

Lorton & Derwent Fells

Local History Society



LOWESWATER, FROM WATER END, CUMBERLAND.

THE LONDON PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY LIMITED

From a drawing taken on the spot by Thomas Allom Esq

First published in 1833

Secretary's letter

Ron George is away on holiday at present and his parting words to me were "Oh, you can write the editor's letter, can't you". So here I am, stuck in front of my monitor and with a new version of my word processor (called Wordworth would you believe!) recently installed, trying to think of a good start to this edition of our Newsletter. However, I seem to have got started so I'll continue.

We're lucky in this issue to have a very interesting article by Rosemary Southey as the centre piece - her own archive must be full of information, judging by the articles she regularly writes for "The Link" and now for us too. In her excellent piece of research, Mrs Southey has thrown down a challenge - will somebody be brave enough to take it up? So here comes the follow-up plea/request: we do want (I really mean need) articles for the Newsletters from you, or your friends or relations, to keep the Newsletters as interesting and vital as possible. I'm not suggesting a two page article (necessarily!) but anything from one short paragraph upwards which you think someone somewhere might be interested in. It should have a connection with history but as Ron points out, yesterday is today's history (or something like that!). The next Newsletter is due in January so

Useful reference books

In the last Newsletter, Ron George gave details of some books that he felt form a useful nucleus for anyone wanting to do some research, whether it is to find out just one or two facts or to dig much deeper in order to find out a lot of information. I also gave a useful reference for old maps which was produced in 1918.

Two more references come to mind and these are:

"A bibliography of the history and topography of Cumberland & Westmorland" compiled by Henry W Hodgson and published by The Record Office in Carlisle in 1968. The entries are in alphabetical order and include people's names, place names and subjects such as afforestation and pottery (I chose those by opening the book at random!).

"The picturesque scenery of the Lake District" by Peter Bicknell and published by St. Paul's Bibliographies, Winchester. This is a full bibliography up to 1855 plus a commentary on the development of the literary and artistic appreciation of the Lake District. It has a good number of pictures too.

The latter book went out of print last year I think and I guess the former is out of print as well; but both crop up in second-hand and antiquarian bookshops. That's where I got my copies.

The front cover

In 1833, a three-volume set of books was published entitled "Westmorland, Cumberland, Durham, and Northumberland, illustrated. From original drawings by Thomas Allom, George Pickering, Etc. with descriptions by T. Rose." These included 103 steel engravings of views of the Lake District. I have a later (1856) re-issue in two volumes called "The British Switzerland, or Picturesque Rambles in the English Lake District" which contains 143 engravings of views in what is now Cumbria. As well as being nice pictures, they are fascinating historical documents; two, for example, show the short bridge that used to cross Thirlmere near Arnboth. The picture on this Newsletter front cover is from Volume 2 of my books. Unfortunately, with my present equipment, this has to be a second generation photocopy so I do apologise for the poor quality.

Chairman's Report at the first AGM held on 16 June 1994

A successful meeting was held, about 35 members attended and the Committee was re-elected unchanged. The Chairman's report was as follows.

"A very warm greeting to all of you who have braved the inclement weather this evening to come here. It is customary for the Chairman, on these occasions, to review the past year's activities and forecast the future. I will do the former very quickly - after all we have not yet completed a full year and I make no claim to foresee the future. You may be wondering why an AGM after only eight months: I take full responsibility. I thought June would provide more reasonable weather for folks to attend than an extra evening in November. As most of you will know, we went from the exploratory meeting in May 1993 to a meeting on 7 October when, with your encouragement, we decided to establish the Society. Our true inaugural meeting, on 20 January under the eagle eye and guidance of our Honorary President Dr Angus Winchester, gave us a fine start to our Society's activities. We have had two meetings since, both I suggest, equally and wholly successful. Mr Bowcock of the Carlisle Record Office gave us a valuable insight into the *raison d'être* of the

Record Office, its activities and an intriguing glimpse into the treasures contained therein. Our members' evening, instigated I must admit with some misgivings - which proved groundless - was a great success. We will return to this theme later this evening when seeking members' opinions and ideas for future activities. Our meetings have all been well attended and have set a precedent we must strive to maintain.

It is also a matter of satisfaction that our membership has built up to the quite healthy number of 56 - as at 31 May. Numbered amongst them are five country members who are geographically spread from the south coast, to Northern Ireland, to Durham. It is, of course, their active interest in the Society which leads them to become members. It is true that their interest is largely, though not wholly, related to family history but although this is perhaps a lesser part of the Society's aims, it is nevertheless a very important part. Such research leads to an increase in the overall knowledge of the area, in particular inhabitants' movements both within and without the valley community - and other interesting aspects of past valley life.

Following this line of thought brings me to think of the forthcoming year and mention my one regret about our progress so far. That is that so few members have become, at least as far as the Committee is aware, directly involved in some aspect of local history research.

There is so much to learn, so much to discover and so much pleasure to be had from doing so. I can not over-emphasise the importance of this. In the first place it is a principal aim of the Society and secondly it gives the greatest benefit to members; and the greatest success of the Society comes from the work undertaken by the members themselves. Outsiders, however knowledgeable, can never create that feeling of understanding of, and being at one with, the locality, that comes with doing one's own study of it.

So I beg all of you to look for something of personal interest - in the environment, in your house or someone else's, or in community life both present and past - something in which you have, or can develop, an active interest. If you like, come and talk to me or a Committee member about it to see if we can spur you on.

You will see from the Agenda that we are looking to you, the members, for ways to make the Society more interesting and useful to you - each of you personally - and, again, if you have no immediate thoughts on this, come and discuss your ideas with a Committee member.

This is your Society - help to make it work for you."

WOMEN OF CONSCIENCE

by Rosemary Southey

A while ago, while looking through documents connected with Pardshaw Quaker meetings, I came across a small leatherbound book containing a list of nine women's names. Each name was followed by a paragraph testifying against the payment of tithes. A typical entry, for instance, was under the name of Harnah Burnyeat:

"I am in some measure a witness that Christ is come who put an end to the first priesthood that received tithes."

A second woman, Mary Wilkinson, says:

"It is my firm belief that there is noe tythes due, but those that are found in the payment of it are denying the coming of Christ."

Friends objected to paying tithes for the upkeep of the Church on the grounds that there was no need for a Church or priesthood - each individual could speak directly to God. Tithes were paid by householders - generally, of course, men - so this list of nine women tithepayers is distinctly unusual.

The list, unfortunately, has one big drawback - it is undated.

Never one to shirk a challenge, I wondered if it might be possible to date this little book. Obviously, judging by the handwriting and by the fact that it dealt with the controversy over tithes, it must date from the late 17th or early 18th century. But could it be dated more exactly?

Glancing over the list, I came across one familiar name - that of Ann Dixon. The Dixons lived at Waterend in Loweswater.

John Dixon and his wife Ann were amongst George Fox's earliest converts in Cumberland; only three years after Fox's first appearance in the area in 1653, John was imprisoned for speaking against local priests. The couple considered emigrating to America but decided in the end to stay; they rebuilt their house at Waterend. Ann gave birth to two sons and John continued to be fined and imprisoned.(1)

After John's death in 1679, Ann suffered yearly distraints of livestock in lieu of the tithes she would not pay, until William and Mary's Toleration Act of 1689 removed such penalties.(2) For instance, in 1679, eight lambs were taken from her fields "being all she had", in 1680 she lost five more, in 1681 nine more and so on.

As was common in those days, John and Ann named their elder son John and he married the eldest daughter of the Woodvilles who lived just across the fields at the head of Loweswater Lake, at what is now

known as the Place. His bride, confusingly, was also called Ann. The marriage was controversial as the couple were too closely related (John's aunt was Ann's grandmother) and they ran off to Cockermouth to be married "by a priest".(3) Friends at Pardshaw disowned John but he and Ann had guessed correctly when they assumed that, presented with a fait accompli, Quakers would let the marriage stand. John apologised, was received back into the Society and Ann and the children were all staunch Quakers.(4)

Which Ann did the document refer to? Both became widows at a fairly early age and ran the farm at Waterend for some years; both were therefore tithepayers at various times and would qualify to be on the list.

I started to investigate the other women on the list. The first name - that of Hannah Burnyeat - seemed most promising. I knew of only two Hannah Burnyeats, mother and daughter, and the elder had died before her husband, John Burnyeat of Crabtreebeck on the edge of Loweswater Lake. I needed therefore to trace the younger Hannah, born in 1702.

By one of those strokes of luck which occasionally (all too rarely) happen, I stumbled across a reference (from 1729) to Hannah while reading through Manor Court records:(5)

"Hannah Burnyeat hath alienated a tenement at High Iredale of 3s 4d rent ... a parcel of a tenement of 1s 6d rent, a messuage and tenement at High Nooke of 15s 4d rent, a tenement at High Iredale of 1s 2d rent, a messuage and tenement at Crabtreebeck of 6s 6d rent, a parcel called Low and High Dub Ing of 1s 2d rent, a messuage and tenement at Thrushbank of 12s 7½d rent to the use and behoof of Jacob Fearon her intended husband for the terme of his Natural life and to the use of her the said Hannah and after the death of the longer lived of them then to the heirs of the said Hannah Burnyeat according to the customs of the Manor."

Hannah was obviously a considerable heiress owning a massive portion of the area around Loweswater Lake.

A search of Quaker registers at Friends House in Lorton revealed a family tragedy. After the death of her mother, Hannah's father had remarried but this second marriage was childless. The heir was Hannah's older brother, Philip, but in 1725, Hannah's father John and Philip died within 16 days of each other. At the age of 23, Hannah inherited her father's considerable wealth.

All this helped to date the book roughly. The list must have been made after 1725 when Hannah, as a householder, became liable to pay tithes and before 1729 when she married and her husband took over that responsibility. The Ann Dixon of the document was clearly the younger Ann, who in 1725 would have been a widow of 2 years, aged 56.

By this time, I was hooked. Could I identify all the women on the list who had come together, perhaps at the little Meeting House high on the fells at Pardshaw to make a statement of their principles? Could I date the book exactly?

One or two of the other women were easy to identify once an approximate date was available. Esther Burnyeat, for instance, was Hannah's elderly cousin by marriage. Esther was originally from Brigham and had married Peter Burnyeat of Thrushbank. She had three surviving children and had been widowed for over 30 years - she was now in her mid-seventies. Sarah Pattinson was a little younger, about 65 in 1725 and her husband William had died the year after Esther's Peter. She too had had three young children to bring up. The Pattinsons also lived at Waterend but the family were originally from Wigton. Sarah, however, was definitely a Loweswater woman; she was sister to the younger John Dixon, which made her Ann Dixon's sister-in-law.

Two of the other women were mother and daughter-in-law, again both widows. Isabell Johnson was probably in her mid-forties; she had been married only four years before her husband, Michael, died, leaving her with two children below the age of 3.

Her mother-in-law, Jane (or Jenet) is particularly interesting as her conversion to Quaker beliefs can be dated almost exactly. Jenet's origins are at present unclear but she and Michael Johnson (again of Waterend) married in Loweswater church and baptised their first two children, Janet and Joseph, there. Then in the two years between Joseph's baptism in June 1677 and the birth of their next child, Ruth, in September 1679, Jane and Michael encountered and embraced Quakerism. Ruth's birth and those of her younger brother and sister are noted in Quaker registers.

The only woman whose identity remains uncertain is Mary Wilkinson. The most likely candidate was born Mary Banks in Blindbothel in 1673 and married her first husband, John Wilkinson of, yes, Waterend in 1699 at Pardshaw Meeting House. This marriage was very short-lived - John died seven years after the marriage, aged 45. Mary, 11 years younger than her husband, was left a widow with three very young children. Four years later, she married again, to Joseph Bacchus of Broughton Quaker Meeting, to whom she bore one son, Benjamin, three years later. Of course this means that in 1725, she would have been known by her second married name, but she was certainly living still at Waterend, the only Mary "Wilkinson" traceable in the area.

But it was the last and one of the oldest of the women who finally enabled me to date the document to a period of eight weeks. Elizabeth Beeby of Lamplugh in 1676 married Thomas Fletcher of Thrushbank at John Fearon's house at Pardshaw, in the days before the little Meeting House there existed. She bore three children and was widowed sometime before 1710. Records at Friends House record her burial on 10 January

1726. The list therefore had to be drawn up between 13 November 1725 when the death of Hannah Burnyeat's brother made her liable to pay tithes and early January 1726 when Elizabeth died.

Two interesting conclusions can be drawn from this investigation. One is that, in this admittedly very small sample, it was clearly unusual for widows to remarry even if they were widowed at a very young age. Only one of the eight widows on the list remarried; instead, the others coped with managing farms and bringing up young children on their own. This may have been possible because of Quakers' well-developed support system, where Quakers in genuine distress could count on the help of fellow Friends. The unusual independence of Quaker women - they frequently travelled alone and were treated with much more equality than seems the case with non-Quaker women - may also have had some influence.⁽⁶⁾ It would be interesting to see if comparable evidence exists for the frequency with which widows did or did not remarry outside the Quaker community and to compare the two.

Secondly, it's clear from identifying these women that the area around and particularly beyond Loweswater Lake, from Thrushbank to Iredale Place including all the houses in between - the area known collectively as Waterend - was inhabited entirely by Quakers. In many cases the families had been Quaker from the 1670s, only twenty years after Fox's first visit to the county. The Woodvilles held out the longest but the marriage of Ann Dixon's brother, William Woodville, in 1705 to another Friend meant that every house in Waterend held a Quaker family. For non-Quakers and the priest at Loweswater, visiting Waterend must have seemed like entering enemy territory. Moreover, in the mid-1720s, almost all the householders were women.

Of the nine women of Waterend who assembled that winter to speak against tithes, at least five died within the next six years. For the middle-aged and elderly widows, this was hardly surprising but for young Hannah Burnyeat there was a tragedy in store. In 1729, she married Jacob Fearon and moved to Shatton near Cockermouth to live at Jacob's home. In February 1730, she gave birth to a daughter, who was named after herself and who seems to have thrived. Then disaster, in some unknown shape, struck; Jacob died in January 1731 and two months later, Hannah too was dead. She was 28 years old.

NOTES

(1) John Besse: A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers ... 1753

An epitome of Suffering of Friends belonging in Pardshaw.

Notes on the Dixons of Waterend and Toddell, compiled by William Fletcher Dixon of Toddell, 1889

(2) Besse, *op cit*.

(3) Cockermouth parish registers

(4) Fletcher Dixon, *op cit*.

(5) Manor of Loweswater and Thackthwaite, Court rolls.

(6) Pardshaw Monthly Meeting Minute Books show that Quaker women frequently travelled often on their own or in the company of other women, both in this country and to Ireland and America. A minute from 1703 does criticize several young Quaker women who "have gone to keep house or shoppe of themselves" but this was because the growing independence of these particular women had created a shortage of domestic servants!

Dates and details of births, marriages and deaths are taken from the appropriate registers at Friends House, London, except where otherwise stated.

Previous meetings

19 May 1994

This was an experiment - it was a members' evening. In the event, maps, pictures, photographs and old house deeds were brought along and the members and visitors who came had plenty to see and talk about. It was good to see that some of the visitors were from the Matteredale Local History Society, another fairly new society.

Before the free-for-all, Ron George showed a few photographs that he had taken over the years of parts of local buildings which had unexplained features and suggested that these were the sort of thing that members could well follow up themselves. He also stressed the importance of keeping a record, perhaps by photograph or tape recorder, of any changes that were taking place locally, preferably on a before and after basis.*

Everyone who came, including the visitors, seemed to enjoy themselves immensely.

* See "A Recording Project" in the Cumbria Local History Federation's Bulletin No 8, August 1994

14 July 1994

This was a talk on vernacular buildings of the Lake District, given by Susan Denyer who is the Historic Buildings Representative for the National Trust in the north west of England. This proved to be a most interesting lecture with slides from a lady who combines a great deal of knowledge with enthusiasm and humour and a quest for answers to still unresolved, enigmatic, questions such as:

Were the "spinning galleries" really used for spinning?

How were the large barns organised for storage of several crops at the same time?

Did the joiner/carpenter who made them, also carve the beautiful panels of interlocking scroll patterns in the oak bread cupboards that are a unique feature in this part of Cumbria?

Mrs Denyer covered the typical shapes and structures of farmhouses and barns from the 17th and into the 18th centuries with a look at the internal layouts and uses of the buildings and some of the furniture. An interesting point was that the main bedroom was originally on the ground floor, the upper floor being used by children and for storage, including the family's store of dried oats in large oak chests which were built in the room. Later, when it became the custom to have all bedrooms upstairs, this huge chest - which was too big to get out - could be stood on it's side and used as a wardrobe.

Approximately 40 members and guests could have listened to much more as the number of questions and comments afterwards indicated.

DH

Outstanding work in our area

At a recent meeting, we said that we would publish a list of work that the Committee thought members would find useful in planning what they would like to do and how they could help to promote the research of the Society. Here it is:-

Census returns

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Lorton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Whinfell	✓	✓				
Brackenthwaite						✓
Buttermere	✓			✓		✓
Loweswater		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mockerkin						
Wythop						
Embleton						
Eaglesfield						
Mosser						

} with Rosemary Southey

The above Census returns are all available in Workington Library. Those ticked have already been transcribed and are available through Ron George. Others, such as Loweswater, may also have been transcribed. Will anyone undertaking this work please advise the Secretary what is being proposed (or what has been done) and make it available for inclusion with the other records in our Archive. What is required is full transcription - numbering and order on the return are almost as important as details of the persons listed, as this can help to place people where addresses are not given.

Tythe awards

These are available at the Carlisle Record Office under the general reference DRC/8. Lorton has already been transcribed. Brackenthwaite, Buttermere, Wythop, Embleton, Whinfell, Loweswater, Mosser and Setmurthy could all be transcribed with advantage.

Parish registers

Lorton has already been done. Those needing to be done are [Loweswater with Mockerkin, Mosser, Embleton, Wythop and Eaglesfield and again would anyone doing these please let the Secretary know and make the results available.

[see A. Southey letter
26/10/94]

done by R. Southy - copy in C.R.S.

Tombstones

Last but by no means least of the records that are more easily available are transcriptions of the tombstones in the churchyards of Lorton, Loweswater and Embleton, particularly the older ones. Some of this work is already done or is being done - please let the Secretary know progress and results.

In general

And of course, taking notes and newspaper cuttings of current local events make useful information for the future. We understand that some of you are already doing this - again, please keep us advised and make the results available to our Archive.

Please note - if anyone wants to know whether a certain piece of work (any of the above for instance) has already been done or is currently being done, I will be very glad to help.

RCG

Cumbria Local History Federation

The Cumbria Local History Federation is holding it's AGM & Open Day on Saturday 24 September 1994 at the Burnside Hotel, Kendal Road, Bowness-on-Windermere (near the Steamer Pier and overlooking the lake). It lasts from 9.30am to 4.00pm and includes a table top "Society and Book Bazaar" and two talks - "The Future of the Cumbrian Archives after Local Government Changes" by Jim Grisenthwaite, Cumbria County Archivist, and "The Difficulties of Writing a Book on Local Issues" by Dennis Perriam, a Carlisle Historian. Oh yes, there's the AGM too! The price is £10 for the lot but only £3 for the lectures and tea.

Enquiries for free table top reservations and to book places to:

Joe Scott, Sidegarth, Staveley, Kendal, LA8 9NN. 0539 821854 or

Jill Wishart, 68 Leighton Beck Road, Beetham, Milnthorpe, LA7 7AZ. 05935 62479

Bulletin

In the Federation's Bulletin under "Local History News and Notes" are the following references:

1. "Ordnance Survey maps: A Concise Guide for Local Historians". Richard Oliver, London. Charles Close Society 1993. ISBN 1 870598 13X £12.95.
2. Centre for North West Regional Studies - "Regional Bulletin". The Summer 1994 edition has appeared in a new format from Lancaster University. It contains 96 pages with 10 articles, news from the Centre, listings of Diplomas in Local History awarded since 1984 and an annotated Regional Bibliography.
3. "Oral History and the Local Historian". Stephen Caunce. ISBN 0 582 07295 6 £11.95 Longmans, June 1994. There is also a review of an interesting-sounding book written for the centenary of Thirlmere water first gushing from a fountain in Albert Square in Manchester. It is "Thirlmere Water: A Hundred Miles, A Hundred Tears" by Norman Hoyle and Kenneth Sankey, both former engineers with the Manchester Water Authority. It is published by Centwrite at £4.50 and is available by post from K. Sankey, 56 Gorseley Lane, Mawdesley, Ormskirk, Lancs. L40 3TF. Cheques Payable to "Thirlmere Water Aid Effort" which is a charity concerned with water supply and sanitation in Africa and Asia.

Mention is also made of the series of country-wide recording projects of the many monuments and memorials that were erected following the Great War. The Second World War resulted in little more than additions to earlier memorials, but many communities earlier commemorated the fallen in earlier wars, particularly the Crimean and the Boer Wars. Apparently, there is no such project for Cumbria and the Bulletin Editor would like to hear from anyone interested in starting one in their area. Would anyone like to take on this as a personal or shared project? It need not cover all Cumbria.

Diary

Details are given of walks and talks by the member Societies.

The following weekly courses are being held near us:

1. "Monastic Cumbria" Egremont 7.00 - 9.00 6 meetings, starting 4 October.
2. "Lake District Social History" Workington 2.00 - 4.00 5 meetings, starting 7 October.
3. "The Making of the British Landscape" Whitehaven 10.00 - 12.00, starting 11 October.

All these are being run by the University of Newcastle upon Tyne; contact Mrs Jean Ward, Moss View, Low Asby, Lamplugh, Workington CA14 4RT for details.

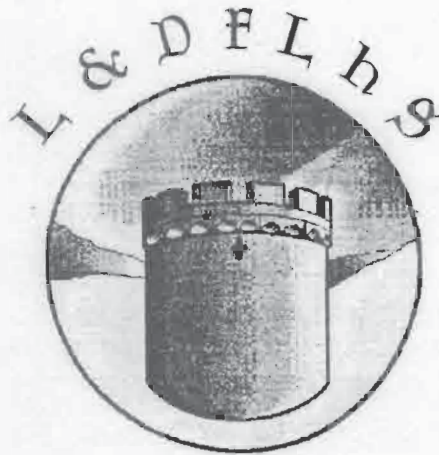
Please contact me or Ron George for more information about (most of) the above items. I also have information about the British Association for Local History - events, publications, joining etc.

MSG

The Society's logo competition

No, we hadn't forgotten about this competition! Regretfully we only had three entries in spite of the fact that Ron and I periodically mentioned it. However, one of the entries included a sketch of the Lorton Park smoke house with some idealised fells in the background. This seemed to be a good basis to work on so I had a few attempts to create a suitable logo using the art software on my computer. It soon became clear to me that, although my software is capable of giving professional results, my own artistic talents are sadly lacking. So I enlisted the help of a friend, Andrew Saggerson, to have a go. His remit was to produce a logo, in colour or black and white, which would reduce well and photocopy clearly.

I'm very pleased with the result and am very grateful to Andrew. If it gets Committee approval, we'll adopt it as the Society's logo and the initiators will get their next year's subscription as the promised prize with our thanks. Here it is:



MSG

Family Trees

In our Lorton "wood", we have a number of trees - some are no larger than undergrowth, a few appear to have been coppiced and others look like pollards. A few have been shredded, but one above all others stands tall and proud - strangely however it has no roots. It is no coincidence that the traditional terms used for woodland management are applied to the concept of family trees. These latter, which are at present in our archive, exhibit similar characteristics to the woodland trees described above. You may be interested on your historic family connections and perhaps that may lead to the further growth of these trees and others. Any information to further this would be welcome, however small your contribution. Here are some more names to add to those given in Newsletter No 2:-

Winder - from 1550 to the present
Benson/Borranscale - 17/18 C
Huntington

Pearson
Musgrave
Thompson

RCG

Future programme

8 September 1994
29 October (Saturday)
10 November

Mr Hugh Turner - "Obsolete Cumbrian domestic articles" - an illustrated talk
Society social evening - a meal then music of the 30s onwards, but not too far!
Patricia Spencer (NW Water) - "History, up to the present day, of the Lorton valley water supply"

12 January 1995
9 March
11 May
8 June

To be arranged
To be arranged
Members' evening?
AGM