Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society

Wanderer

No.59, February 2026

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Our Next Talk, 5 March

'Cumbria's First Farmers' by Dr Gill Hey

Around 6,000 years ago, the way of life for Neolithic people living in Cumbria changed dramatically. Hunting, gathering and living in the natural environment were replaced by farming and the alteration of the landscape, including clearing woodland and constructing burial and ceremonial monuments. These are changes that occurred throughout Britain but recent work in the North West is providing particularly good evidence for understanding this transition. Was it as abrupt as first seems? Did it involve an immigrant population and, if so, what happened to the native Cumbrians?

Dr Gill Hey

Dr Gill Hey's research interests focus on settlement and landscape in the late Mesolithic, Neolithic and early Bronze Age, and particularly on the interaction between people and their changing environment. Her consultancy work has ranged from examining the effectiveness of archaeological evaluation techniques, to working for the National Trust in advance of developments within their Stonehenge Estate, and exploring how the north-west of England can help us understand societal changes in the Neolithic period. Dr Hey is the President of CWAAS, and the former CEO of Oxford Archaeology, where she worked for over 30 years managing large fieldwork projects. Gill Hey has written or edited a number of books. She is the co-editor of *New Light on the Neolithic of Northern England* (with Paul Frodsham, 2020).

Our future programme 2025/6

05 Mar 2026	'Cumbria's first farmers'.	Dr Gill Hey
14 May 2026	'Border Fortress: The Turbulent History of Carlisle Castle'.	Dr Maksymilian Loth-Hill
11 Jun 2026	Our AGM plus 'Artists and Prints: Cumbria Illustrated in Early 19th Century Prints'.	Dr Michael Winstanley
10 Sep 2026	'In search of Arctic Wonders: Cumbria and the Arctic in the 18th and 19th Centuries'.	Dr Rob David
19 Nov 2026	'A History of Slate Quarrying in The Lake District'.	Mark Hatton

Talks are held at 7.30 pm in the Yew Tree Hall in Lorton, and are included in membership. Visitors welcome, £4 cash payable at the door, including refreshments. Talks are also streamed live to members using Zoom but are not recorded. Other activities may be added.

Officers and Committee 2025/6

President: Professor Angus Winchester Financial Examiner: Dr Ian Shaw

Andrew Chamberlain *Chairman*	07815 422092 *ldflhschair@gmail.com*	Charles Lambrick *Vice-chair,*	*charleslambrick@btinternet.com*
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Mary Baker Treasurer, Membership	*ldflhs.subs@gmail.com*	Fiona Lambrick Gloria Edwards Tim Stanley-Clamp Jan Evans Sheena Denwood Sharon Arrowsmith	

Diary dates

7 February – Lancaster University Regional Heritage Centre. Annual study day with Dr Alan Crosby (British Association for Local History). Roads and Traffic in the North West over four key historical periods. 10am - 4 pm. £28. Details at: https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/regional-heritage-centre/events/

7 March – Lancaster University Regional Heritage Centre. The 53rd Annual Archaeology Forum. An annual roundup of the year's development's in archaeology and related technology in the north-west. Also available via a Microsoft Teams link. 10 am – 4.45 pm. £30 online £15. Full details as above.

The **next issue** of the *Wanderer* will be published on 1 May 2026. Please send any items to the Editor, Derek Denman, by 1 April.

The *Wanderer* is published by the Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society, 19 Low Road Close, Cockermouth CA13 0GU.
http://derwentfells.com *https://facebook.com/Lortonlocalhistorysociety*
L&DFLHS Archive: *https://derwentfells.org.uk*

Message from the chair

Dear members,

Welcome to the first edition of The Wanderer in 2026. I hope and trust you had a lovely Christmas. As you will see, we have a great programme of events to look forward to this year, organised by our Secretary, Lena Stanley-Clamp, presented by some excellent speakers and covering topics as diverse as exploration, industry, settlement and landscape. In addition to this we are hoping to organise a literary walking tour of Ambleside with Dr Penny Bradshaw of the University of Cumbria as a guide, hopefully in April or May. We'll communicate further once we've firmed up arrangements.

In this edition you will find Tim Stanley-Clamp's report of our excellent final talk of 2025, 'The Great Enchantress: Ann Radcliffe's 1794 Tour of The Lakes' which was given by Dr Penny Bradshaw, and which was very well attended. In addition, we have Ian Baines' trip report of our walking tour of Whitehaven, an interesting and entertaining article by Gloria Edwards on Henry Mayhew's satire, illustrated by George Cruikshank, which tells the story of Mr. and Mrs Sandboys and the Great Exhibition of 1851, and Walter Head's fascinating piece on the Loweswater-born Quaker, William Woodville, eighteenth-century smallpox pioneer. My thanks to all our contributors to this edition of The Wanderer.

Charles Lambrick has provided an update on our third successful study week at the Leconfield Archive, last October, and the fact that we've been offered a fourth in April, which is wonderful news.

We are also very pleased to report that our president, Professor Angus Winchester, is planning to write the Cockermouth volume of the Victoria County History (VCH) which includes all the parishes in our area. This has been greatly facilitated by our digitisation of much of the Leconfield archive at Cockermouth castle. Professor Winchester is still completing other work and expects to be in a position to embark on it in earnest until later on this year.

Finally, I'd like to take the opportunity to welcome Sharon Arrowsmith, who has been co-opted to the society's committee, bringing with her a wealth of experience in the field of local history research, and that Alison McCann (Consultant Archivist of the Leconfield Estates) and Robert Baxter (Senior Archivist and now Joint Professional Lead, Cumbria Archive Service), have accepted honorary memberships of the society.

I look forward to seeing you at our next event on 5 March, 'Cumbria's first farmers' presented by Dr Gill Hey, President of Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society (CWAAS).

Andrew

Remembering Michael Baron

Many members will have seen the obituary in the December *Link* of Michael Baron, who died on 16 November 2025, aged 96. In his appreciation, David Lindley emphasises the wide range of Michael's interests and achievements in his long life, within which he found time to make a large contribution to our Society, together with Hetty.

It was Hetty who first joined the committee in 1999, when a new treasurer was urgently needed, and it was Hetty who encouraged Michael to join in early 2000, to fill the role of talks organiser. At the time, Michael was the best-qualified historian on the committee, which helped with the talks programme, but his involvement became far more valuable to the Society. The year 2000 marked a deliberate change in which the focus of the Society moved from covering Lorton parochial chapelry, with a membership of sixty, to a wider geographical area and a broader range of interests. This led to today's Society with nearly 200 members.

Michael, at Watergate Barn, played a large part in the Society's development, in particular being responsible for our venture over the Cocker to embrace the history of Loweswater – in a different barony! With Hetty he created the Three Valleys Oral History Project, which developed from a millennial project to more than forty interviews.

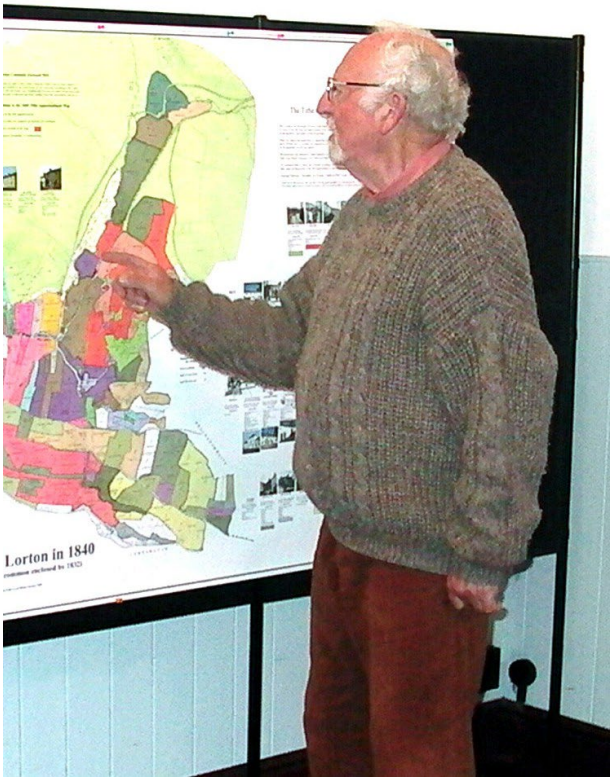
Maybe his greatest contribution was to introduce the Society to the historical aspects of literature, as relevant to our area, which of course included poetry and Wordsworth. This led to the commemorations around the bi-centenary of the Wordsworths' visit in 1804 to the Lorton yew-tree, and to his joint editorship of our book, *Wordsworth and the famous Lorton Yew-Tree*. This was his first published book, which earned a presentation at Words by the Water.

In 2006 Michael took on the chairmanship of the Society for two years, and he continued as a committee member until 2010, after which he was made an honorary member. He continued to contribute to the *Wanderer* and to comment on its content long after leaving the area.

The Society is very fortunate to have had the interest and involvement of this remarkable man and friend.

DD

Michael Baron with the township map of Lorton at our tenth-anniversary exhibition, September 2003



Newcastle University

Did you volunteer in an NHS hospital in Cumbria, Northumberland, or County Durham, 1979-1997?

Are you interested in sharing your experiences?

Are you willing to give 1 or 2 interviews, at a time that works for you?

I need your expertise !

I am a PhD researcher studying links between volunteering in the NHS, North-South health inequalities, and regional identity.

I want to interview people who volunteered in Leagues of Friends, hospital radio, and other healthcare tasks!

If you or someone you know may be interested, or if you would like more information, get in touch:

Lily Tidman

Email : L.tidman2@newcastle.ac.uk

Phone: 07977326960

UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council

NORTHERN BRIDGE CONSORTIUM DOCTORAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

Meeting Reports

Outing: 'A Wander around Whitehaven', 9 October 2025

Whitehaven has a complex history and our walk and talk today, led by Jayne Dickie from the Beacon Museum, would hopefully unravel some of this for us. She started with an introduction outside the Museum and continued as we walked through part of the town towards Lowther Street.

The Romans were active in the area 2000 years ago and probably used the natural port but their nearest confirmed settlement was the fort at Parton to the north. The Vikings were certainly present in the tenth century and buried Viking silver has been found locally.

The St Bees Priory was established around 1120, after the Norman conquest, and Whitehaven, then a small fishing village with fields down to the sea, was included within its administered land. Henry VIII dissolved the priory in 1539 and stripped it of most of its assets, and the land then passed through several secular landlords.

Sir Christopher Lowther acquired the Whitehaven estate in 1630, seeing the opportunity to develop the coal mines in the area. He built a pier for the harbour in 1634, still existing as the Old Quay, which allowed his ships to transport the coal to England and Ireland. He also established a shipbuilding industry to build those ships. His son, Sir John Lowther inherited the St Bees Manor in 1642 and with the booming coal exports, he transformed Whitehaven from a small fishing village to a planned gridded town, three times the size of then Carlisle. He built Whitehaven Castle as his home. In 1660, during Cromwell's Commonwealth, Whitehaven was granted a Market Charter and the new Market Hall replaced the previous Buttermarket. Lowther Street stretched from the Castle to the harbour but no houses were allowed to be built over three stories high so as not to obstruct Sir John's

The Society group at Whitehave harbour, with Jane Dickie below the flag – photo Roger Hiley

view. By the time of Sir John's death in 1706, Whitehaven had 3000 inhabitants and had 77 registered vessels totalling 400 tons and exporting 35,000 tons of coal annually. Sir John's son, Sir James Lowther, 1st Earl of Lonsdale was known as 'Farthing Jimmy'. The plaque outside the gates of St Nicholas garden describe him as 'the richest commoner in England' but also 'as having a reputation for meanness and frugality'.

The town grew rapidly during the eighteenth century with other trades developing including iron mining and smelting, rope and sailmaking, pottery and salt. Guns and knives were exported to Africa. By 1762 there were 9000 inhabitants. The town's prosperity grew and was based on trade in other goods, especially tobacco from the British colonies in Virginia and other American states, with up to 10% of the English tobacco trade entering through Whitehaven. Unfortunately, after the Act of Union in 1707, some of this trade started to move towards the better port facilities in Glasgow and had ceased entirely by the 19th century. The Tobacco trade was replaced by sugar imports from Barbados, cotton coming from Antigua and coffee and cocoa from St Lucia. By 1750, Whitehaven was the second largest port in England, by tonnage, after London and by the mid-nineteenth century it was still the fifth largest with 443 registered vessels. This significantly declined by the end of the nineteenth century.

Although Whitehaven does have connections with the slave trade in the early eighteenth century, it played only a minor role because the local industries were not well suited to the trade in slaves in Africa.

We walked through to St Nicholas Gardens, just off Lowther Street, to see the ruined church, destroyed by fire in 1971. There we saw the American plaque to Mildred Warner, paternal grandmother to President George Washington. Jayne explained how she was born in Virginia in 1671 and married Lawrence Washington there in 1685, producing three children, John, Augustine and Mildred. Augustine was the father of George Washington. Lawrence died in 1698 and in 1700 Mildred married George Gale of Whitehaven, a prominent local merchant. She died of fever in 1701 but her will placed the care of the Washington children with George Gale's. This was subsequently challenged in the Virginia courts and custody passed to Lawrence's cousin, John Washington. Mildred is buried in an unknown location in St Nicholas's churchyard. George Gale subsequently founded Whitehaven in Maryland.

We walked along Millenium Way, seeing the rope knot structures, then onto the north quay. Jayne told us the history of John Paul Jones, one of Whitehaven's more colourful characters. He was born in Kirkcudbrightshire in 1747 and became a sailor on merchant and slave ships from Whitehaven from the age of thirteen. After killing a mutinous subordinate while on the Betsy in Tobago, he fled to Virginia and joined the Continental Navy in 1775, commanding his own ship Providence. During the American War of

Independence, by then commanding Ranger, he participated in several engagements with the Royal Navy in the Irish Sea, while on sorties from France. He persuaded his crew to attack Whitehaven Harbour on 17 April 1778, as he knew the layout of the port and the town. The winds were not favourable, forcing them to abandon the attempt and head for Ireland instead, and causing more trouble for the Royal Navy there. He returned on 23 April, intending to set fire to and sink all the ships in Whitehaven harbour, which were moored side by side. They successfully disabled the town's guns and took the old fort (near the Beacon Museum), but their attempt to sink the coal ship Thompson failed after the townspeople were alerted. Jones and his crew narrowly escaped. Jones went on to capture the Royal Navy ship Drake in which the British Captain George Burdon was killed, but he court-martialled his own lieutenant Simpson, in charge of the captured Drake, as they separately returned to Brest. John Adams, then a commissioned officer, but later to become the second US President, disagreed with Jones and cleared Simpson of all charges. England was shocked by the attempted invasion and more batteries were built in the port of Whitehaven and elsewhere. John Paul Jones is celebrated by a statue in Washington DC as a US hero but there is also one outside the Beacon Museum. He was given a posthumous pardon by the townspeople of Whitehaven in 1999 and the US Navy were granted freedom of the Port of Whitehaven. President Thomas Jefferson, the third US President, described John Paul Jones as 'the principal hope of America's future efforts on the ocean'.

Further round, the west quay was built in 1832. The railway arrived in 1847 from Maryport and in 1849 from the south, initially not being connected until the Corkickle Tunnel was built in 1854. A branch line led to the harbour where the Millenium Promenade is now.

Along the way Jayne introduced a few more prominent Whitehaven people connections: Benjamin Franklin visited Whitehaven in 1772 to see William Brownrigg a leading scientist; Hugh Lowther, 5th Earl of Lonsdale and also known as the Yellow Earl, was the first president and founder of the Automobile Association and was also the first chairman of Arsenal FC; William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy were frequent visitors to the town. William's father, John Wordsworth was the legal representative of James Lowther (Farthing Jimmy).

We completed our tour back at the Beacon Museum where we enjoyed an afternoon tea in the café courtesy of the History Society. Many thanks to Jayne Dickie and the Beacon Museum for a thoroughly interesting and detailed walk and talk.

Ian Baines

See a pictorial report by Roger Hiley at https://www.loweswatercam.co.uk/251009_History_Soc_Whitehaven.htm

Members' study week at, Cockermouth Castle's Leconfield archive, 22–25 October 2025

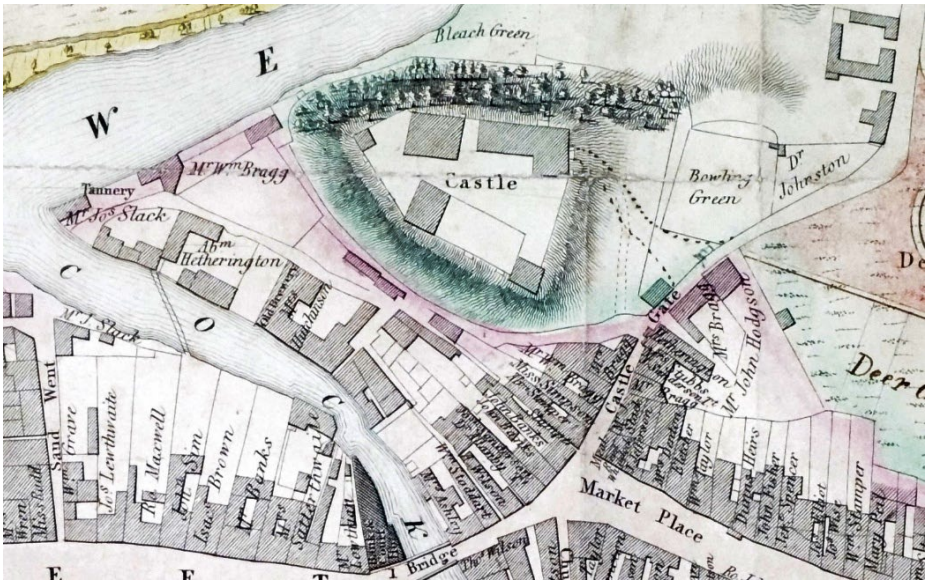
A twelve-strong team of Members of the Society assembled at Cockermouth Castle over four days towards the end of October 2025 to continue with photography of Leconfield Estate archive documents.

The sessions took place by kind permission of Lord Egremont and were facilitated by Alison McCann, consultant archivist, and Andy Loukes along with support from members of the permanent staff at the castle. Once again, we took up all available space in the Estate Office, using four tables on each of which camera stands were fixed so as to help speed along the process of document photography. This was usually conducted by two people, one person to handle each archive document while the other operated the camera.

As was the case during the previous Study Week in March, Estate plans and maps relating to the Society's area of interest and to Cockermouth were among the documents photographed. An example accompanies this Report. In all, some 12,000 images were created during the week, and since then they have been integrated by Derek Denman into the Society's Digital Archive of Leconfield Sources (DALS). This now contains some 42,000 images. It is also of note that Cumbria Archives Service has restored to their website the electronic CASCAT searchable catalogue of Leconfield Estate documents. This makes identification of ones relevant to a property or to an individual much more straightforward than was the case before it came into being.

Members now have access to 'DALS3', the third expanded edition of the resource by application to Derek Denman for the loan of a flash drive. The DALS3 has been deposited with the Cumbria Archive Service and its format has been updated

An extract from Wood's map of Cockermouth, 1832, DLEC/3/6/12/119, reproduced by permission of Leconfield Estates Ltd.



by Derek to ensure that the Society's digital versions of Leconfield Estate archive documents are compatible with the 'Preservica' digital archive system that is currently being developed by CAS. The Society's digital archive documents will, in due course, become accessible through the Preservica system.

There are now only a few more documents in the Leconfield Estate archives that relate to the Society's area and to Cockermouth which need to be photographed to complete the exercise in creating digital versions of them all. It is pleasing to add that a fourth Study Week is now being organised for April this year, and it will follow the successful pattern that has previously been established.

Charles Lambrick

Talk: 'The great enchantress: Ann Radcliffe's 1794 tour of The Lakes', 13 November 2025

Ann Radcliffe had published three very successful novels and was at the peak of her fame when in 1794 she embarked on a tour first of Europe, then of the Lake District, to collect material for a book of travel writing. As Dr Penelope Bradshaw made clear in her enthusiastically received talk, the resulting publication in 1795, though mocked and denigrated by a largely male literary establishment, would make a significant contribution to the period's thinking about our experience of the natural world.

The novels*, A Sicilian Romance* (1790) *The Romance of the Forest* (1792) and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1793) all drew on dramatic settings modelled on her readers' conception of European landscapes, usually suggestive of a remote past. They were almost entirely fictional, inspired by artists like Salvator Rosa, Poussin and Claude, whose paintings would evoke scenes designed to startle and intrigue. Through them, a sense of remote places and times were re-created imaginatively in the novels to explore the effect of the natural world on the human mind as her heroines, cut off from the ordinary protections of everyday life, would be challenged by surroundings which while beautiful, were also threatening because of their strangeness.

Quite what motivated the decision to write in such a different vein when she was at the height of her fame and commercial success remains an open question. Ann Radcliffe was a very private celebrity, even by the standards of the 1790s, and what we know about her thinking on such matters comes from a few recollections provided by her husband which were no doubt carefully chosen to honour her wish to keep out of the public spotlight. The simplest explanation is that she felt entitled to a holiday and retracing as far as possible the progress of the Grand Tour, at least as far as the Alps, would have appealed to an affluent couple with leisure to spare. There may have been a professional motive. The novels made use of foreign settings, conjured from Ann's imagination. Perhaps she felt the need to ground her writing more securely in actual experience because she was serious about showing her heroines as intelligent agents in their own lives? Another explanation lurks in the possibility that Ann Radcliffe and her husband, whose journalism was distinctly radical, seem never to have completely lost their faith in the overthrow of France's *ancien regime* and that this journey was a muted act of faith in the Revolution's future.

In any case, their journey south was abandoned before they had accomplished anything worthwhile. Germany was overshadowed by the imminent threat of a French invasion and arriving at the border they found that they were not allowed to enter Switzerland. They turned back to England and the plan to explore Nature much closer to home was born. *Observations During a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland and Cumberland* was published in the year, 1795.

Salvator Rosa, Mountain Landscape with figures (part)

The Radcliffes began their tour of the Lakes at Lancaster, passing through Kirkby Lonsdale to Kendal, then to Ullswater, Keswick, Borrowdale, Ambleside, Coniston and on to Furness. The last stage was a guided progress across the Morecambe sands back to Lancaster. The journey was related very much as a novelist might, with passages of descriptive writing which aim at more than simple visual appeal. Throughout there is often a sense that the landscape before her eyes was being read for the meanings it could yield, about the people who lived in it and their history. An early example is the obelisk at Kendal marking the Glorious Revolution of 1688 which she saw as testimony to the love of liberty and independence of the local people. Further north, when she got to Ullswater she was excited by its 'sublimity' and lived for herself some of the feelings she had given her novels' heroines when they were confronted by mountainous scenes. After a visit to the ruins of Brougham Castle, with its reminders of the cruelties of feudal oppression, the Radcliffes travelled west, staying in the Horse and Farrier in Threlkeld under the looming Saddleback, before arriving in Keswick and taking rooms in one of the town's 'tourist' hotels, probably the Queen's Head.

Ann Radcliffe was unimpressed by Keswick and Derwentwater, not convinced by Gilpin's description of it as 'Beauty lying in the lap of Horrour' (though she had used the phrase herself in describing an Alpine landscape in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*) but the ascent of Skiddaw, recapitulating a key episode from *The Romance of the Forest*, confirmed her belief in the power of untethered nature to educate as well as astonish. A walk round Bassenthwaite, and then round Derwentwater to view the Lodore Falls followed before a journey south over Dunmail Raise to Grasmere and Ambleside. Impressed by Coniston Water, she then made her way to Furness, and spent time exploring the Abbey which,

The plaque on the Kendal obelisk commemorating the Glorious Revolution of 1688 – photo Penelope Bradshaw

like Brougham Castle, prompted reflections on the nature of medieval tyranny and its transience. From the Abbey the Radcliffes made their way to Ulverstion and then hired a guide to lead them across the Morecambe sands to the safety of Lancaster.

> *Thither we returned and concluded a tour which had had afforded infinite delight in the grandeur of its landscapes and a reconciling view of human nature in the simplicity, integrity and friendly disposition of its inhabitants.*

Having conducted us through the Lakes in the Radcliffes' company Dr Bradshaw then turned to the deeper themes of the *Observations*. There is a current of political commentary running through the narrative. We've already seen the author's vivid sense of a cruel and despotic medieval past and celebration of its passing, seen in the ruins of Brougham and Furness Abbey where nature was reclaiming the space occupied by the buildings which had housed oppression. In contrast, there are also, anticipating Wordsworth, several passages celebrating the virtues of the local population, qualities which are both moral and by implication, political. At Mardale, for example, she met a family which prompted the following

> *Here in the winter evening a family circle, gathering around a blazing pile of wood upon the hearth might defy the weather and the world. It was delightful to picture such a party, happy in their home, in the sweet affections of kindred and in honest independence, conversing, working and reading occasionally, while the blast was struggling against the casement and the snow pelting on the roof.*

Such reflections were not new, the reading public was very used to praise of the rural way of life but Ann Radcliffe was writing

about a region which was thought about fearfully as remote and dominated by Nature's 'horror' and she was writing about it at a time when reaction against the French Revolution was about to take control of the nation's political discourse. Set alongside her evocations of aristocratic cruelty and her praise of Kendal for its steady loyalty to the 1688 Revolution, as a sign of their steadfast 'independence', it seems likely that the author was making a political statement in terms which were as bold as could be risked at the time.

One of Dr Bradshaw's key themes in the talk was that in the *Observations* Ann Radcliffe was doing something new in her treatment of landscape. West's *Guide* was used by everyone who visited the Lakes and Radcliffe herself would have made use of the information in it. But she was not interested in West's viewing stations and she made no use of the Claude glass which captured a scene and presented it to the user in the guise of a painting. The picturesque approach to landscape, set out in Gilpin's recently published essays, involved matching the scene to the viewer's preferences, which were already established in advance according to commonly agreed formulas. Nature was in effect treated as a commodity and visits to the Lakes were managed so that the visitor was supplied with experiences which were not intended to surprise, let alone 'astonish' but to provide the

Dr Bradshaw re-enacts the fearful experience of ascending Skiddaw side-saddle – photo from Penelope Bradshaw

fulfilment of an expectation. The scene had defined outlines and was fixed, deliberately excluding elements which might unsettle or challenge, capturing a moment which satisfied because it confirmed the viewer's faith in their own faculties.

While some of Radcliffe's writing in the *Observations* shows the influence of Gilpin Dr Bradshaw took her audience through a central moment in the book where the mind is doing something very different,

The horse and Farrier Inn at Threlkeld, where the Radcliffes stayed – photo Penelope Bradshaw

making use of faculties which West and Gilpin had no use for. Skiddaw was thought to be England's highest mountain at that time and Gray had already noted the superstitions attaching to it among local people (he declined to tackle it partly as a consequence) In any case, West's *Guide* was very little interested in climbing to the peaks – the picturesque sentiment was better served by lakes, perhaps from a slightly elevated position but never from the tops of the fells. So when Ann Radcliffe tackled Skiddaw she was following up the emotions stirred by the fells around Ullswater where she had, anticipating one of Wordsworth's most celebrated passages from *The Prelude*, felt the power of 'partial glimpses of the gigantic shapes … leav(ing) the imagination, thus elevated, to paint the 'forms of things unseen'….

On Skiddaw's summit, she felt translated into a different kind of perception, one which felt as well saw, aware of great spaces reaching across to Scotland and the Irish Sea in the West and towards the Cheviot Hills in the East. Her imagination experienced the awe of this new way of seeing the world and also included her in it as a creature existing in a three dimensional setting which the picturesque did not invite or allow:

> *We stood on a pinnacle, commanding the whole dome of the sky. The prospects below, each of which had been before considered separately as a great scene, were now like miniature parts of the same landscape*.

The audience was reminded of the well-known image in Wordsworth's *Guide* (published some fifteen years later) of a cloud poised in the heavens looking down on the whole region which echoes Radcliffe's invitation both to stand in imagination above the world and also feel part of it.

Dr Bradshaw spoke of Radcliffe's 'experimental' approach in her writing and showed us how the author was starting to move on from the formulaic language of natural description (including in her own earlier writing in the novels.) Of Borrowdale, for example, she wrote

> *It is difficult to spread varied pictures of such scenes before the imagination. A repetition of the same images of rock, wood and water, and the same epithets of grand, vast and sublime, which necessarily occur, must appear tautologous, on paper, though their archetypes in nature, ever varying in outline, or arrangement, exhibit new visions to the eye, and produce new shades of effect on the mind.*

The talk concluded with some thoughts on Ann Radcliffe's treatment at the hands of her contemporaries. Thomas de Quincey was generous in his description of Ann Radcliffe as 'the mighty enchantress' and Ruskin praised her descriptive writing, but acknowledgement of her significant contribution to the creation of Romantic sensibility has been delayed until very recently. Wordsworth wrote dismissively of her novels and did not refer in public to the *Observations,* though it is almost certain that he had read extracts from it, including her account of the ascent of Skiddaw with the invitation to imagine the region from the heavens which would be adapted for his own purposes in the Guide he published later. Coleridge's review of her novel *The Italian*, published in the same year, was so spiteful that (it seems) Dorothy Wordsworth persuaded him not to publish it. Keats was facetious at her expense - ironically, much of the poetry of these two would include Gothic elements which appealed to a readership largely created by Ann Radcliffe. Walter Scott was typically generous at the end of her life when contributing a 'Prefatory Memoir' to a complete set of her novels published in 1824. But he too commented critically on the early novels along with a host of lesser figures, exclusively male, who created what might be thought the late eighteenth century equivalent of a social media pile-on. Some of the commentary was targeted directly at the *Observations. The Lakers*, a play written by James Plumptre and published in 1796, satirised Radcliffe herself in the person of Veronica, a novelist who goes to the Lake district to collect material for a Gothic novel which would be set there.

> *I think I shall lay the scene of my next upon Derwent-water, make St. Herbert to have murdered a pilgrim, who shall turn out to be his brother, and I shall call it 'The Horrors of the Hermitage.' I can introduce a mysterious monk of Borrowdale, and shall have fine opportunities of describing luxurious groves and bowery lanes[.] (The Lakers: A Comic Opera, p. 18)*

But apart from the easy mockery of James Plumptre's skit (never actually performed until recently, it bears remembering) there was a deeper current at work. The early enthusiasm in this country for the revolution in France was virtually extinguished by the Terror of 1792-3, a revulsion which was hardened into implacable opposition by the war between England and Revolutionary France of 1794. So, by the time the *Observations* was published there had been a major shift in public sentiment as well as punitive legislation designed to suppress radical thinking. Anti-Jacobin reaction changed the terms of debate so that much of what had passed for legitimate comment became problematic. In her answers to

'Dr Syntax loses his way', from *Dr Syntax in search of the picturesque*, 1812, a better known mockery of the picturesque traveller, by Thomas Rowlandson – *www.royalacademy.org.uk*

questions at the end of the talk, Dr Bradshaw made the point that Ann Radcliffe's novels portrayed heroines with intelligence and agency as well as feelings, women who overcame their isolation and conquered their fears through resources they discovered within themselves. At best, this would be seen as unhelpful, at worst as bordering on sedition. What's more, casting the aristocratic villains as foreigners was no longer protection enough from anti-Jacobin suspicion and the whole genre came to be thought of as somehow subversive, for all that most of the overt attacks cast it as merely silly.

The talk was received with prolonged applause and several messages from the online audience saying how much they enjoyed its intellectual scope, its absorbing detail and its lucid advocacy for a writer who until recent years has been badly neglected. To quote from Dr Bradshaw's Introduction, page 52:

> *As one recent critic remarks, 'No English writer of such historic importance and diverse influence has so often been trivialised by her critics.'*

Those who attended this talk now know better.

Tim Stanley-Clamp

Bibliography

Observations during a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland and Cumberland, by Ann Radcliffe, edited by Penny Bradshaw, Hornob Press, 2024. This report has added some material from Dr Bradshaw's excellent Introduction to the book.

William Gilpin *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and On Sketching Landscape,* 1792

Thomas West *A Guide to the Lakes in Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire,* 1778

Thomas Gray, *The poems of Mr Gray. To which are prefixed memoirs of his life and writings by W. Mason, M.A.* 1775

Wordsworth's first guide is the anonymous introduction to Rev Joseph Wilkinson, *Select views in Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire, 1810*

Articles

The Great Exhibition of 1851 and the Story of Mr & Mrs Sandboys

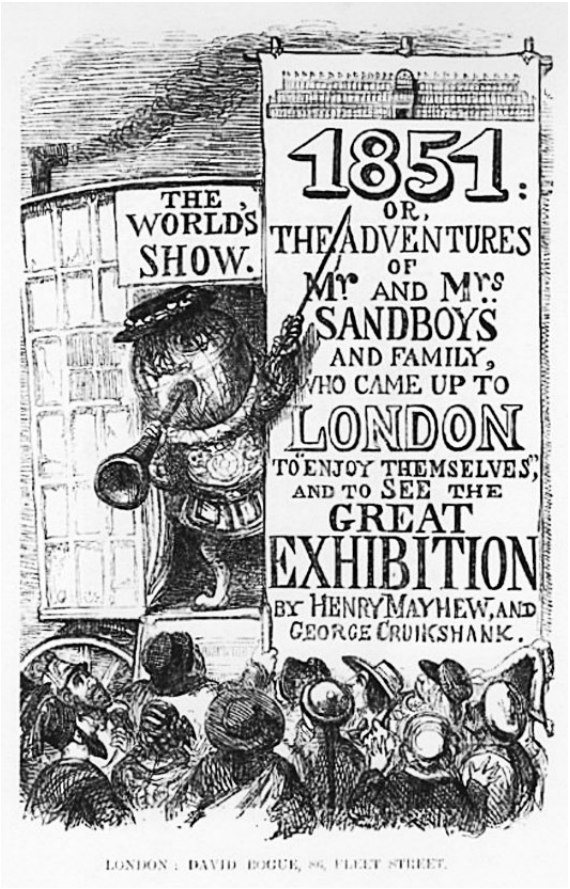
by Gloria Edwards

Henry Mayhew (1812-1887) is most commonly known for his social investigation into the lives of the London poor, portrayed through a series of interviews with people in *London Labour and the London Poor,* 1851. He was, however, a writer of fiction of all kinds. And that same year also saw the publication of a satirical and highly amusing story: *1851: or, The Adventures of Mr and Mrs Sandboys and Family,who Came up to London to 'enjoy themselves,' and to see the Great Exhibition.*

The book was beautifully illustrated by George Cruikshank, a caricaturist, whose satirical style blended perfectly with Mayhew's text. His story describes the Sandboys family, caught up in the national excitement about the Great Exhibition, travelling down from Buttermere in Cumberland. The family encounters one misadventure after another and, ironically, Mr Sandboys arrives just as the Great Exhibition has closed.

So why was there such excitement nationally about visiting an exhibition? The Great Exhibition, which ran from 1 May to 15 October 1851, was planned chiefly to be a celebration and showcase for the industry of Britain and her Empire, but also included displays from other countries. To house it a huge glasshouse was constructed from iron and glass. Known as the Crystal Palace, it stood in Hyde Park, London. The Exhibition – more specifically, 'The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations' - was to be open to people of all classes. The idea for it came originally from Prince Albert, who was heavily involved in the project throughout. Prince Albert was President of the Royal Society of Arts, and the idea for it grew from a smaller exhibition of industrial design. Albert, together with Henry Cole and others in the RSA, developed the idea, and the Great Exhibition was opened by Queen Victoria on 1 May 1851. By the time it

The frontispiece by Cruikshank



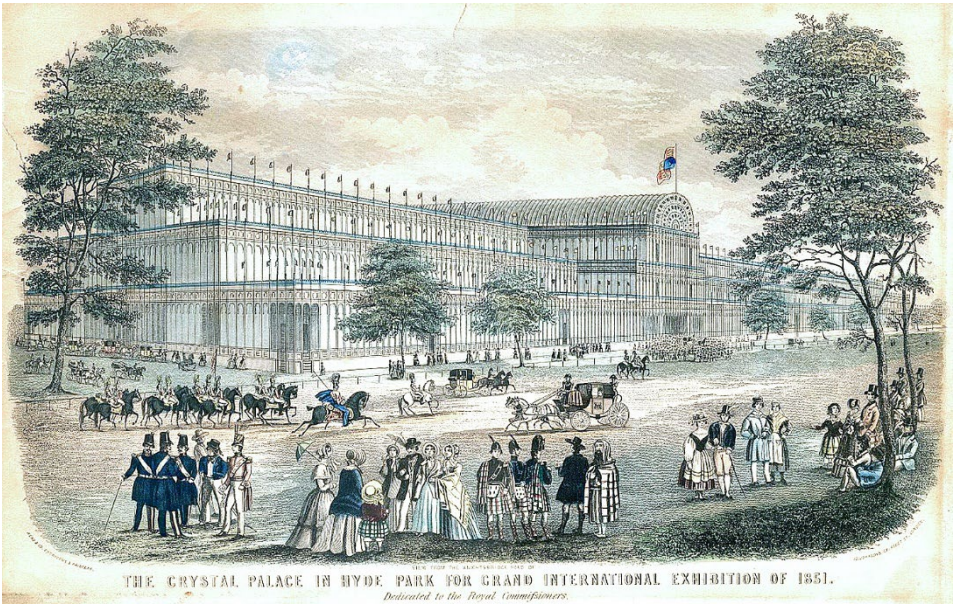


Image: https://britainsbestguides.org/the_crystal_palace_in_hyde_park_for_grand_international_exhibition_of_1851-2/

closed there had been more than six million visitors. They came from all over Britain, and special excursion trains were laid on to ferry factory workers and agricultural workers to view the spectacle.

Henry Mayhew describes how Cursty Sandboys and his wife Aggy, along with daughter Elcy and son Jobby, find themselves travelling to the capital. This fictional family live at Hassness, Buttermere. Cursty is described as having one hundred acres for his sheep, a man contented with his lot. He spends his evenings reading newspapers, learning of the horrors of places outside his beloved part of Cumberland, never having travelled further than Keswick or Cockermouth. He reads about the: 'long catalogues of robberies and murders that filled his London weekly and daily sheets … that all out of Cumberland was in a state of savage barbarism, and that the Metropolis was a very caldron of wickedness'.

All places round about, no matter how small, had their 'shilling clubs', so that people might save to undertake the journey down to London to visit the Exhibition'. Interestingly, Mayhew uses the names of actual families in the Buttermere area in 1851: Fleming, Clarke, Cowman, Nelson are all mentioned, but Sandboys is fictional. Sandboys is an interesting choice of surname for Cursty, and hints at Mayhew's sense of humour: a sandboy in Victorian times was a boy who took sand to establishments such as butchers' shops and alehouses to spread on the floor and soak up blood, beer, etc. It is the origin of the phrase 'happy as a sandboy', surely ironic back then, since sandboys received very little money for hard, physical work, and were often paid partly in ale! Cursty's neighbours all seemed to belong to the Buttermere Travelling Club – but not Cursty, who was determined that neither he nor his family would travel to the 'heart

of darkness' that was the great metropolis. No amount of argument would persuade him otherwise and, on the day appointed, villagers set off to join the Travellers' Train at Cockermouth. In the real Cockermouth of that period the town did not have its passenger station until 1865, so the fictional journey took them from Cockermouth to Workington via goods railway, and then on to Carlisle.

Back in Buttermere life becomes increasingly difficult for the Sandboys' family: with no-one left to ply their trades, supplies of tea, bread, candles, coal and soap are running out; no beer because the Jennings' brewer has gone; the horse needs shoeing but no blacksmith to do the job; shoes are needed desperately for the servant but none available; the 'porker' needs butchering and no-one to attend to that. A series of mishaps, compounded by the effect of Mrs Sandboys' increasingly insistent reproaches and encroaching misery, wear Cursty down and he agrees the family should leave the safety of Buttermere and venture to London, upon the condition that everyone should 'enjoy themselves'. They set off from Cockermouth, accompanied by 'twenty-three packages', for the station at Workington:

> *The journey from Cockermouth to Workington per rail is by no means of an agreeable character. The line being in none of the most flourishing conditions, every means for economizing the 'working expenses' have been resorted to. The men engaged upon it have been cut down to boys; so that the establishment has very much the look of a kind of railway academy, where the porters on the platform are ever playing at marbles or leapfrog, where the policeman all wear pinafores, and where the clerks are taken to the station in the morning, and 'fetched' in the evening by the maids of their anxious parents …*

By the time they reach Carlisle, via Workington, they 'might have been taken for a family of Ethiopian serenaders', so dirty are they having been exposed to the sooty air. More misfortunes are about to unfold as their luggage is loaded on to the London train, whilst they are mistakenly directed to a train for a Holborn Hill in the opposite direction – not in London, but in a part of Cumberland on the banks of the Duddon. They have to wait several hours to get a train back to Carlisle but, because of the lateness of the hour, once on the train they all fall asleep and find themselves in Edinburgh, rather than Carlisle. More tickets are paid for, and they are on a London-bound train (minus their 'packages') and joined in their carriage by a strange gentleman, purporting to be a Metropolitan policeman. He regales them with horror stories about thieves in the capital, completely duping them with his stories. When he leaves the train at Preston, Cursty finds that he no longer has his money or his train tickets! The ticket inspector in Manchester who discovers this promptly has them arrested, but they are saved by a guardian angel at the police station in the form of a police investigator who is a former resident of Buttermere. The family continue their journey, and head for the Bull and Mouth Inn at Holborn Hill, London. The sign on the door heralds yet another calamity: 'The beds here are quite full … .'

The rest of the book outlines a catalogue of woes that befall the family, such that Cursty Sandboys only arrives at the Exhibition when it has closed. It is an entertaining book, written in an amusing style, and may be viewed online free of charge by searching Project Gutenberg. Derek Denman has also written about the real Hassness House in Buttermere: see the August 2019 edition of the *Wanderer* to read about its interesting history.

BANKS & Co., *Greta Pencil and Black-lead Works, Keswick.*—Pencil, penholder, leads, &c.

[*Obtained Exhibitor's Medal*, A.D. 1851.]

The exhibitors are manufacturers of drawing pencils, from the celebrated Borrowdale lead (obtained only in that locality), and every other description of drawing, office, pocket-book, drapers', and carpenters' pencils, penholders, &c., and also of the solid block black-lead for stoves and grates.

BANKS & Co., are the original and only manufacturers of the polished fireproof points or leads, suitable for Perry's, Lund's, Mordan's, or any other pencil-case, of any length or gauge. Pencil manufacturers to Her Majesty the late Queen Adelaide, the King of Saxony, and the King of the Belgians. Established A.D. 1833.

London Warehouse, 21 Cannon Street West.

So what might the fictional Sandboys' family have found in the real Great Exhibition relating to their part of the world? Exhibitors from Cumberland were included in thirteen of the thirty classes: eleven came from Carlisle, five from Whitehaven, three from Workington and two each from Cockermouth, Alston and Maryport, whilst Keswick and Nenthead each sent one exhibit. The classes were:

Class 1 – Mining and Mineral Products
Class 2 – Chemicals
Class 7 – Civil Engineering, Architecture and Building Contrivances
Class 8 – Naval Architecture, Military Engineering, Guns, Weapons, etc.
Class 10 – Philosophical, Musical, Horological, and Surgical Instruments
Class 11 – Cotton
Classes 12 and 15 – Woollen and Worsted (grouped together for administrative purposes)
Class 14 – Flax and Hemp
Class 16 – Leather, Saddlery, and Harness, Skins, Fur, and Hair-finds
Class 18 – Woven, Felted and Laid Fabrics, Dyed and Printed
Class 26 – Furniture, Upholstery, Paper hangings, Papier Mache and Japanned goods
Class 29 – Miscellaneous Manufactures and Small wares

Below are some of the businesses in Cumberland represented at the Great Exhibition:

Keswick was represented by Banks, Son & Co. (Class 1) - founders of the Greta Pencil Works, who showed specimens of pure Cumberland lead and composition used in the manufacture, and pencils in various styles of finish. See the description in the image above. The Company had been founded in 1832 by Joseph Banks, using local graphite found in the sixteenth century. When Joseph died, his wife Ann Banks ran the Company. It was acquired by Hogarth & Hayes in 1894 and became the Cumberland Pencil Company in 1916. They produced the first coloured pencils and the products were later rebranded with the name 'Derwent'. In 2007 the Company moved to new, modern facilities, where pencils are still made under the 'Derwent' brand.

Above: an image of the carving of Ceres exhibited by James Brooker

Adair & Co. of Maryport (Class 1) - Robert Adair was making pencils at Ellen Grove, Maryport in 1847. Additionally, he was a bookseller, bookbinder and stationer, amongst other things, as well as being a black lead pencil manufacturer. He also published the Maryport Advertiser, and later operated from Crosby Street in the town.

James Brooker of Maryport (Class 8) - a highly skilled ship's figurehead designer and carver. Born in Liverpool in 1815, he began working in Maryport in 1842, after serving his apprenticeship with Robertson's of Liverpool. Maryport then had a thriving ship-building business (as did Workington, Whitehaven and Harrington). His design that was exhibited at the Great Exhibition was of Ceres picking up the veil of her daughter Proserpine. Brooker's work was highly spoken of, and he received commissions from shipbuilders in Sunderland too. Sadly, this did not prevent his dying as a pauper in 1860. Maryport Maritime Museum has further information on James Brooker and his work.

From Cockermouth came J Martin (Classes 12 and 15) - inventor, ventilating and waterproof cloth and paper. He had made great improvements in the manufacture of all kinds of cloth and paper, including silk, net, lace, etc. to make them repellent to moisture. The paper was manufactured by I Cropper of Burneside near Kendal.

Below: an advertisement for Harris's flax thread, from Derwent Mills

Jonathan Harris & Sons of Cockermouth (Class 14) - manufacturers of Flax and Hemp, displaying dyed and bleached linen threads. They were major employers in Cockermouth, and at one time had showrooms in London, Manchester and Birmingham. Jonathan (a devout Quaker) began his thread business around 1800 and later bought Low Gote Mill, converting it around 1820 for the weaving of flax. He built Derwent Mills which opened in 1834. The Harris family supported its workforce by creating Bridge Street, and the bridge over the Derwent, to improve access to Derwent Mills. Additionally, the row of terraced houses at the approach to the bridge was built by them for their workers.

The Great Exhibition was closed by Prince Albert on 15th October 1851. The Crystal Palace was re-erected in South London and used for exhibitions, concerts and festivals. Sadly, it was destroyed by fire in 1936. With the profits from the Great Exhibition a new cultural quarter was established in South Kensington, where today stand the V & A, Natural History Museum, the Science Museum and the Royal Albert Hall. It was a highly profitable and influential exhibition, which had a great impact on art and design education, international trade and tourism. It attracted vast numbers of people from all parts of the country, and all walks of life, something which Henry Mayhew maybe wished to illustrate in humorous fashion in his account of the Sandboys' trip to the capital for this major national event.

Acknowledgements

Article by A K Ames, 'Cumberland at the Great Exhibition of 1851' (March 1973)

Article by Christopher Marsden, Senior Archivist, V & A Museum in 'The Gazette'

William Woodville, 1752-1805, Smallpox Pioneer

by Walter Head

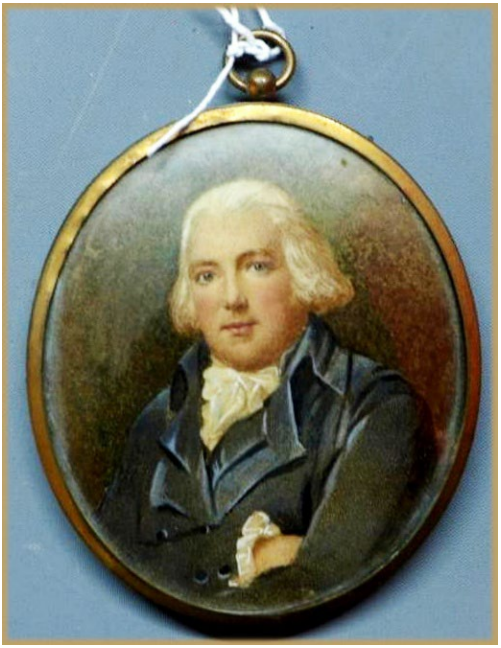
William Woodville was born in 1752 into a wealthy Loweswater Quaker family. William was the fourth of six children and the youngest son of William Woodville Snr and his wife Jane, who lived at Woodville Place, Loweswater. (I think Woodville Place was an alternate name for Hudson Place but I may be wrong about it)*. William's father, William Snr, was born in 1714 at Waterend, Loweswater, and was the son of William's Grandfather, also called William, and Grandmother Sarah who lived at Hudson Place. William Snr married Jane Fearon, who was born in 1723 and was the daughter of Isaac and Mary Fearon who lived at Shatton, Embleton. William Snr died in 1758 and Jane died in 1804.

William snr and his family moved to Papcastle, near Cockermouth, in late 1752 and Woodville Place was sold in 1758 after William snr died.

William was educated at the local Grammar School at Cockermouth and when he left school he was apprenticed to the Apothecary William Birthwhistle, before attending Edinburgh University. He graduated as Doctor of Medicine on 12 September 1775, aged 23 years. He spent time in Europe before returning to Cumberland and then started a medicine practice at Papcastle.

Late on an evening in early January 1778 William Tickell from Papcastle and a friend journeyed to Papcastle to the doctor's practice to see a relation who lived as a maid with the Woodville household. The

*According to Roz Southey, Woodville Place, Hudson Place, and Place, were all names given to the same farmstead at different times. See *Life in old Loweswater*, pp. 124-7 for the wider family and p.74 for the monument. – Ed.



Miniature of a portrait by Abbot of William Woodville, MD,FRS,FLS, 1752–1805, Physician & Botanist, source Wikipedia

After leaving Cumberland, William went to Denbigh in North Wales and practised there for a short time before moving to Ely Place in London in 1782. On 9 August 1784 William became Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians of London. He served as secretary of the Medical Society of London in 1784 and 1785. William had taken an interest in the prevention and treatment of Smallpox. On 17 March 1791 he was Physician to the Smallpox Inoculation Hospital at St Pancras. William was an accomplished botanist and acquired two acres of ground owned by the hospital which he maintained at his own expense as a botanical garden. He published a medical botany catalogue of plants, and was the author of three volumes on medical botany between 1790 and 1794.

occupiers of the house had retired to bed, and the men knocked on the door and windows without any answers. William Woodville thought that the men were robbers and discharged a gun though awindow into the garden, the lead shot from the gun hit William Tickell in the left side of the stomach which killed him at the scene. William Woodville was of the opinion that the death of William Tickell was a tragic accident. A formal Coroner's Inquest was held on 10 January 1778 and the jury disagreed with William Woodville and returned a verdict of wilful murder against William Woodville. William left the district and left a letter intimating that he would surrender him to justice at the next assizes. The Coroner said that William had absconded. The Coroner said that William Tickell had been an honest and industrial man. William Woodville was disowned by the local Quakers in 1782.

The earliest physical evidence of Smallpox in people was found in the Egyptian mummies who died some 3,000 years ago. In William's time it was estimated that approximately 25 per-cent of people suffering from smallpox died, and that many of the victims who survived had lost toes and had serious scars.

In the late 1700s it was noted that dairymaids who were infected with milder cow pox from cows' udders were protected from getting smallpox. William was interested in the work of Edward Jenner, 1748-1823, on the vaccination for the prevention of smallpox using material from cow pox. William carried out his own tests and research but he did not have the success of Jenner. By this time he was an advocate of inoculation to eliminate smallpox. In the eighteenth century smallpox was a major cause of mortality in France. In spite of the prevailing French Revolution, William Woodville took the Jenner discovery to France with the

backing of Napoleon Bonaparte. He performed the first vaccination at the coastal city of Boulogne sur Mer on 19 June 1800, before travelling to Paris to carry out further vaccinations during the following months. The vaccinations were a success and Napoleon insisted that all his troops were inoculated. William kept records of all his patients. There are two statues at Boulogne sur Mer, one of Edward Jenner and the other of William Woodville.

William Woodville died on 26 March 1805 of a chronic pulmonary complaint, aged 58 years, and was buried in the Friends Burial Ground at Bunhill Fields on 4 April 1805. George Fox, 1624-1691, the founder of the Religious of Friends, (Quakers) is buried there. A portrait of William Woodville by Lemuel Abbott is in the Smallpox Hospital , St Pancras, London.

William Woodville should be given credit for establishing vaccinations on a large scale as a safe and effective protective measure against smallpox. Because of his work the last recorded case of smallpox occurred in 1977 in Somalia, and the World Health Organization declared Smallpox eradicated worldwide in 1980.

Monument to Edward Jenner in Boulonge-sur-Mer, source *https://e-monumen.net/patrimoine-monumental/monument-a-edward-jenner-boulogne-sur-mer/*

Translation

William Woodville

Doctor from the London smallpox hospital brought Jenner's discovery to the French people despite the state of war and performed the first innoculations in Boulogne-sur-Mer on 27 Prairial Year VIII [19 June 1800]. The vaccine collected by Dr Nowel was sent to Paris where Woodville inoculated it again in Thermidor following.