in the event of such an invasion. Approximately 250,000 men initially volunteered. During the period 27<sup>th</sup> May to 4<sup>th</sup> June 1940, the British Expeditionary Force was evacuated from the beaches of Dunkirk, which resulted in the loss of a large quantity of equipment as well as heavy casualties in the regular army.

Within six weeks of Sir Anthony Eden's appeal, 1,500,000 men had enlisted in the LDV and were issued with an LDV armband. Fascists and Communists were barred from joining the LDV. In the early days shortage of equipment and uniforms was a major problem. All new weapons etc. were used to restock the regular army, and so the LDV used home-made equipment with only a few shotguns. However, within one month there was one rifle available for every six men, but with very little ammunition. Having been hastily formed, there was no guidance on training from the Home Office, and so each area organised its own training. As a consequence a member of the LDV was four times more likely to die in training than a member of the regular army in training.

The 1,500,000 men who enlisted within six weeks of Sir Anthony Eden's appeal were formed into platoons, and Lorton was one place which had a platoon. This platoon was part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion E group under the command of Colonel GT

Pocklington-Senhouse of Maryport, and affiliated to the Border Regiment. Initially the Lorton platoon comprised 8-10 men led by Mr Gamlin of High Lorton as commander, with a first world war veteran, Jimmy Nicholson, as second in command. Other war veterans in the group included Tom Lister and Joe Walker, who at this time was a farm hand at Bridge End Farm.

The Lorton LDV, like others, had no equipment or uniforms to start with; only an LDV armband. Local children said that LDV stood for Look, Duck and Vanish. The LDV started training in the Yew Tree Hall, sloping arms and performing other rifle drills with broom handles, and practising throwing hand grenades using potatoes. They also carried out manoeuvres by night in the blackout, crawling through hedges etc. Eventually rifles were issued, but with very little ammunition; then uniforms which included battledress, anklets, boots, overcoats, gas capes, eye-shields, steel helmets, belt, frogs (spats?), pouches, haversacks, field dressings, anti-gas ointment and gas masks in a haversack (civilians received gas masks in cardboard boxes); plus weapons but no wet-weather kit. Later still greatcoats were issued to each man, and by the winter of 1940/1 most of the LDV, now called the Home Guard, had the standard battledress.

It was on 22<sup>th</sup> July 1940, following a suggestion from Churchill, that the name was changed from the Local Defence Volunteers to the Home Guard. Around this time men from the Loweswater and Buttermere areas joined the Lorton platoon. There was no payment or extra rations for members of the Home Guard, but if they were involved in night manoeuvres they could request to be excused work the following day. The Home Guard were not meant to defeat any German troops, who were seasoned soldiers, but to delay and harry any invasion force and to supply information regarding the location of the enemy.

By now the training was organised and included joint exercises with regular Border Regiment troops, and also joint exercises with the Portinscale Home Guard, who had a despatch rider, as did Ullock Home Guard. Dick Bell was the platoon wireless operator and cycled to Cockermouth one night each





**Lorton/Loweswater Home Guard 1942**

	G Stagg	A Turnbull	J Graham	J Porter	
V Alexander	J Smith	J Hannah	G Mackereth	J Fearon	W Coulthard
	J Coulthard	A Johnston		R Short	J Marston
H Hope	J Walker	R Bell	J Studholme	T Hope	T Lister
	S Fearon	K Milburn	J Nicholson		

week to learn Morse Code. There were also visits to the rifle range at Winscales near Workington, though shooting practice was carried out across the school yard or on the howe at Scale Hill. Later equipment included a bren gun and a two inch mortar.

Some Home Guard members left to join the regular army including Charlie Allison of Holme Cottage, who joined the guards and had to report to the guards in his Home Guard uniform. In December 1941 conscription was introduced in certain areas to keep the Home Guard up to strength. Home Guard members were required to attend parades twice per week, Wednesday night and Saturday mornings. They paraded and held rifle drill in Lorton school yard or at Scale Hill Hotel.

One of the assets of the Home Guard was their local knowledge of the area under their control. At a training exercise at Scale Hill Mr Gamlin stood on a wall to emphasise the point; unfortunately on completion he turned the wrong way and fell into the farm midden, losing his cap in the process. Two laughing members were ordered into the manure to retrieve his cap; understandably they trod the cap further into the manure before returning it to an embarrassed Mr Gamlin.

On another occasion, Lorton Home Guard were allocated the task of guarding Ouse Bridge to intercept a group of commandos who had to pass that way to capture Cockermouth Drill Hall. One member, Tony Hope, was positioned on the bridge while the remainder, using their local knowledge and country craft, spread out and laid in wait

around the bridge. Jack Studholme got lost in the woods for a while. None of them saw or heard the commandoes. None, that is, except for Tony Hope who was positioned on the bridge and was taken prisoner by the commandoes before he could raise the alarm. Tony was allowed to rejoin his group next morning for coffee and biscuits. The commandoes successfully captured the Drill Hall. If you are ever in Scotland in the vicinity of Fort William, it is well worth making a visit to the commando memorial north of Fort William near Spean Bridge on the A82.

At times Lorton Home Guard had to mount guard at Cockermouth Drill Hall; one at the door and one stationed inside. On a regular basis, two men were stationed each night at Crummock Water in a corrugated hut situated between the sluice and Park beck in case a seaplane tried to land on the lake. Two men were also stationed on the Howe above Scale Hill, which gave a good view point over the whole valley.

On 16<sup>th</sup> June 1944 a Wellington bomber with a Canadian crew crashed on Red Pike, Buttermere, at tea time and the Home Guard were called to the scene to guard the site. (See L&DFLHS *Newsletter* No 38, August 2006.) Gordon Stagg, Billy Irving, Joe Faulder and Harry Hardisty stood guard until relieved by regular troops at midnight.

There were no fatalities locally, but nationally 1,206 Home Guard members died on duty. With Germany on the brink of defeat, the Home guard was 'stood down' in December 1944. At the end of the war the Home Guard were no longer required; they were disbanded and ceased to exist on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1945.

***Members of Lorton Home Guard at various times, 1940-1945.***

Victor Alexander  
Charlie Allison  
Dick Bell, joined aged 16  
Kingsley Burns  
Billy Couthard  
Joe Coulthard

Joe Faulder  
Joe Fearon  
Stephen Fearon, sargeant  
??? Gamlin  
Jim Graham  
Joe Hannah  
Harry Hardisty  
Hilti Hope, sergeant  
Tony Hope  
Billy Irving  
Albert Johnstone  
Tom Lister, WWI veteran  
Geordie Mackereth  
Joe Marsden  
Gustav Malik, a Czech at Lanthwaite Green  
Keith Milburn, sergeant  
Jimmy Nicholson, sergeant  
Tom Norman  
Greenop Parkin  
Johnnie Porter  
Harry Rapley  
Robert Short  
John Smith  
Gordon Stagg  
Jack Studholme  
Willie Statters  
John Thompson  
Alf Turnbull  
Jack Vickers  
Joe Walker, WWI veteran  
Alf Wise, WWI veteran

**Sources:-**

*The Home Guard*, SP Mackenzie  
*Real Dads Army*, Channel 4  
*The Story of the Border Regiment*  
5<sup>th</sup> (Cumb) Home Guards, e.g. Sarsfield Hall  
Charlie Allison, Dick Bell, Joe Lister, Gordon Stagg

**Editor's note:-**

Walter has been unable, so far, to find out more about the mysterious commander of the Lorton LDV, a Mr Gamlin from High Lorton. He does not appear in the photograph and even his first name was not recalled by those who served. Would anybody who can illuminate Mr Gamlin please contact Walter on 01900 85697 so that the record can be completed?



## ***Wardhall Limekilns in the 1960s***

*by G H Cole, MA*

Readers may be interested in the accompanying photograph following the Society visit to Wardhall Lime Kilns featured in the Wanderer, November 2008.

My picture was taken in summer 1966 when David George and I took time out to record many of the industrial sites of West Cumberland before the bulldozers moved in to tidy up the relics of the industrial revolution.

Here we are looking south across the valley from Prospect Village over Oughterside to the Wardhall Lime Kilns beside the Maryport and Carlisle railway line. This is a telephoto shot and shows the kilns very clearly for the vegetation had not grown up then, and the wagon way leading up the valley side past Wardhall Gards Farm (Scandinavian name) under the road and onwards to the quarries below Wardhall Common. Skiddaw is to the left.

## ***Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society***

### **The Committee 2008/9**

<b>President:</b>	Dr Angus Winchester
<b>Chairman:</b>	Dr John Hudson
<b>Vice-Chair:</b>	Mr Michael Baron
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mrs Sandra Shaw
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Mr Derek Denman
<b>Committee:</b>	Mr Ted Gilbertson (talks)
	Mrs Sally Birch (house history)
	Mr Ted Petty
	Mr John Scrivens
	Mr Alan Airey

<b>Financial Examiner:</b>	Mr Les Polley
<b>Membership:</b>	Mrs Anne Asquith

***website: [www.derwentfells.com](http://www.derwentfells.com)***

## ***A visit to Low Hollins***

*By courtesy of Jim and Jean Williams, on 15<sup>th</sup>  
October 2008, report by Sally Birch*

### **House History Group members present:-**

Sally Birch

Christine England

Gwyn and Janet Evans

Anne Flower

John Hart

Judy Hudson

Peter and Michelle Kerr

History Society member Jean Williams had been a founder member of the House History Group Mark I but by the time Mark II was resurrected a couple of years ago her interest in researching the history of her house had been placed on the back burner. However, when she and husband Jim joined the LDFLHS Archaeology Survey under the auspices of the National Trust and their land was invaded by the intrepid Survey Group 2 earlier this year, her enthusiasm was rekindled by the admiration expressed by certain members of the group when they were invited inside the house. As leader of the HHG, I kept getting reports about this beautiful and typical Lakeland farmhouse and when I came across an early photo of the interior in a book by local writer Doreen Wallace, published around 1940, I felt certain that our Group would benefit from a visit. Jim and Jean's response to my request was positive and Jean later confessed that it had prompted her to get down to some more serious research in time for our visit (which, after all, is one of the fundamental aims of the Group).

The appointed night was dark and rainy but the welcome provided by Jean and Jim and by the cosiness of the house itself rewarded our efforts to turn out. The initials and date which greeted us over the entrance door tell their own tale. The date is 1687 which probably reflects one of the makeover phases of the house not long after it was built (or more likely rebuilt). The initials RCS tell us that this particular doorway had been created during the occupancy of Robert and Catherine Stubbs (variously spelt) but Jean has

discovered baptismal records relating to three children belonging to a Robert Stubbe of Brackenthwaite in 1598, 1599 and 1601 respectively and in 1602 another (presumably not the same?) Robert Stubb of Hollings married one Jenatt Fysher in Lorton. To return to our door plaque, as customary tenants, Robert and Catherine would have held the property from the Lord of the Manor – in this instance the Leconfield Estate – and their status was akin to the present-day leaseholder. This privilege had been afforded originally in return for services rendered to combat occasional raids from across the border. Around the middle of the seventeenth century, according to Susan Denyer, whose book on vernacular architecture in the Lake District is the House Detective's Bible, the house would have been simply a firehouse and parlour with a loft above. From then on, as the Border region became more and more settled, Low Hollins would have undergone major rebuilding works. The extent to which the footprint and layout of the original earlier dwelling were reutilised is a matter for conjecture but as the tenants became wealthier and more confident in the future, the house would have been extended and altered until by the early 1700's the family had obviously accrued enough material wealth to begin beautifying their home. The real wow factor is the gorgeous plaster frieze over the inglenook where lesser mortals have to make do with a plain old firebeam. There are two further friezes over eighteenth century fireplaces and these must have been the ultimate in interior design. Several very old doors and windows with stone mullions survive and a particular gem is a cubby hole, complete with a small window, in the room above the inglenook. Recalling a comment made by House Detective Chris Craghill when she visited my own house, I suggested that this might conceivably have been an area where hams were hung to smoke when the firehouse (now the living room) still had a chimney hood. Still in the realms of conjecture, a particularly impressive roof truss warrants further inspection to establish whether it might be a cruck construction.

Following a tour of the house, Jean explained some of the research she has been



**The interior of the firehouse at Low Hollins, with its plaster frieze**

doing into the Stubs family. At the start there was an element of continuity which made Jean's task a little less onerous. The family definitely lived there up until 1777 when Sarah Stubbs, a widow, died. The 1844 Tithe Map shows Jane Stubbs as the owner, but Edward Small as the occupier and then by 1861, the Stubbs Family had surrendered the customary tenure and so Jean has to negotiate her way through the maze of owners and occupiers which ensued. The theme of continuity however, does not disappear altogether because during the last century the house was occupied by members of the Head Family (Walter Head was, like Jean, one of the founding members of the HHG) and when Jim found a ring in the garden which had clearly been lost by one of Walter's ancestors he was able to offer to give it back to the family. I am not sure whether or not it was accepted! A snippet of family life was also revealed by a member of the Head family who told Jean that not one of the thirteen Head children who had lived at Low Hollins at one time had been allowed to set foot in the parlour, not even on high days and holidays. That one small detail gives an immediate insight into the dynamics of life in

a bygone age and demonstrates the important role that oral history can play in house research.

All in all, we could have spent many happy hours speculating and house detecting but our visit sped by (helped along by some delicious refreshments provided by our hosts) and so Jean and Jim have kindly extended their welcome to a summertime visit when we can see the house properly in its setting. Meantime, Low Hollins will become one of those places I can retreat to in my head whenever modern life becomes just too irritating!

This visit concluded our activities for 2008 and next year we are hoping to pay a visit at the end of May to High Mill (where Steven Revell has done a magnificent job of restoration). Also on the wish-list for the coming months is a trip to Low Stanger Farm where Peter and Michelle Kerr have already commissioned some research which featured in the Journal and last but not least, a visit to Graythwaite courtesy of John and Judy Hudson. Perhaps this may have whetted a few more appetites amongst Journal readers to join our small band. Newcomers are always welcome – just contact Sally Birch on 01900 85680 or send an email to [sally.birch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sally.birch@hotmail.co.uk).

## ***The life of Isabella Huxtable, (1831-1909):- from Lorton farmer's daughter to London college proprietor.***

*by Michael Winstanley and Derek Denman*

*In September 2008 while in search of the owner of a property on Cocker Bridge, Cockermouth, one Mary Anne Penfold of Holland Park Mansions, Kensington,<sup>1</sup> Mike Winstanley, of Lancaster University, stumbled across an Isabella Huxtable, proprietor of a lady's boarding school in the same neighbourhood who was born in Lorton, Cumberland.*

*Intrigued, he asked Derek if we could find her origins and family. As her story unfolded, it opened up a window on various aspects of Victorian life: the growth of organised education; Cumbrian migration; the role of family; the perils of bankruptcy and the debtors' prison.*

*This is the product of our research but it is also offered as a case study of just how much research can be undertaken from home or library, using the ever expanding range of online digital resources to supplement manuscript and printed sources available in local archives. Online sources are in bold footnotes.*

*The life of Isabella Huxtable, nee Nixon, is given first, followed by three annexes covering the Nixon family more fully, an outline of her husband's family, and some notes on on-line sources used.*

Isabella was born Isabella Nixon in Boon Beck farmhouse and baptised at Lorton on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1831. John Nixon was a tenant farmer who had recently taken the farm, so called because it was 'above' Whit Beck. John and Betty Nixon had married in Deanscales in 1811, and brought a large family to Boon Beck in 1831. Isabella had eight older siblings, and two younger sisters were born, Elizabeth at Tenters, who probably died in infancy, and Hannah at Boon Beck in 1837.

The farm was owned by Martha Stubbs, the customary tenant of the

<sup>1</sup> Mary was born Mary Anne Walker in Cockermouth to an attorney, Thomas Walker. She had married a city bank official.



**Plan of Boon Beck, Lorton in 1828<sup>2</sup>**



**Boon Beck farmhouse today**

**Over door: J<sup>S</sup> A 1733**

Dean and Chapter of Carlisle Cathedral, the lords of the manor. The Stubbs family had been yeoman farmers in the seventeenth century at Boon Beck, but by the later eighteenth century they had moved to Cockermouth and had rented Boon Beck Farm out to a succession tenants. The farm in 1830 had about 45 acres of good quality enclosed land in the south of High Lorton, around High Lorton Mill. Martha Stubbs had recently been allotted 124 acres of common on

<sup>2</sup> Survey for the enclosure, CRO/D.Ben 282 annotated

Swinside Fell, and had bought a further 24 acres from the enclosure commissioner. The farm had a water wheel to power machinery, and included Yew Croft – the Yew Tree was much larger in those days. Apart from the yew tree, Isabella's view from the farmhouse was much more open than today, without the Yew Tree Hall and cottages. Lorton Park was arable land. The Jennings brewery, from Brewery House to Homestead, had been constructed in the late 1820s and would have been in full production.

It seems clear that Isabella must have attended school in Lorton from the mid 1830s to at least 1841, since she appears in the Lorton census of that year with her family. We know nothing more of them until 1851 when Isabella and her unmarried sisters, Ann and Hannah, lived together at 91 Main Street, Keswick in 1851. Ann, 35, was the head of household and described as the proprietor of a lodging house and a confectioner, a considerable achievement for an unmarried farmer's-daughter. Hannah was still described as a scholar aged thirteen, and Isabella, now aged twenty, was described as a confectioner. Unlike her sisters, Isabella soon left Keswick behind for London, to train for a new and progressive career - teaching. In 1853 she qualified as a government certified teacher at the Home and Colonial Infant and Juvenile School Society's training college in Grays Inn Road, with a Third Class, Division 1 certificate.<sup>3</sup> The normal course was of twenty four weeks, living-in with board

<sup>3</sup> *Parlm Papers, 1854 [1787] [1788] Committee of Council on Education: Minutes, Correspondence, Financial Statements, and Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, 1853-54.* (online House of Commons papers)

### *Third Course.*

**I.—The practice of the school-room, and the principles on which it should be regulated :—**

**The school-room and its apparatus, including library, collection of objects, &c.**

**The opening and general arrangements of a school.**

**Attendance, and the best method of raising and filling a school.**

**Admission payment, and first treatment of children.**

**General order and quietness.**

**The physical state of the children, health, cleanliness, neatness.**

**The exercises of the school-room and playground.**

**The division of time, and the subjects of lessons in a school.**

**Modes of leading elder scholars to work, independently of the master's direct teaching.**

**The government of a school with respect to its spirit and plans.**

**The influence of numbers in teaching and moral training.**

**Rewards, punishments, emulation.**

**Assistance, including paid assistants and monitors; the monitorial system.**

**The defects and advantages of the individual, and simultaneous methods of instruction, and the use of the ellipses.**

**Examinations by the teacher, for parents and for subscribers.**

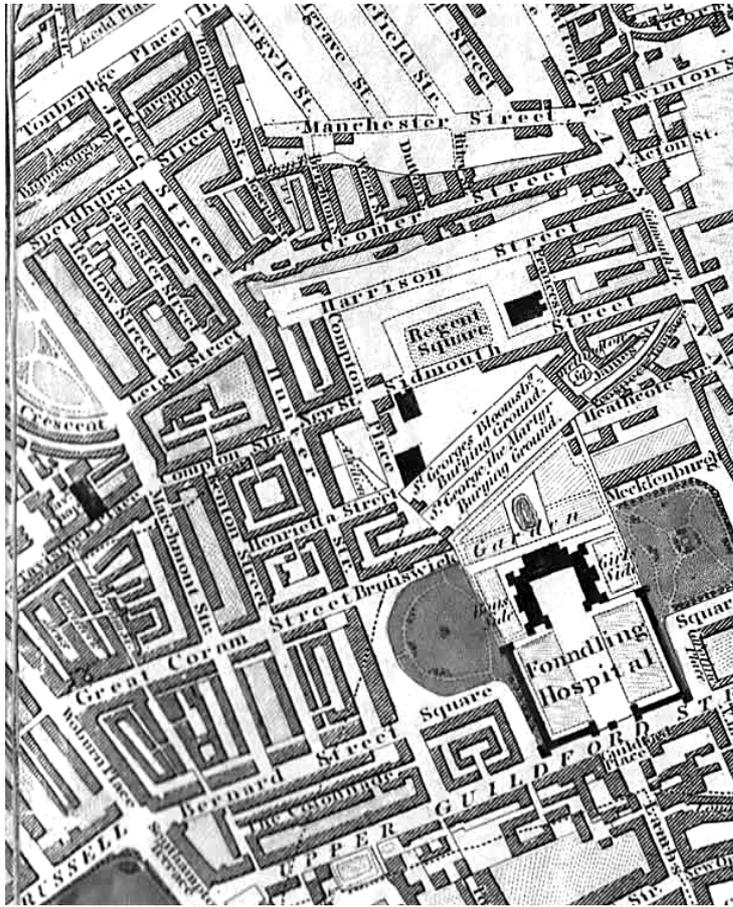
**Holidays.**

### **Part of Isabella's training at the Home and Colonial School (above)**

included, but not washing, at a cost of £8.<sup>4</sup> Such training was both new and unusual for the period. The Home and Colonial Society was a pioneer institution founded by Elizabeth and Charles Mayo in 1836 to advance the methods of Swiss educational reformer Johann Pestalozzi. Possibly its most famous student was Charlotte Mason, who graduated from there in 1860. Edward Tuffnell's report to the newly formed Board of Education in 1847 praised its buildings, which accommodated sixty people, its methods and its emphasis on religious education, although he was not as impressed by the quality of some of the students.

There were two classes of students, those who entered voluntarily and those who were sent by patrons; 'the conditions under which the patronized students are received', he remarked tellingly, 'are rather less stringent than those required from the other class'.

<sup>4</sup> *Report on the schools of the Home and Colonial Infant and Juvenile School Society, by EC Tuffnell Esq. Minutes of the committee of council on education, with appendices, 1846.* HMSO 1847. pp. 544-577. Google Books online



**Isabella's early location in London –  
Greenwood map of 1827**

Unfortunately we do not know into which category Isabella fell. The chief aim of the Society was 'to make them good teachers rather than accomplished ones; to instruct them in the art of managing children'. He was impressed with the children who were taught by teachers trained by the society. 'The school appears to me to attain the important end of sending children into the world with well-furnished minds, capable of easy development in whatever direction, occasion may call for further progress.'

As well as inculcating a specific approach to teaching, the Society also offered practical training in school management as well as classroom teaching, skills which Isabella she would later put to good use. After qualifying, Isabella obtained a post at the newly opened Woburn Episcopal School

in Tavistock Place, near St Pancras, being listed as a certified teacher there in 1856.<sup>5</sup> In 1861 she was living with her brother Joseph and his family at 12 Compton Street East, between Marchmont Street and Hunter Street, a stone's throw from the school and was described as an unmarried national school teacher.<sup>6</sup> Joseph Nixon, five years older than Isabella, had moved to London by 1851 to become a salesman in a large warehouse in Milton Street, St Giles without Cripplegate. At least a hundred young men lived in this warehouse, and Joseph was one of six selling hose, presumably of silk and/or wool, to retailers. Joseph had returned briefly to Cumberland in 1856 to marry Elizabeth Bell of Workington and by 1861 had four children and two servants. Joseph was described as a warehouseman, suggesting that he had progressed to operate a warehouse on his own account. Presumably he was still dealing in hosiery because that

continued to be his line of business when he later continued as a wholesale hosier in Brixton.

Superficially, from the census, Isabella's life changed little during the 1860s, since by 1871 she was still listed as a teacher living in London. In reality, however, it had been transformed beyond recognition. She had left her brother's home, and become wife, mother, and widow in quick succession and she was no longer an employee; rather she was the proprietor of her own private fee-paying establishment in fashionable Islington.

<sup>5</sup> *Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, with appendix, 1856/7*. HMSO. p. 1082. Lists Nixon, Isabella, as mistress at Woburn Episcopal School in 1856. Google Books online

<sup>6</sup> The locations have been obtained from the Greenwood map of 1827, reproduced in Old London Maps, <http://www.oldlondonmaps.com/index.html>

On 29 August 1864, the *Leeds Mercury* carried a notice announcing the marriage on 25 August at Holy Trinity Church, Cloudesley Square, Islington, of Isabella, daughter of John Nixon Esq. of Keswick and one John Elliott Huxtable Esq. of Barnsbury [Islington]. The groom and both fathers were described generously on the marriage certificate as 'gentlemen'. In reality, both fathers had been working farmers, while the groom was, like Isabella's brother, 'in trade'.

John was younger than his bride. He had been born in 1836, at Chittlehamholt in the parish of Chittlehampton, near South Molton, Devon. His father, also John, was already in his late 40s since by 1851 he was a 62 year old farmer of 86 acres who employed two labourers, and headed a family which included his wife, Ann, John, aged 15, and three other siblings. Like Isabella's father, he had retired by 1861 and was still alive in 1871. His son is simply listed as plain John before the wedding. His middle name Elliott appears nowhere before the wedding and was possibly used to appear more like a gentleman, since there was nothing in his previous career to suggest that he was such. In the 1861 census, he and the two witnesses at the marriage - William Heslop and Harry Broughton Hutton - were all listed among a hundred or more Manchester warehousemen at Knowle Court, 43 Fish Street, St Mary Magdelene. His two witnesses also later married and become solid respectable and successful tradespeople. Hutton in 1871 was still a Manchester warehouseman with wife and child and one servant at 13 Boundary Road, St John's Hampstead, while Heslop had become an outfitter at 16 Oxford Street with a wife and servant.

John, however, would appear to have aspired to rise still further, setting up home with his new wife in the fashionable Arundel Square, Barnsbury. When his son, also called



**Arundel Square, Barnsbury, today (above)**

John Elliott Huxtable, was born on 12 March 1865, 29 weeks after the marriage, he described himself grandly as a merchant. By this stage he had entered into a partnership with one John Fenn Elsdon and they were trading from 6 Russia Court, Milk Street in the City of London as commission merchants. Unfortunately for Isabella, her husband's new partner had a record of debt and a rather dubious past. Elsdon was a Londoner in his early thirties, boarding in Poplar in 1861 and describing himself as a gentleman. In November 1863 he had entered into partnership with a Morris Heymann but this had been dissolved within six months. Elsdon had continued to trade in his own right as a general merchant in Lime Street, Fenchurch Street but had been declared bankrupt in November 1864. When he applied for discharge in June the following year, judgement was reserved on the grounds of some suspicious transactions which Elsdon had undertaken. It was argued that he had been the dupe of others, but the deputy commissioner found this argument 'far from convincing'.<sup>7</sup>

John Huxtable's partnership with him was dissolved in March 1867 for reasons which remain unclear. What is clear is that within four months Huxtable was being personally sued as an insolvent debtor, for debts which the partnership had incurred and he had been imprisoned in the debtors' ward of City Prison,

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<sup>7</sup> *The Times*, 23 June 1865

now Holloway.<sup>8</sup> In July he was deemed to be a bankrupt and his case taken before the Court of Bankruptcy but in October his bankruptcy was annulled and proceedings continued against the partnership. Only the assets of the partnership were assigned, leaving John and Isabella their personal assets, which would include those of the school. The first and final payment was made to the creditors in January 1870.<sup>9</sup> Elsdon, apparently undaunted by the experience, soon entered into yet another partnership which was dissolved in 1873. Isabella's husband, however, for reasons which remain unknown, died prematurely about this time. But this we know only from Isabella's declared status as a widow in the 1871 census.

Against this turbulent background, Isabella had opened a school in the family home at 32 Arundel Square in July 1866, an advertisement in the *Times* on the 20<sup>th</sup> of that month describing the location 'one of the most open and healthy localities in London' and describing the facilities in detail: 'Masters attend daily. Resident Parisienne. Superior advantages in music. Annual concerts. For

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<sup>8</sup> For a description of the prison see 'The northern suburbs: Holloway', *Old and New London: Volume 5 (1878)*, pp.373-388. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45244>.

<sup>9</sup> *London Gazette*, 5 March 1867; 4 October 1867; 29 November 1867; 14 January 1870. TNA B6 series Case number 27.849; "assignment"; date of deed 1/11/1867 JOHN ELLIOTT HUXTABLE and JOHN FENN ELSDON of no 6 Russia Court, Milk Street in the City of London, merchants, of the first part; trustees Webster Denison of 18 Laurence Lane in the City of London, agent (trustee) of the second part; the joint creditors (no details) of the third part; assignment by the debtors of all their joint estates and effects to the trust to be administered for the benefit of their joint creditors as in bankruptcy, and a release to them from their creditors; document left for registration on 28th November 1867 at 3.30pm.; We are grateful to Richard Brockington for checking this case for us in the bankruptcy court records at the The National Archives.

references and particulars of inclusive terms address Mrs Huxtable.' Whether or not her husband's financial situation had propelled her to do this, or whether it had always been planned is not known, but with her husband's premature death it had become her sole source of income by 1871.

She clearly thrived. By 1869 her 'ladies college' had expanded its curriculum, promising 'great attention paid to English studies and French. Music and singing highly cultivated.' Pupils were prepared for college examinations and young ladies desiring special instruction in preparing for Oxford and Cambridge local were admitted for a session. Further adverts appeared regularly in the *Times* and by 1874 she had named the college 'Westbourne College' after the nearby road of that name.<sup>10</sup>

In 1879 she announced that her boarding college had moved to even more salubrious quarters in Holland Park Mansions, Kensington. Now called Birklands, it continued to offer the same education, with a particular emphasis on singing, music and French.<sup>11</sup> 'The plan of teaching' embraced 'individual attention with the class system as pursued in the upper class colleges of London and Edinburgh'.<sup>12</sup> Some idea of the scale of her business is obtained from the 1881 census. In addition to Isabella, described as 'principal, ladies college', there were five resident, unmarried teaching staff (a 23 year old music governess from Devon; two English governesses from London and Molesworth, Leicestershire, and native German and French governesses), five resident

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<sup>10</sup> *The Times*, Sat Mar 20 1869 p.3; Tue Sep 15 1869 p.11; Tue Oct 20 1874 p.11; Mrs Huxtable Westbourne College, Arundel square; Fri April 2 1875; Thurs April 15 1875 p.15; Westbourne college for ladies Tues Jul 06 1875 p.14; Tues Dec 21 1875 p.14; 32 and 33 Arundel Square Mon Jul 23 1877 p.3; Thur Jul 26 1877 p.15; Mon Sep 10 1877 p.15.

<sup>11</sup> *The Times* Wednesday 2 July 1879

<sup>12</sup> J.S. Cockburn, H.P.F. King, K.G.T. McDonnell (eds.), *Victoria County History of Middlesex, Vol 1 (1969)*, quoting F.S. Dumaesq de Carteret-Bisson, *Our Schools and Colleges, vol. 2 (Simpkin, Marshall, 1884)* By 563, 755 *British History online*, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>

domestics and 33 scholars. These were largely drawn from England, but four were born in the colonies, and they ranged in age from 8 to 19 with most of them being in their mid-teens.

Isabella's son does not appear in the census as at home during his youth. In 1871 he was in Keswick, as a scholar with his aunt Ann, who was now married to the proprietor of the Coledale Pencil Factory. Between 1875 and 1880 he attended Merchant Taylor's School and from there he went to Malvern and on to Oxbridge before qualifying as a solicitor, LL.B at London 1888.<sup>13</sup> During the 1890s and 1900s he was a partner in the firm Paines, Blythe & Huxtable of 14 St Helens Place, London EC, but he lived in Kensington with his retired mother. After her death he moved to Manchester Square, W1, and later to Bexhill.

Isabella died at 7 Dawson Place on 10 December 1909 aged 78. Her funeral service was held in nearby St Peter's, Kensington Park Road, five days later.<sup>14</sup> Although she was not buried in the family grave in Keswick, she was reunited in death with her roots. The young and increasingly famous (not to say notorious) Brighton-born sculptor, Eric Gill, was commissioned to make and engrave her headstone, a cross of green Borrowdale slate.<sup>15</sup> We can assume that her son was responsible for this commission, for he became a noted collector of art and old master drawings, which he lent for exhibitions. After his death his collection was sold at Sothebys in 1949, 'The sale on 13<sup>th</sup> July offers remarkably fine Old master

drawings collected by the late Mr JE Huxtable ...'<sup>16</sup>

Various features of this family history stand out, apart from the natural abilities of Isabella and her sisters, each encapsulating a different feature of Victorian social life. Perhaps the strongest image is of the mutual support that the Nixon siblings gave one another, both in developing their trades and in supporting one another's families. This aspect is evidenced further in Annex 1. Marriage, as in the higher classes of the time, was often about securing or re-establishing economic systems of support for the present and the future. While they constructed classical nuclear families and sought their fortunes outside the region, the Nixons continued to function as an extended family and Isabella clearly never lost contact with her home area. The naming of her school 'Birklands', using the dialect word for beech, suggests an emotional tie. This is also a story of migration in search of work or improvement. While many of the family continued to live locally, Joseph, Thomas and Isabella all left to pursue their fortunes elsewhere, in the 'big smoke' of London and the gold fields of Australia. Unusually for the period, Isabella, Hannah and Ann were all women who continued to be engaged in business and trade after marriage perhaps reflecting their origins as daughters of family farmers. Isabella's traumatic experiences, or more precisely those of her unfortunate debt-ridden husband, conjure up images of the precarious nature of the London middle-class as portrayed by Charles Dickens, particularly in *Little Dorrit*. One wonders how many comparable stories of Lorton born people there are during this period.

### Annex 1. The Nixon family

It is clear that Isabella had support from her family, particularly from her sister Ann in Keswick, with whom she was working in 1851, and who seems to have taken in Isabella's young son while Isabella was establishing her school after the bankruptcy and death of her husband. Did Ann and others help to find the

<sup>13</sup> **Kimes International Law Directory, 1908 p.255, Google books**

<sup>14</sup> **Times, 13 December 1909**

<sup>15</sup> **Evan R Gill, *The Inscriptural Work of Eric Gill: An Inventory* (London, Cassell, 1964). No 244 Cross of Green Borrowdale stone in memory of ISABELLA, widow of John Elliott Huxtable, died December 1909. There are no less than five careful pencil drawings (coloured) for this and a full size sketch (outline only) of the cross, signed Eric Gill (30-3-12 revised 2-5-1912). Text and references from Google books.**

<sup>16</sup> **The Burlington Magazine, Vol 91, No. 556 (Jul., 1949), p.209 (JSTOR)**

### The Nixon Family

John Nixon 1784 Wigton -1871 Howe, Keswick = Elizabeth Smith 1791 Bothel - 1857 Bank, Whinfell  
04/06/1811 at Dean

John 1812 Deanscales -1870 Howe, Keswick = Sarah Kendall 1818 Southwaite Mill - 1865 Lorton  
1846 at Lorton — (1)

Mary 1814 Deanscales - 1840 Lorton, Boonbeck (unmarried)

Ann 1815 Deanscales - 1881+ = Robert Wilson 1824 Keswick - 1881+  
1861, Cock RD — no issue, Rbt a widower with 3 children

Thomas 1819 Deanscales - 1861 Australia = Hannah Garnett 1819 Lorton - 1906  
1852 at Lorton — dau Hannah 1858 Lorton -

Betsy 1821 Deanscales - 1881+ = John Clark 1825 Brigham - 1881+  
1866, Cock RD — no issue

Sarah 1824 Deanscales - 1881+ = John Gasgarth 1801-1878 E.Ward RD, Westmorland  
1872, Cock RD — no issue John a widower with 1 child

Joseph 1828 Deanscales - 1891+ = Elizabeth Bell, 1825 Workington - 1881+  
1856, Cock RD. — (2)

Jane 1828 Deanscales - 1891 (unmarried, imbecile at the Howe). dau. Mary 1854 -

Isabella 1831 Boonbeck, Lorton - 1909 Kensington = John Elliott Huxtable 1836 Chittlehampton - 1867x1871  
1864 Islington — son John Elliott Huxtable 1865, Islington -

Elizabeth 1834 Tenters, Lorton - probably died in infancy

Hannah 1837 Boonbeck, Lorton - 1903 Wigton = David Pape 1836 Keswick - 1886 Keswick  
1861 Cock RD ----(3)----- Hannah & David Pape

(1) John & Sarah Nixon

(2) Joseph & Elizabeth Nixon

Mary 1862 Keswick -

Sarah Ann 1847 Lorton -

Mary B 1858 St Pancras -

Annie 1864 Keswick -

Betsy 1850 Lorton -

John G 1859 St Pancras -

David 1866 Keswick -

Kendall 1853 Lorton -

Henry 1861 St Pancras -

Earnest 1867 Keswick -

John 1857 Lorton -

Catherine 1863 St Pancras -

Sarah 1870 Keswick -

Elizabeth 1865 St Pancras -

Clarence 1872 Keswick -

Herbert 1874 Keswick -

Albert 1880 Keswick -

#### Lorton memorial inscription No. 184 (L&DFLHS Archive. Transcription: Ellen Bentson, Heather Thompson)

Side 1: Sacred to the memory/ of John Nixon of this Vale./ who died at the Howe Farm near Keswick/ Jany  
10th 1871, aged 87 years./ And also of Betty his wife who/ died Decr 19th 1857 aged 66/ Not in our  
innocence we trust/ we bow before thee in the dust/ And through our Saviour's blood alone/ We look for  
mercy at thy throne./ Also of Mary their daughter/ who died June 26th 1840,/ aged 26 years./ Also of Robert  
Nixon, who died/ at Aylesbury, July 4th 1855./ aged 45 years./ Also of Thomas, their son, who was/ drowned  
in the River Yarra, Australia,/ May 30th 1861. Aged 42 years./ Also Hanna, his wife, who died March 28, 1906  
aged 87 years.

Side 2: Thy will be done/ In memory of/ John Nixon, son of/ John and Betty Nixon, who died/ at the  
Howe Jany 27th 1870/ Aged 57 years./ Also of Sarah his wife/ who died August 4th 1865, Aged 49 years.

£8 that Isabella needed to pay for her training? It seems likely. Then, for up to ten years, Isabella lived with her brother James in Compton Street East, a location seemingly chosen for its position close to Isabella's work at the Woburn Episcopal School. This mutual support among these Nixon siblings was important to Isabella's success, and the following notes examine and record the other siblings from the marriage.

In 1851, Isabella was a confectioner in Keswick, aged twenty. She was working with her older sister Ann, 35, who was proprietor of a Lodging House at 91 Main Street and a confectioner. Younger sister Hannah was also there, a scholar at age 13. By 1861 Ann was concentrating on the confectionery business at 83 Main Street, Keswick, and Hannah had recently married David Pape, a Keswick butcher. In late 1861 Ann, now 45, married Robert Wilson of 29 Main Street, a pencil manufacturer whose wife had died leaving three young boys. In 1871 Robert and Ann Wilson were proprietors living in the Coledale pencil factory, employing twenty hands, and Ann's nephew John E Huxtable was with them as a scholar aged six. It would seem that Isabella, now a widow running an important school for girls, entrusted her son and his early education to her sister in Cumberland. Meanwhile, Isabella's younger sister Hannah and her husband, David Pape, raised a large family at 66 Main Street, running the business of butcher and bacon curer, and by 1881 additionally working as a land agent. Robert and Ann Wilson had moved in next door at 67 Main Street; Robert was still a black lead pencil manufacturer, but Ann, now 65, was running a business as a milliner and hosier. Ann and Hannah, therefore pursued careers and marriage as substantial trades-people in Keswick, but kept close together. Hannah also took in a mysterious brother, William Nixon, a retired Royal Navy Quartermaster, who was aged 72 in 1881.

Of Isabella's other siblings, perhaps the most interesting is Thomas, born 1819, who, like Isabella and Joseph, left Cumberland to make his living. According to



**The Nixon memorial at St Cuthbert's Lorton**

the memorial inscription he 'was drowned in the River Yarra, Australia, May 30th 1861. Aged 42 years.' This is the place of the Australian gold rush which, from 1851, drew many English prospectors, some of whom emigrated voluntarily while others, until 1867, had been invited by Her Majesty to spend a few years abroad. Perhaps Thomas had read *A voyage to Australia & New Zealand* by steerage passenger Jonathan Askew of Cockermonth, 1857, which told of the fortunes which had been made.<sup>17</sup> Thomas Nixon married Hannah Garnett, 1819-1906, of the Midtown farm family, in Lorton in 1852. Daughter Hannah was baptised in Lorton in 1858 and soon the family was off to the Australian goldfields, where Thomas met his untimely end.

The Nixon family were essentially tenant farmers, starting in Deanscales, moving to Lorton in 1851 and then to the Howe in Keswick by 1861, and it is to farming that one must look to consider the other five siblings, John, Mary, Betsy, Sarah and Jane. John Nixon Snr farmed Boon Beck until at least 1841, where Mary died unmarried in 1840, but by 1851 the family had moved to Low Lorton, and it is unclear which farm they then held. Isabella's mother, Betty Nixon, died in 1857 at Bank in Whinfell, suggesting that it was Bank Farm that they held. The first son, John, born 1812, worked with his father and married Sarah Kendall of Lorton in 1836. The Kendalls had come to High Lorton from Southwaite Mill,

<sup>17</sup> **Google Books**

and it seems that John Jnr and Sarah Nixon lived separately, John living with his father at Low Lorton in 1851 while Sarah and the children lived with her mother in High Lorton. This continued in 1861, by which time John Snr had moved to the Howe in Keswick together with John Jnr and unmarried sisters Betsy, Sarah and Jane, plus a grand-daughter, Mary Nixon. Sarah Nixon, nee Kendall, and the four children stayed in Lorton with their grandmother. Sarah Nixon died in Lorton in 1865, aged 47, two years before her mother, Sarah Kendall, when sons John and Kendall were eight and twelve. In 1866 Betsy Nixon, living and working at the Howe aged 45, married John Clark, a tenant farmer who held Armaside in Lorton. They then took in Betsy's two young nephews, John and Kendall, at Armaside, after their mother and grandmother had died. Their father, John Nixon Jnr, remained at the Howe. But soon after, in 1870, John Jnr died, and his father followed him in 1871. This left only Nixon sisters, Sarah, Jane and her presumed daughter Mary to run the Howe farm, and from the 1881 census we know Jane to be an imbecile. In the short term John Clark's retired uncle, John Clark Snr, aged 70 joined them at the Howe, being described in relation to farmer Sarah Nixon as a 'friend' in the 1871 census. But by 1881 Sarah Nixon had departed, John and Betsy Clark had moved to the Howe and control had moved from the Nixon sisters, by marriage, to the Clark family. But a new 'Nixon' had joined the household in the shape of Clarence J Pape, Hannah's nine year old son. Also, at the Howe an additional income was being gained from two young gentlemen-boarders from Oxford University, no doubt drawing on the tourism experience of Ann Nixon.

What happened to Sarah Nixon who was in charge of the Howe in 1871 after her brother and father had died? In 1872 at age 48, Sarah Nixon married a widowed farmer, John Gasgarth, and appears to have moved to his farm in East Ward in Westmorland, the Appleby area. In 1878 John Gasgarth died, and Sarah returned with her step-daughter to hold a small farm in Braithwaite, so that the Cumberland branch of the Nixon siblings,

Ann, Betsy, Jane, Sarah and Hannah were grouped together in the Keswick area in 1881.

What is striking about the Nixon sisters in Cumberland is how they stuck together and provided mutual support in earning a living and supporting a family. The youngest, Hannah, had a conventional family, marrying a little late at 28, but Ann, Betsy and Sarah married at 45 or later and in each case the marriage seems to be related either to retaining or improving sources of economic support, or responding to the need to reconstruct a family. It is also interesting that the Nixons were 'of this vale' on the memorial inscription. All but two were born in Deanscales, and the family were well established in Keswick before the two Johns died. But by then three women had been buried in Lorton, Mary, her mother Elizabeth, and John's wife Sarah, and so perhaps that fixed the resting place for most of the Nixons.

### **Annex 2. The Huxtable family**

On August 25<sup>th</sup> 1864 Isabella Nixon married John Elliott Huxtable. Was he a wealthy person who could supply the resources and status necessary for Isabella to open a respectable school for young ladies, and had he an established position in education?

The name Huxtable derives from a Devon place-name. The Huxtables came from yeoman families, and prospered in and around South Molton in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, some becoming gentlemen. One family of wholesale and retail druggists and chemists established themselves as gentlemen in Stoke Newington in the 1840s. But John Elliott Huxtable was not from this family, but derived from a dynasty of yeoman farmers, always called Edmund Huxtable, first sons being named after fathers. John Elliott Huxtable's father, John, was a second son, and therefore due a lesser inheritance than brother Edmund. Nevertheless, John Elliott Huxtable was the eldest son of a yeoman farmer who held a farmstead called Featherstones, and perhaps he received some help in establishing himself in the Manchester warehouse, though he did not inherit any funds from his father or mother, who retired in Chittlehamholt and died in 1876, aged 88 and 76.

John Elliott Huxtable had two younger brothers and four older sisters, though the eldest, Emily, died in 1849. Their occupations were similar to those of the Nixon siblings, though perhaps not so enterprising and successful. In 1851 his sisters Rachel and Elizabeth, aged twenty and nineteen, kept a shop in Chittlehamholt. In 1852 Elizabeth married Samuel Johns, an agricultural labourer, and by 1861 had had three children and had moved to Little Torrington. In 1858 shopkeeper Rachel Grazilda Huxtable married Robert Brind, a grocer and tea dealer of Speenhamland, Berkshire. Daughter Grazilda was born in 1860. By 1871 Robert was a master grocer in Tiverton.

John Elliott Huxtable's sister Ann was two years older than John. She was a farmer's daughter on the family farm in 1851, and in 1858 she married John Skinner, giving birth to John H Skinner in 1860. By 1861 her parents had retired and Ann and John Skinner had taken on the Huxtable family farm, Featherstones, which suggests that it was a freehold or customary tenancy. Perhaps at this point a payment had been made to John Elliott Huxtable in lieu of inheritance.

John's brother Edmund, two years younger, became a master watchmaker in Newton Abbot by 1871. In 1861, as a watch jobber he had visited and stayed with watch-examiner James Harvey at 17 Dame Street, Islington, and most likely had contact with John at that time. In 1862 Edmund married Sarah Jane Thomas, the 26 year old daughter of a widowed dressmaker of South Molton.

The youngest brother of John Elliott Huxtable, George Frederick Huxtable, born 1846, had the benefit of an education at Chulmleigh, where he was at age 15, and by 1871 he was a draper. He married a Chittlehampton farmer's daughter, Elizabeth Greenslade, in Tiverton in 1873. Their son was named after his father, George Frederick Huxtable, in the family tradition. But the baby died in his first year in 1874 at Tiverton. George Frederick Snr died on the Isle of Wight in 1881, aged 35, approximately the same age as the deceased John Elliott Huxtable.

### **Annex 3. A note on sources used**

Much of this research was undertaken using freely available or subscription online digital resources, by entering either the names of the individuals involved or institutions and organisations with which they were associated

#### **Ancestry**

A subscription service offering searchable access to censuses from 1841 to 1901 and other 19<sup>th</sup> century genealogical sources, providing extensive search facilities

[www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)

#### **Free BMD**

As its name suggests, a free service allowing searches of births, marriages and deaths for most of the country from civil registrations starting in 1837. Original certificates have still to be purchased; details of how to order these on-line are included on the site.

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

#### **Times Digital Archive**

Fully searchable text from 1785-1985, available through Higher Education institutions and some public libraries, but not, unfortunately, Cumbria.

#### **Nineteenth-Century Newspapers**

20 major regional titles including the *Leeds Mercury* and *Liverpool Mercury* searchable by word. Available through Cumbria Library Service.

#### **Old London Maps**

An excellent collection of high quality downloadable maps, including the Greenwood map of 1827, which was used to identify the Nixons residence and Woburn school, and the London School Board map of 1872 which is at present incomplete.

<http://www.oldlondonmaps.com/index.html>

A wider collection to view is at [www.historystreets.com](http://www.historystreets.com)

#### **Google Books**

This contains the full text of a remarkable number of rare 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century books and periodicals worldwide, which may be searched by word and downloaded in pdf file. Use 'Full View' to restrict your search. The editions online are not necessarily the first editions. Always check the title page. Illustrations and maps are not well produced.

<http://books.google.co.uk>

**London Gazette**

A major source for national, local and international businesses including records of partnerships dissolved and bankrupts over 350 years. Fully searchable by word with the facility to download individual pages as pdf files.

<http://www.gazettes-online.co.uk>

**House of Commons Parliamentary Papers since 1800**

Despite their rather dull description, these are an **invaluable** source. They consist of Bills, Accounts, Estimates, Royal Commissions and Select Committee Reports (including verbatim evidence from witnesses) dealing with EVERY aspect of British (and Imperial) politics, society, economy and culture which attracted the attention of government, ranging from prostitution and drink, to overseas trade and colonial expansion, to child labour and horse racing. All searchable by keyword and downloadable but only available to students in subscribing Higher Education institutions. Some reports are available on Google Books.

**British History Online**

Various sources for a range of periods, including the first edition Ordnance Survey and many volumes of the Victoria County History; in particular the topographical volume for Lancashire north of the sands.

[www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk)

***Society Visit to Nenthead***

*provisionally arranged for May 16th 2009*

We will travel to the lead mine at Nenthead, for an underground tour and a visit to the museum. Lunch will be at the Miner's Arms in Nenthead, after which we visit the Border Museum in Hexham, where we will have a costumed guided tour focusing on the Border Reivers. The plans are provisional, so if you are interested please make a note in your diary. I hope to confirm arrangements within the next few weeks, and to distribute booking forms at the meeting on 12 March and also with the Wanderer in mid-April.

*John Hudson 01946 861555*

***Historic Landscape Survey Group***

We hope to undertake further survey work this spring. When plans are finalised I will contact all those who took part last year, plus those members who have expressed an interest in joining the group this year. If anyone else wishes to participate, please call me soon.

*John Hudson 01946 861555*

***The Journal***

The next Journal will be published for 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009. Please send contributions to Derek Denman by 7<sup>th</sup> July.

Published by Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society. Beech Cottage, High Lorton, Cockermouth CA13 9UQ

<b><i>L&amp;DFLHS – Programme 2009</i></b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b><i>12<sup>th</sup> Mar</i></b>	<b>Talk: by Harry Hawkins. Medieval parks in Cumbria</b>
<b><i>9<sup>th</sup> Apr</i></b>	<b>Talk: by June Hall. Lady Anne Clifford (rescheduled)</b>
<b><i>14<sup>th</sup> May</i></b>	<b>Talk: by John Butcher. Thirlmere aqueduct, 1890-2008</b>
<b><i>16<sup>th</sup> May</i></b>	<b>Visit to Nenthead – (provisional)</b>
<b><i>11<sup>th</sup> Jun</i></b>	<b>The Society's agm, followed by a House History Group presentation</b>
<b><i>13<sup>th</sup> Jul</i></b>	<b>Talk: by Ian Tyler. Honister slate mine, the history of Cumbria's largest underground slate working.</b>
<b><i>26<sup>th</sup> Sep</i></b>	<b>Talk: by Peter Schofield. A land interpreted – recent discoveries on National Trust land in Buttermere and Loweswater</b>
<b><i>13<sup>th</sup> Nov</i></b>	<b>Talk: by Barry McKay. The Cumbrian chapmen – chapmen, pedlars and hawkers who served the villages of Cumbria, 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.</b>
Unless noted otherwise, talks are held at the Yew Tree Hall in Lorton starting at 7.30pm. Visitors £2.50 including refreshments.	