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Society News

Our Next Talk 13 November

'The great enchantress: Ann Radcliffe's 1794 tour of the Lakes'

Ann Radcliffe (1764–1823), was an immensely popular novelist in her day who introduced the Gothic novel to England. Contemporary critics called her a "mighty enchantress". She inspired later authors, including Jane Austen, Mary Shelley and Lord Byron.

At the height of her fame, she published the account of her tour of the Lakes undertaken in 1794. **Dr Penny Bradshaw**, of the University of Cumbria, who edited the recent publication of Ann Radcliffe's *Observations during a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland*



Dr Penny Bradshaw

and Cumberland, describes it as an important stepping-stone in the journey from picturesque tourism to Wordsworth's development of a poetics of place from 1799 onwards. Though *Observations* has been marginalised within subsequent accounts of Lakes literature, it was well-known in the Romantic period. It informed both John Keats and Thomas De Quincey's expectations about the region prior to their own encounters with this landscape. Penny Bradshaw considers the ways in which *Observations* contributes to developing ideas about the cultural significance of the Lake District.

In a recently filmed re-enacting of historic Lake District ascents, Dr Bradshaw took on the role of Ann Radcliffe ascending Skiddaw on horseback (she rode as far as Latrigg).

Our future programme 2025/6

13 Nov 2025	'The great enchantress: Ann Radcliffe's 1794 tour of The Lakes'.	Dr Penny Bradshaw
05 Mar 2026	'Cumbria's first farmers' [Neolithic].	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

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Diary date

25 November – **Archaeology in the Lake District 2025**, a full day conference organised by the Lake District National Park. At the Percival Lecture Theatre, University of Cumbria Ambleside Campus, LA22 9BB. £16
<https://lakedistrict.gov.uk/learning/archaeologyhistory/archaeologyconference>

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

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<http://derwentfells.com> <https://facebook.com/Lortonlocalhistorysociety>
L&DFLHS Archive: <https://derwentfells.org.uk>

Message from the chair

Dear members,

Welcome to the November edition of The Wanderer, which includes a diverse range of subjects from Stuart Heatherington's article on Stephen Martin, auctioneer, to Lena Stanley-Clamp's piece on the Lorton based artist Marjorie Arnfield and her family; from Sheena Denwood with her very interesting article on the Brew Family of Lorton and Cockermouth to a collection of photographs from the 1980s of Paul and Jean Eurich and the Low Lorton shop.

I'd like to offer my thanks to our last speaker, the archaeologist Bruce Bennison, for September's excellent talk entitled 'Clouties and Mud, Long Meg Stone Circle and Birdoswald Roman Fort', for which Tim Stanley-Clamp has provided the talk report for this month's Wanderer. The evening was very well attended both in the hall and online, and I would like to thank my fellow committee members and our volunteers for making the evening such a success.

I'm also happy to report that around twenty of our members joined me on a walk around Whitehaven in October, which shed light on its fascinating history as a port and a mining town and some of the characters that lived, worked and raided there (John Paul Jones - I'm sure his mother liked him!). There is much more to Whitehaven to uncover than can be achieved in an hour and a half, so we were barely able to scratch the surface of the town's story, but it certainly whet my appetite to learn more and I hope that one day we'll get the opportunity to discover more of the town's industrial history.

I'd like to record my appreciation, on behalf of the Society to the staff of The Beacon Museum in Whitehaven for organising this event, and one of our members, Ian Baines, has kindly offered

to write up the trip report for our February edition, for which thanks.

Next week, members of the Society will have the opportunity to take photographs of selected documents from the Leconfield Archives at Cockermouth Castle. We very much appreciate Lord Egremont allowing us access to this precious resource and the ongoing support of the archivist, Alison McCann and the curator, Andy Loukes.

Lena Stanley-Clamp, our Secretary, has put together an exciting schedule of talks for 2026, which is covered on page 4 of this edition, and our last talk of this year, by Dr Penny Bradshaw, will be on 13th November at our usual venue and on Zoom.



Finally, I'm very happy to report that in recognition of Charles Lambrick's ten years of service as Society Chair, the committee unanimously agreed to offer him honorary membership, which he was pleased to accept.

Look forward to seeing you on the 13th.

Andrew

Introducing the 2026 Talk programme

'Cumbria's First Farmers', 5 March

Around 6,000 years ago, the way of life for people living in Cumbria changed dramatically. Hunting, gathering and living in the natural environment were replaced by farming and the alteration of the landscape. 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** is the President of CWAAS and former CEO of Oxford Archaeology.

'Border Fortress: The Turbulent History of Carlisle Castle', 14 May

Carlisle Castle's bulky sandstone keep still lowers over the city it was built to defend some nine centuries ago. This talk shines a spotlight on the turbulent heritage of one of the most besieged places in the Britain, highlighting the vital role it played in both local and national history and bringing its dramatic past to life. **Dr Maksymilian Loth-Hill** has given talks to our society before, notably on Border Reivers and the Dacre Family.

'Artists and Prints: Cumbria Illustrated in Early 19th Century Prints', 11 June

Developments in printing techniques, including engraving and lithography, made mass reproduction of artworks possible. Prints quickly became popular with the artists and the public. **Dr Michael Winstanley**, formerly of Lancaster University, will present the 19th century artists who depicted Cumberland in

prints. He will show examples local to our area with a focus on Thomas Allom among others.

'In search of Arctic Wonders: Cumbria and the Arctic in the 18th and 19th Centuries', 10 September

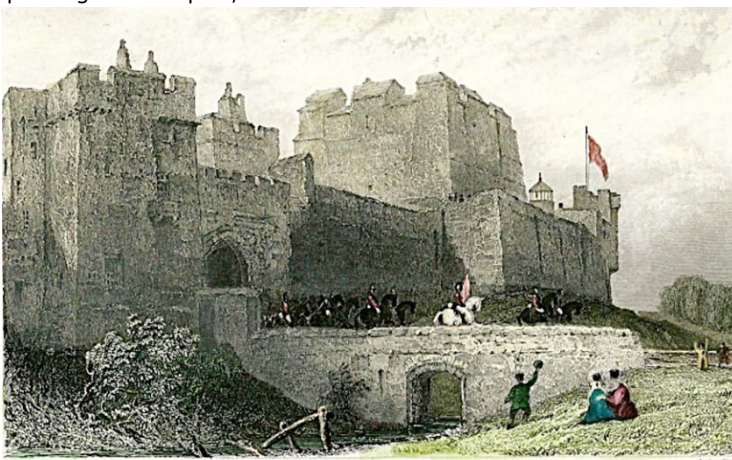
Dr Rob David will range widely over Arctic exploration investigating the role of Skeffington Lutwidge of Holmrook Hall in the North Polar Expedition of 1773, the adventures of the Yellow Earl, the roles of Sir John Barrow in promoting Arctic exploration while at the Admiralty, and of Sir John Richardson and Sir John Franklin in their search for the North-West Passage, as well as other Cumbrians involved in amazing adventures in the Arctic.

'A History of Slate Quarrying in The Lake District', 19 November

Mark Hatton from The Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society will present the story of the formation, quarrying and use of the Lake District's extensive slate deposits. An industry that shaped Cumbrian landscape and local lives for centuries. Just 65 years ago more people worked in the Lake District's Quarrying industries than worked in Tourism.

Lena Stanley-Clamp

Carlisle Castle by Thomas Allom



CARLISLE CASTLE, CUMBERLAND.

Meeting Reports

Talk: 'Clouties and Mud: Long Meg Stone Circle and Birdoswald Roman Fort', 18 September 2025

Archaeologist Bruce Bennison delivered a fascinating and well-received talk to our audience about new discoveries and insights from recent excavations at two of the most important archaeological sites in Cumbria – the stone circle we know as Long Meg and Her Daughters and the Birdoswald Roman Fort on Hadrian's wall.

The talk began with slides which gave us an overview of the time scales involved. Long Meg is some 3000 years older than the Birdoswald fort and the starting point for her story is some 2500 years earlier than that. The earliest Neolithic farmers we know of were present in the far south east of the continent some 8000 years ago, say approximately 6000 BCE. Over the course of the next three thousand years they migrated north west, bringing knowledge of the new technology with them. It is not clear whether this was done through conquest and replacement or through the more peaceable means of co-existence and sharing of

knowledge. The DNA of the migrants is more commonly found than that of the hunter gatherer groups, which points to appropriation of the land by the incomers, but the real picture may be more complex as farming was able to support significantly larger populations. The debate continues.

The talk moved on to the stone circles built by the farming peoples, first with a discussion of Avebury with its huge circular ditch, posing a question which would recur – were the circles meant to keep people outside or shelter them within their boundaries?

Monuments in the Penrith area – Bruce Bennison





A slide showing how common stone circles were in the north and west of the country also raised intriguing questions. Quite why none were built or have left no trace east of a line heading due north from what is now Dorset up to Aberdeen is puzzling, especially as the record of axe finds suggests very strongly that the communities in the eastern half of the country were populous and active.

We were shown the tools used in the construction of the monuments, as well as in the everyday work of growing crops and homesteads. The farmers used stone axes, produced in industrial quantities in Langdale, found at hundreds of sites across the country – only the Scottish Highlands and the Welsh mountains have no finds. One miracle of preservation was shown on screen, with its wooden handle still attached and intact.

Cumbria has the surviving remains of as many stone circles as anywhere in Britain apart from North East Scotland in the agricultural land between Aberdeen and the Highland mountains. Long Meg is the best known and the most imposing of this region's monuments, standing about three miles north east of Penrith. Long Meg herself is made of the local red sandstone while her

Long Meg – photo by Bruce Bennison



A view of Birdoswald Roman fort – photo from English Heritage

‘daughters’ represent a variety of rock types of different colours brought here from different locations. This suggests that the circle was constructed at least in part to provide a focal point for the dispersed local people, as well as the likelihood that the circle was used for astrological purposes. Many of the stones are marked with spirals similar to those found in many other places in the British Isles and Ireland.

Bruce Bennison concluded this part of his talk with an account of the important archaeological work carried out at the site in 2015 which investigated the enclosure to the north, visible now thanks to modern aerial photography which remained hidden for many centuries. The circle itself was constructed in 3100 BC while the enclosure is several centuries older,

perhaps as old as 3900 BC. The dig uncovered artefacts made of material from faraway places, Langdale, Yorkshire and Arran which are very likely to be associated with the older enclosure rather than the circle. The relationship between the two is far from fully understood and provides an incentive for further work.

The second half of the talk moved on 3000 years to the Roman period and Hadrian’s Wall. Birdoswald Fort was a large military base at the furthest northern limit of the Roman Empire, manned by as many as 800 soldiers recruited from what is now Romania, the Cohors Aelia Dacorum. The fort was occupied for at least 500 years.

It was served by a civilian settlement – the vicus – which was built outside the walls of the fort itself. Here were markets, tradesmen and amenities, all supporting the daily life of the garrison. Its archaeological story was first taken up in 1929 by Sir Ian Richmond who led an



excavation which lasted for three years until 1932. He discovered an outbuilding in the grounds, *'A good building, twenty feet square with three-foot walls.....A drain seemed to lead away from it.... but rain compelled us to leave (its) investigation unfinished.'*

The mystery was left unsolved until a geophysical survey was carried out in 1997 which revealed the settlement's buried layout in hitherto inaccessible detail. Some twenty years later a working group, led by Tony Wilmott of Historic England and including Bruce Bennison, was set up to complete the work which Sir Ian Richmond had been forced to abandon. An enthusiastic and hard-working team made up of students recruited from Newcastle University gradually uncovered the remains of a fully equipped bath house with its furnace and

The excavated area of the bath house and hypercaust – photo Rob Collins

highly complex drainage systems. We were shown photographs of the emerging structures and were able to share in some of the excitement the workers must have felt as they uncovered the history which had been hidden for so long.

This account of the three-year project, with its detailed description of the unfolding discoveries, gave the audience an inspiring insight into the excitement of archaeological research, an experience which was shared by the young people getting involved for the first time.

Tim Stanley-Clamp

Articles

Stephen Martin, auctioneer of Lorton, 1761-1853, and his wider family

by Stuart Heatherington

Acknowledgements

This article has been developed in collaboration with direct descendants of Stephen Martin, in particular Judy Rosmus who lives in British Columbia and Nicola Thwaite who lives more locally in the UK. My interest in the Martin family arises from researching the ancestors of my sister-in-law, whose four times great grandfather was Stephen Martin. May I also acknowledge the considerable help and advice Derek Denman has given me in providing photographs, related local knowledge and general guidance on the article's content.

Introduction

To many people living in or near Lorton, and interested in its history, the name of auctioneer Stephen Martin may be familiar. Perhaps less well-known is that

some of his relatives also made lasting contributions to the history and industry both of the Lorton and Cockermouth area, and indeed further afield from India to Australasia to North America. The lives of his relatives reveal contributions perhaps not previously appreciated.

Stephen Martin: 1761-1853

Born in 1761, Stephen Martin died aged 91 in 1853 and had, as reported in a newspaper article in 1847, originally trained as a shoemaker, before becoming an auctioneer:

There are now living at Lorton, near Cockermouth, two men, whose united ages amount to one hundred and eighty-five years, namely, Mr William Jennings, ninety-eight, and Mr Stephen Martin, eighty-seven, the latter of whom is strong, in excellent health, and following the laborious occupation of breaking stones. It may further be worthy of notice, that the gentleman of 87 served an apprenticeship to a shoe-maker, with the venerable worthy of 98, upwards of seventy years ago!¹

Park Cottage in High Lorton in 1994, birthplace of Stephen Martin.



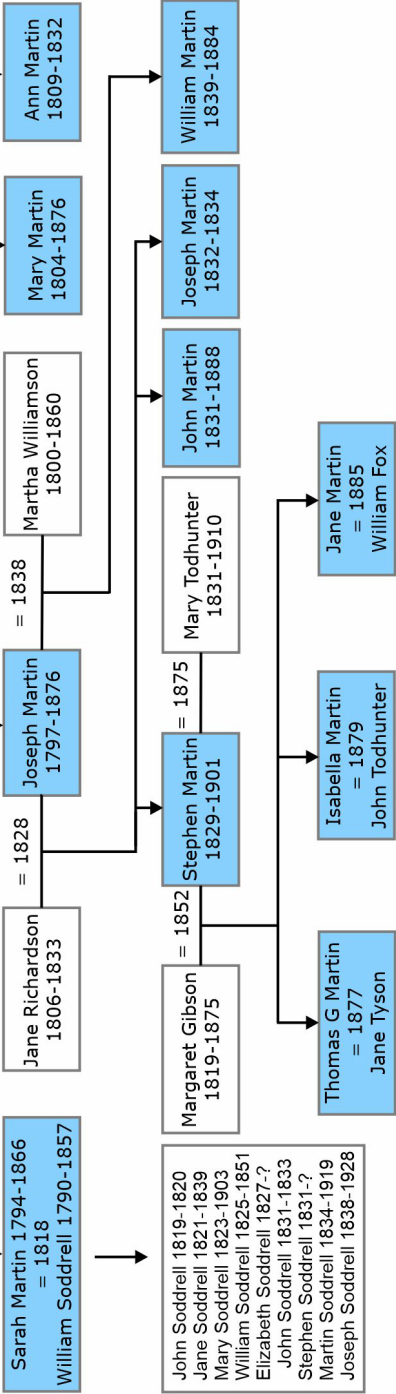
¹ *Cumberland Pacquet and Ware's Whitehaven Advertiser*, 30 Nov 1847 page 3 of 4

William Martin ?-1762
= 1724
Jane Woodcock 1698-1771

Moses Martin 1726-1799
= 1752
Mary Thompson 1723-1812

Stephen Martin 1762-1853
= 1793
Jane Rawling 1764-1841

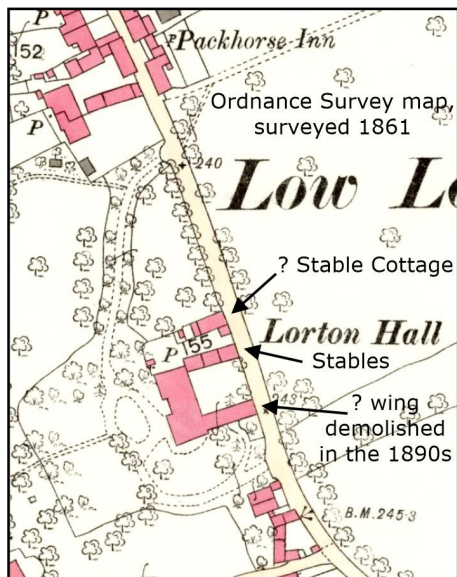
Stephen Martin of Lorton
family connections



*On the morrow Stephen took out his
licence, and continued so to do*

Stephen Martin died in the year 1853, aged 92 years. He resided in one cottage fifty years; it forms part of Lorton Hall, and to the passer by is easily distinguished, as the gable faces the street, having no other piercing than the door, which is first on the right from Mr Churnside's Inn.²

Stephen Martin was renting his 'cottage and shop' from the Lorton Hall Estate from before 1811, for £1 10s per annum.³ The gable referred to above, and annotated on the 1861 map below, might be the present Stable Cottage, which was the first building past the Churnside's Pack Horse



² John Askew, *A Guide To The Interesting Places In And Around Cockermouth*, 1866, pp.40-2.

³ TNA/C 101/5337 Accounts of Bragg v Wilkinson in Chancery, schedule 3.

Inn, or conceivably the old south wing of Lorton Hall, demolished in the 1890s.

An earlier generation.

Stephen Martin's parents were Moses Martin and Mary Thompson who married in 1752. Moses Martin was left a legacy by his uncle Joseph Woodcock in a will dated 1765.⁴ Analysis of the will identifies other nephews and nieces that in turn help to establish the siblings of Moses, and their families. Joseph Woodcock's sister Jane married a William Martin in 1724 and this taken together with the will suggests that this is Moses Martin's family, the father of Stephen Martin. Moses Martin, born in 1726, would have been the eldest son of William Martin and his wife Jane née Woodcock. The name Moses has a strong biblical derivation as do those of his brothers and sisters who had names including Mary, Joshua, Caleb, Aaron, Martha and Elizabeth.

It is Moses's youngest sister Elizabeth who gives us the first example of a noteworthy member of Stephen Martin's wider family. Elizabeth Martin was the wife of Fletcher Hayes and the mother of Commodore Sir John Hayes.⁵ Whilst not having a Martin surname Commodore Sir John Hayes was, through his mother a first cousin of Stephen Martin. He is remembered within the context of the powerful and influential East India Company and his military career is well documented. Less well known are his activities as an explorer and in particular his role in establishing an enduring connection between Cumbria and far off Tasmania.

In mapping the island of Tasmania and naming many of its features John Hayes named the river running through Hobart

The River Derwent and the mountain range behind Hobart as Skiddaw, both reflecting the county of his birth.⁶ The river's name remains today whilst the Skiddaw name for the mountain range was never widely accepted. To quote his biography: 'As an explorer he is unknown and as a navigator unrecognised. The fact that the name of Derwent was given to the river on which Hobart now stands, by him, is seldom mentioned'.

Stephen Martin's family

Stephen married Jane Rawling in 1793 at Lorton and it is known that the couple had four children, Sarah (1794-1866), Joseph (1797-1876), Mary (1804-1876), and Ann (1809-1832). Little can be said of their youngest daughter Ann as she died in 1832 at the young age of 23.

The Soddrells. Stephen's eldest daughter, Sarah married William Soddrell in 1818, and when Stephen died in 1853 Sarah Soddrell was the informant on his death certificate. Her husband's career illustrates yet another connection between the Martin family and the history of the local area.

'Mr Sorrel' was referred to in a lecture given by John Bolton in 1891, and transcribed in 2015 by Joan Head.⁷ John Bolton, referring to the old school room, explained, 'The Master was Mr Sorrel, & he lodged with Anthony Garnett. He afterwards married ? Martin, a daughter of Stephen Martin, Auctioneer'.

William Soddrell was born in Cockermouth. He had a short military career and a comment in the obituary of a Mr Robinson dated 1908 read 'Mr Robinson gained the elements of his

⁴ PROB - Wills and administrations - 1548-19411766 - Diocese of Carlisle wills, letters of administration and associated probate documents for 1766-1766 PROB/1766/W697 Title: Will of Joseph Woodcock, yeoman, of Tallentire, Bridekirk, Cumberland.

⁵ *Commodore Sir John Hayes: His Voyage and Life*, Ida Lee, Longman's Green and Co 1912;

⁶ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-25/history-of-place-names-in-tasmania/9570242>

⁷ Archived on www.derwentfells.org.uk



Lorton School, first built in 1809 and later extended

education at the Lorton Endowed School then kept by William Soddrell a retired soldier who had been in the Walcheren Expedition.⁸ William Soddrell's military record gives his occupation as shoe maker as do the 1841 and 1851 census records

The Soddrells lived first at Birkett House, which was also rented from the Lorton Hall Estate.⁹ John, Jane, and Mary were born there by 1823, after which the Soddrells moved into the village, being at High Lorton between 1825 and 1834. By 1838 the Soddrell family had moved to Papcastle.

Their daughter, Mary Soddrell, emigrated with her husband John Gibson to America. Two other sons, Martin and Joseph Soddrell followed their sister Mary by emigrating to America where they all carved out successful lives recognised by the communities in which they lived. One

of Joseph Soddrell's sons, born in Missouri, America was baptised with the name Lorton Martin Soddrell, a clear reference to the family's origins, both in name and location. Once more, a familiar Cumbrian family name, Soddrell, became established in America but can be recognised to be explicitly linked to Cumberland, Lorton and Stephen Martin's close family.

Joseph Martin. The only son of auctioneer Stephen and Jane was Joseph Martin, born in 1797. Joseph was a lifelong resident of Lorton and in the census records from 1841 to 1871 his occupation was variously described as agricultural labourer, shop-keeper, grocer, servant, and finally labourer. Joseph was married twice, as his and Stephen Martin's grave marker at St Cuthbert's, Lorton, records:

⁸ Maryport Advertiser 06 January 1900 page 6 of 8; The Walcheren Expedition was an ill-fated expedition in 1809 to Walcheren in North

Holland where more soldiers died of disease than being killed in battle

⁹ TNA/C 101/5337 Accounts of Bragg v Wilkinson in Chancery, schedule 3.

In/ memory/ of/ Stephen Martin,/ who died Feby 1st, 1853, aged 91 years/ Jane his wife died June 11 1841,/ aged 77 years./ Ann their daughter, died March 22/ 1832 aged 23 years./ Mary their daughter, died May 23rd 1876/ aged 71 years./ The valued friend & / (faithful) servant of the late Mrs. Skelton,/ of Papcastle for 45 years./ Jane the wife of Joseph Martin, of Lorton,/ who died Feby 6th 1832, aged 30 years./ Joseph their son who died Dec. 20th/ 1833, aged 15 months./ Martha his second wife who died Decr 18th/ 1860, aged 60 years./ Also the above Joseph Martin, who died/ Decr 18th 1876, aged 79 years.¹⁰

Widowed at age 33, Joseph married again in 1838. He and his second wife Martha Williamson had one son, William, born in 1839, who worked as a joiner but never married. The 1881 census shows William living with his half-brother Stephen but three years later it seems his fortunes had changed and he died in 1884 in the Union Workhouse at Cockermouth aged 45.

Mary Martin. Stephen's daughter Mary, never married, but was a faithful servant to Maria Skelton, the army widow of Major Henry Skelton of the 19th Lancers. Maria Skelton was from Dublin where she married, but her husband was from the Skelton family of Papcastle. The respect Maria Skelton had for her servant Mary is epitomised by a family bible she gave to Mary that includes the inscription, 'A token of regard from Mrs Skelton to her faithful servant Mary Martin Feb 23 1842'.

Subsequently the family bible was passed down the generations to Stephen's great-granddaughter Isabella Martin (of whom

more a little later) and when Isabella with her husband John Todhunter emigrated to British Columbia in Canada the bible went with them.¹¹ The bible contains details of the family lineage, preserving their legacy and connecting their new life in Canada with their roots in Cumberland.

Maria Skelton died on May 5 1876 and less than three weeks later, on May 23 1876 her servant Mary Martin died. Unusually for a gravestone Mary's father Stephen's grave marker explains that Mary was a 'valued friend and faithful servant of some 45 years of the late Maria Skelton' of Papcastle.

Stephen Martin's grandson Stephen Martin 1829-1901

The family of Stephen's grandson, Joseph's eldest son, also called Stephen Martin born in 1829, presents a complex spider's web of relationships. He was married twice and with his first wife, Margaret Gibson, he had three children. After Margaret died in 1875, in the same year Stephen married widow Mary Fox née Todhunter.¹² Mary Fox's eldest son John Todhunter, born before his mother was first married, was to marry Stephen's eldest daughter Isabella, and Mary's second son William Fox was to marry Stephen's second daughter Jane. This meant that Stephen's two daughters had a step-mother who was also their mother-in-law. Similarly Stephen's two step-sons were also his sons-in-law, and two step-sons married their two step-sisters!

Isabella Martin's husband, (also her step-brother), John Todhunter was a mining engineer and in the early years of their marriage he worked in the Brigham area. The family then moved to Anglesey but in 1893 John Todhunter sailed to Canada leaving his wife and children back in

¹⁰ Archived on www.derwentfells.org.uk

¹¹ Details provided by Judy Rosmus, a direct descendant of Stephen Martin who lives in British Columbia

¹² An amusing nominative deterministic aside on names arises from Mary Todhunter (Tod being a fox) meaning that Mary "Foxhunter" who married a William Fox "caught her man."

Brigham. It was seven years before the family could afford to be reunited. Taking the family bible, referred to earlier, with her, Isabella travelled with her children from Brigham to Liverpool, then sailed to Montreal followed by a long train journey to their new home in British Columbia. John was by then manager of a set of coke ovens. The family home in Elko, British Columbia, was known as Cumberland House in Carlisle Avenue, a reminder of home memories some 5000 miles from their original home in Cumberland. The family flourished in British Columbia and Isabella was described as an ardent church worker and a devoted member of the Church of England: a clear example of the diaspora of the Martin family of Lorton albeit under the name of Todhunter.

Stephen Martin's grandson John Martin 1831-1886

Another of Stephen Martin's grandsons, John Martin, was the second son of Joseph Martin. Born in 1831 John was to work as a farm servant in the 1851 and 1861 census records and described as a husbandman on his marriage certificate in 1867 when he married Mary Jane Mounsey. By the time of the 1871 census he was a mason's labourer and by 1881 he was a pit labourer at St Helen's Colliery Workington. Did John's life story add to the local history? Sadly - yes.

Tragedy struck in 1888 when there was a massive pit explosion at St Helen's Colliery. John, aged 58, was the oldest victim of this tragedy, leaving a widow and five children. Many press reports were written about the disaster both at the time and subsequently with the coroner's inquest into the tragedy. The 1888 Mines Inspector's Annual Report noted that, 'On the 19th April 1888, shortly after 8 p.m., an explosion occurred at Saint Helen's Colliery, in the county of Cumberland,

causing the deaths of 30 men and injuries to three others'.¹³

The five children left fatherless were aged from five to twenty and all were girls. Despite the tragedy of their father's death all but the eldest daughter married coal miners. Then all five of the daughters, with their husbands and families, moved from Cumberland to north-east England.

John Martin's eldest daughter Mary, Stephen Martin's great granddaughter, married Joseph Bell in 1889. Through their marriage a final rather tenuous familial connection can be claimed between the family of Stephen Martin, the auctioneer and his friend William Jennings the maltster. Joseph Bell's uncle, George Bell (1826-1896) was married to Grace Jennings (1816-1903) who in turn was the youngest daughter of John Jennings (1782-1876) the founder of the famous Lake District Brewery Jennings and the granddaughter of William Jennings the maltster.

Conclusion

Researching family history can often prove inconsequential but surprises do occur. Examples from Stephen Martin and his extended family are no exception, ranging from everyday life in 19th century Lorton, through complicated intermarriages, to fascinating involvement with national and international events as they unfolded. Names familiar to long established Cumbrian families include Hayes, Todhunter, Soddrell, and Jennings, as well as Martin itself, and many are entwined. Indeed researching families' backgrounds is often so entwined with local history that bringing the two together becomes a fascinating exploration of wider interest than the initial quest to know more about one's own family histories: other Martins, other histories.

¹³ www.dmm.org.uk/reports/r1888-01.htm

The artist Marjorie Arnfield and her family remembered

by Lena Stanley-Clamp

Marjorie Arnfield was at an early stage of her artistic career when she came to live in Lorton with her husband and their young sons Robin and Nick in 1962. The rural and industrial landscapes of Cumbria would inspire many of her works over the years. She became best known for her mining art which portrayed the demise of the mining communities of Nottinghamshire.

Marjorie Arnfield was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1930. Her father Dr K. V. Milburn was a GP and her mother Helen Milburn was a nurse. Marjorie grew up in Sunderland where her paternal grandfather and uncles were well-known architects responsible for many public buildings in the North of England. Marjorie was struck by juvenile chronic arthritis at the age of four and suffered from this condition for much of her life. But she never let her illness limit what she wanted to do.

Marjorie Arnfield at an exhibition



She attended Sunderland College of Art and King's College at Durham University. Her tutors included eminent British artists Lawrence Gowing and Victor Passmore as well as art historian Quentin Bell. After obtaining design and art teacher's diplomas she returned to teach at her old school in Sunderland. She would later teach in the adult education departments of Nottingham and Glasgow Universities, as well as Cumbria and Nottinghamshire Adult Education Authorities, the WEA, the Maryport Educational Settlement, the art room at King's College, Cambridge, and painting schools in Britain and abroad.¹

The Arnfield family in Cumbria

Marjorie's husband Ronald Arnfield (1927-2006) was born in Leeds. His parents were German Jewish immigrants to the UK. After graduating with a first-class degree from Leeds University he worked in the chemical engineering industry. The couple met in 1956 on a beach in Menton where Marjorie was successfully wooed by Ron's sense of humour. Eleven weeks later Ron proposed by a tarn in the Langdale Pikes. The first years of their married life were spent in Cheshire and were marked by the birth of their first son Robin, the resurgence of Marjorie's juvenile arthritis, and financial difficulties.

It was Ron's new job - teaching a course in chemical engineering at Whitehaven Technical College to graduate chemists working at Sellafield - that brought the family to Cumbria in 1960.

After initially living in Greysouthen, during which time their son Nick was born, the family came to live in Lorton. They rented the picturesque Kirkfell Cottage; it was a small home

¹ Art UK
<https://artuk.org/discover/artists/arnfield-marjorie-19302001>



Kirkfell Cottage, Lorton, 1970s

with very basic amenities. Ron and Marjorie bought a building plot in an idyllic location in Braithwaite and moved there in 1963 after the new house was built. Marjorie continued to paint local scenes

and exhibit her work as well as teach part-time art classes to adults.

The Arnfields and their children remained in Cumbria until 1966 when Ron was offered a position at Strathclyde University and they moved – in Marjorie's case reluctantly – to Scotland. They settled for a few years in Drymen, near Loch Lomond, and Marjorie continued to teach as well as paint and exhibit.

They built a holiday home in Applethwaite in the late 1970s and Marjorie would paint there until the end of her life. She was drawn to scenes of Cumbria's industrial heritage and its natural landscapes. Her last exhibition in

'The Haig Pit' – exhibited at the Beacon Museum, Whitehaven



the county was held at the Upfront Gallery in Hutton in the Forest in October-November 2000 and was devoted to works inspired by the Cumbrian poet Norman Nicholson.

Nottinghamshire, a new chapter

The Arnfields uprooted again in 1969 when Ron was appointed Director of Industrial Liaison at Nottingham University. They made their home in Westhorpe, Southwell. In 1980 Marjorie became a part-time tutor in the Department of Continued Education at Nottingham University and remained in that post until 2000. In her classes she combined the teaching of the history and practice of art, a new approach in art adult education at the time. She was a talented teacher who knew how to encourage and inspire.²

Despite debilitating health problems – two spine operations, knee replacements and polymyalgia rheumatica – Marjorie's career continued to flourish. This was achieved with the assistance of Ron who acted as her 'art roadie' as he termed it – a general helper with her classes and busy exhibition schedule. 'After my retirement in 1992, I was able to repay Marjorie for her support with my own career' – he wrote.³

The Nottinghamshire years were a very creative time in Marjorie's life. She and Ron travelled extensively in the South of France, Spain, Greece and Italy on working holidays where she would paint *en plein air* alongside a group of her students. She was inspired by the Mediterranean light and landscapes. In an interview for *Artists & Illustrators* (1998) she described her palette in those paintings as 'colours that sing'.⁴ In a

catalogue for an exhibition in Newark in 1996, Arnfield wrote of her passion for the Mediterranean and the images she saw and felt. Her style of painting was reminiscent of post-impressionists. She was at ease with a variety of media: acrylic, oil and watercolour. A review in the *Guardian* of an earlier exhibition in 1964 commented on 'a series of broad, fell country watercolours held together by a lyrical and febrile line' and said that she seemed 'most readily at home when, with pen and wash, she follows in the tradition of Raoul Duffy and John Paddy Carstairs'.

Mining art

It was for her mining art that Marjorie Arnfield achieved a national reputation. She had been fascinated by scenes from the North-East mining villages during her student years in Sunderland in the 1950s when she produced a series of sketches of miners gathering sea coal along the beach. In the 1990s, distressed by the closures of coal mines and impending privatization of the British coal industry, she decided to record the work of the miners and the way of life of their communities. She visited collieries, even descending underground in a wheelchair. She took inspiration from the stories of D.H. Lawrence and used archival photographs as a source. As the pits closures accelerated, she recorded scenes of demolition.

An exhibition of these works was held in 1994 at Nottingham University under the title *Coal Mining in Nottinghamshire – A Tribute* honouring all those who dedicated their lives to the mining industry. The exhibition was sponsored by the British Coal Board. It was a great success that attracted much press coverage. Reviews

² Joanne Wright in the Introduction to *Marjorie Arnfield, A Celebration of her Life and Work*, Nottingham University, 2001.

³ Ron Arnfield, 'Marfie and Me – A Forty-Year Partnership' in *Marjorie Arnfield, A Celebration of her Life and Work*.

⁴ Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marjorie_Arnfield



'Gala Day Band'

of this evocative tribute to mining communities commented on the paintings' vitality and lack of sentimentality. Marjorie Arnfield's paintings depicted a variety of scenes: miners at work and at leisure, a Miners' Gala Day, women

hanging their washing, or protest demonstrations.

Marjorie Arnfield continued to show this body of work over the following years in a touring exhibition *Images of Coal* that travelled across the country to many mining centres including South Wales,

'Women Protesting' circa 1985





Receiving the MBE in 2000

where the tour was supported by the Arts Council of Wales. The extensive tour included Sunderland Art Gallery where the BBC journalist Kate Adie, who was once a pupil in the school where Marjorie was the art teacher, joined Marjorie at the opening.⁵ Kate Adie was also present at the launch in Nottingham and at the opening of Marjorie Arnfield's exhibition at Woodhorn Colliery Museum in Ashington, the location of what was once the largest pit village in the world.

Marjorie Arnfield was awarded an MBE for services to art in the 2000 Millennial Honours. She travelled to Buckingham Palace to receive the award from the Queen in January 2000 accompanied by Ron. The following year, besides making the front pages in Sunderland for capturing match scenes for the Sunderland Association Football Club, she was busy preparing to mark her 70th birthday with an exhibition at Nottingham University.

The Arnfields' younger son Nick studied art history at King's College, Cambridge. He was a gifted artist, jazz and blues

musician, and art teacher. He was also passionate about climbing. Tragically, he died in 1999. A posthumous exhibition of Nick Arnfield's work was held at the St Ives Tate Gallery in 2000. Two examples of his paintings can be seen on the website Art UK, the catalogue of art in public collections.⁶

Marjorie Arnfield died on 26 April 2001. In keeping with her Anglican faith, the funeral service to celebrate her life was held at Southwell Minster and was attended by hundreds of people whose lives she had touched.⁷ A major exhibition titled *Marjorie Arnfield, A Celebration of Her Life and Work* was held at the Djanogly Art Gallery at the Arts Centre of Nottingham University from 21 July–21 September 2001. Among the most recent artworks on show were Marjorie Arnfield's studies of the Cumbrian landscape: rocky outcrops, abandoned quarries and iron works. A review in *The Times* said that Marjorie Arnfield's commemorative exhibition was among the best one-person art exhibitions in the UK that month.

Marjorie Arnfield's legacy

Marjorie Arnfield's work is held in many public and private collections. Seventeen of her paintings are included in the online Art UK catalogue of works in public collections. She exhibited her work in countless solo and group exhibitions all over the country. Early in her career, her painting *Landscape, County Durham* was selected for the 1958 Northern Young Artists Exhibition at the Graves Art Gallery in Sheffield, where it attracted the attention of L.S. Lowry, who was on the selection panel. Her exhibitions in Cumbria

⁵ Nottingham Weekly Post and Recorder, 1 December 1994

⁶ <https://artuk.org/discover/artists/arnfield-nick-19611999>

⁷ Ron Arnfield, 'Marfie and Me – A Forty-Year Partnership', as quoted above.

included the Lakes Artists Society, Grasmere, the Netherhall Centre, Maryport (1965), the Beacon Museum, Whitehaven (1999), and the Up Front Gallery, Penrith (2000). In 2025, Marjorie Arnfield's work *Haig Pit* was one of the highlights of the *Inspired by Industry* exhibition at The Beacon Museum in Whitehaven.⁸ Those writing about her work noted Marjorie Arnfield's strong sense of place and sympathetic observation of people. Her pictures embodied 'a spirit of vitality, optimism and sheer aliveness to it all'.⁹

The author would like to thank most warmly Robin Arnfield for sharing his knowledge, images and family photos on which this article is based. Also for the memories of Helen Milburn, Marjorie's mother, which follow:

Helen Milburn (1901-1984), Marjorie's mother, retired to Lorton in 1963, taking over the tenancy of Kirkfell Cottage from the Arnfields until 1980, when she moved into the Abbeyfield Home in Cockermouth. Helen was very involved in Lorton's village life and the Women's Institute. She was a devout Anglican and a member of St Cuthbert's parish church. She is buried in St Cuthbert's graveyard. Helen Milburn is well remembered by some Lorton residents.

Robin Arnfield's childhood recollections of his Granny paint some scenes of life in Lorton in the 1960s and 1970s.

I remember her taking me and my late brother Nick to Easter Sunday services at St Cuthbert's when we were children in the late 1960s. The Vicar would give all the children who attended the service a chocolate Easter egg after the service had finished. In those days, St

Cuthbert's had a harmonium, which had to be pumped with pedals to provide its sound. Granny got me permission to play the harmonium, as I wanted to learn how to play the church organ. Granny played a profound role in my Christian education. She would always say prayers with me at night-time, and she also gave me Ladybird illustrated children's Bible stories to read. She had a very strong and deep Christian faith.

Granny played bridge and I remember her telling me that she would attend bridge games with local farmers. She could drive, but didn't own a car. She walked everywhere, got lifts from friends, or took the bus. I remember that there was a van that came regularly from a grocer in Cockermouth bringing food that Granny had ordered over the phone – an early version of home shopping.

Robin Arnfield and Helen Milburn in Lorton



⁸ BBC News, North East and Cumbria, 18 January 2025
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/>

⁹ Neil Walker in the Introduction to *Marjorie Arnfield, A Celebration of her Life and Work*, 2001

The Brew Family of Lorton and Cockermouth

by Sheena Denwood

Last year the Kirkgate Heritage Group had two exhibitions about 'Off Comers' and Jennings Brewery. I decided to write a small article about my great, great, grandfather, John Willine Brew, whose life was connected with both the exhibitions.

I have known for many years that my father's grandmother, Margaret Brew, was born on the Isle of Man and came to live in Lorton in 1873 with her parents and siblings. My knowledge of the family was limited and so I contacted Simon Bondsfield (a Brew relative) to ask if he had any information. The following information is from Simon and other family members who have helped me with the family history and provided photographs.

John Brew in Lorton

John (Willine) Brew was born on 6 September 1833 in Castletown, Rushen, Isle of Man. He married Eleanor Kermeen on 6 February 1858 in Ramsey, Isle of Man. They had eleven children.

Jennings Brewery in Lorton sent staff over to the Isle of Man to recruit seasonal labour. John Brew transported the Jennings Brewery representatives around the island to talk to potential employees.

In 1873 John Brew was offered a position at Jennings Brewery as a drayman, which he

accepted. He and his family came to live in Lorton in November 1873 and resided at No 2 Yan Yak Cottages, Lorton next to the brewery.

According to the 1881 census John (aged 46 years) and Eleanor (aged 43 years) lived with four of their children – Mary Ann (aged ten years), William (aged seven years), Joseph (aged five years) and Catherine (aged two years) at No 2, Yan Yak Cottage. Eleanor Brew (aged twenty years) had married Thomas Beattie and they lived in the cottage next door. Thomas Brew (aged 22 years) had married Mary Lennox (aged nineteen years) and they were living with her parents John (he was a blacksmith) and



**Old-Established Brewery, Malting, Wine, and Bottled Beer Business,
with Plant and Stock-in-Trade, Dwelling House, Warehouses, Work-
shops, and Building Plot for Sale.**

MESSRS. MITCHELL, BOWE, & MITCHELL

Have received instructions from Mr. H. R. WYNDHAM, who is retiring from business,

TO SELL BY AUCTION,

(If not previously disposed of by private treaty, of which due notice will be given.)

AT THE "GLOBE" HOTEL, COCKERMOUTH,

On Wednesday, the 5th day of November, 1873.

At Four o'Clock in the Afternoon.

LOT 1.

All that Old-established and Well-accustomed

10-QR. BREWERY AND MALTING PREMISES,

SITUATE AT COCKERMOUTH AFORESAID, COMPRISING—

Extensive and Commodious Buildings, Offices, Stores, Stables, and Dwelling House, Steam Engines and Pumps, Water-power Pumps, Hydraulic Hoist, 20-Horse Power Steam Boiler, Malt and Corn Crushing Mills, &c., &c., and covering an Area of About Three-quarters of an Acre.

The Engines, Steam and Water Pumps, Hydraulic Hoist, Copper and Tanks, to go in with the Premises. The Plant, Stock-in-Trade, Tools, Brewing and Bottling Utensils, &c., to be taken at a valuation: the mode of valuation to be provided for in the Conditions of Sale.

To any person of capital, or to a joint stock company, this offers an opportunity seldom to be met with. The Premises are in thorough repair. The Plant is of the most improved construction, being almost all new.

LOT 2.

All those extensive Premises,

Situate in Waterloo Street, in Cockermouth, formerly used as a BREWERY, but now used as a SAW MILL and JOINER'S SHOP, in the occupation of JOHN HUSTER; a COTTAGE HOUSE, known as the "Bee Hive," in the occupation of Mrs. LEWTHWAITE; a STABLE, YARD, and COACH HOUSE, in the occupation of the LOCAL BOARD, yielding an annual rent of £34, and the Malt Buildings now unoccupied.

LOT 3.

All that large and commodious House,

Situate in Castle Street, fitted with Baths Hot and Cold, Water and every convenience, with Yard and Garden, now let in Five Tenements, yielding an annual rent of £43.

LOT 4.

A Plot of very eligible Building Ground,

Situate and fronting into Station Street and South Street, with a frontage to the former of 77 feet, and to the latter of 34 feet, or thereabouts, and containing in the whole about 200 square yards,

Lot 1 is of Leasehold Tenure—term, 1,000 years from 6th day of July, 1754, subject to free burgage rent of 4d., and to Leasehold rent of 1s.

Lot 2 is Freehold. Lot 3 Freehold, subject to yearly quit rent of 2s. 9d. Lot 4 Freehold.

 For further Particulars apply to Mr. H. R. WYNDHAM, the Owner, Cockermouth; Messrs. BENSON & MOORDAFF, Solicitors, Cockermouth; or to the AUCTIONEERS.

Cockermouth, October, 1873.

Cockermouth: Printed by R. Bailey, 12, Main Street.

**Sale particulars for Wyndham's Brewery,
DLEC/3/6/10/26, reproduced courtesy of
Lord Egremont and Leconfield Estates.**

Ann Lennox in High Lorton. Margaret Brew (aged eighteen years) was a servant at Tenters House, High Lorton. Robert Brew (aged fifteen years) was an agricultural servant at Boon Beck Farm. The farmer there was John Walker.

As a boy Robert Brew worked with his father John Brew (Snr) and a brother, for Jennings at High Lorton Brewery.

The Brew family in Cockermouth

The Old Brewery in Cockermouth, which was then owned by Horace Robert Wyndham and Co., was for sale in 1873. The Jennings brothers bought the brewery in 1874 and built up the brewery at Cockermouth, now known as Castle Brewery. They wound down the brewery in Lorton which closed in 1881. The Brew family moved sometime after this to Brewery Cottages, Cockermouth.

Jennings brewery workers circa 1892; John Brew is seated second from the right with beard.

The 1891 census states that John Brew's and Robert Brew's families were living in Castle Tannery Cottages. Robert worked as a drayman too. He told a West Cumberland Times reporter in 1938 that Jennings made 'the finest beer in the world'. His job was to distribute it by a dray drawn by two horses to pubs from Egremont to Wyemoor. Often he was away from home two or three days at a time.

Robert Brew moved to Workington with his family in 1899. His wife was Sarah Simon, whose father was a farmer from Loweswater. Robert worked in the blast furnaces of the steel-works until he retired aged 69 in 1933.

John's son Thomas Brew was living with his family in Mackreth Row Cockermouth. The 1891 census gives his occupation as a brewer's maltster.





The Brew Family photograph

My great grandmother, Margaret Brew, married Isaac Pingey Denwood (related to the Denwood authors) in 1886, and they emigrated to Sydney, Australia, that same year. They came back to live in Cockermouth in the late 1890s with their two daughters Alice and Eleanor. My grandfather, Isaac Henry Denwood, was born in 1899. It is fortunate from my perspective that they returned to Cockermouth. I wouldn't be writing about them now!

John Brew's grandson (Jackie Brew), a nephew and a granddaughter's (Annie Mary Brew) husband (John Doughty) worked at Jennings Brewery. John Doughty had an accident and lost his right foot in 1926. He was offered the job of night watchman at Jennings Brewery. When that job finished he was offered a job on the wagons (drays).

John Brew's retirement

John Brew continued to work for Jennings (Castle) Brewery as a drayman until about

1899, when he had to retire due to health problems.

Newspaper cutting dated 1908 – Report of a Golden Wedding:

Mr and Mrs John Brew of Brewery Yard Cockermouth have this week celebrated their Golden Wedding. They belong to Manxland and were married at Ramsey on February 6th 1858. They crossed the water 34 years ago and settled at Lorton, where John Brew entered the service of the late Mr John Jennings, brewer, as drayman. When the firm removed to Castle Brewery Cockermouth, he continued in their employ and served Messrs Jennings Bros. faithfully up to about nine years ago, when he became incapacitated owing to a trouble in the legs which made it difficult for him to move about and he retired on a well-earned pension. With the exception of this he is hale and hearty and Mrs Brew also enjoys good health.



John and Eleanor Brew

They have passed by a few years the allotted span of life and have reared a family of eleven children, seven of whom survive and all are married. They are a happy and cheery couple, highly esteemed by many friends, who combine with their congratulations the hope that they may yet see many years of happiness together".

There is a photograph of Robert and Sarah Brew's Golden Wedding Anniversary in the Times and Star on 31 December 1938. In the newspaper article it states that 'Given a prominent place in the Brew's kitchen is a framed card, on which is inscribed the following: "This card and a gratuity of £5 was presented by Messers Jennings Bros to Mr John Brew as a special recognition of his faithful services to the brewery"'.

John Brew died in 1916 and Eleanor his wife in 1917. They are buried in Cockermouth Cemetery with other family members.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following family who helped me with the information and photographs - Simon Bondsfield, Elizabeth Litt, Susan Ferguson and Helen Peachy. If any other family have more information I would like to hear from you. I've wondered why Jennings representatives travelled to the Isle of Man to recruit seasonal staff.

It was really good news this year when Jennings Brewery was bought and opened again after its closure in 2022.

The family grave-marker at Cockermouth cemetery - photo the author



Paul and Jean Eurich and the Low Lorton Shop in the 1980s

In Wanderer No. 43, January 2022, Fiona Lambrick wrote an article about the Low Lorton shop during the time of the Joe and Dora Kennon. In about 1980 the property and business were sold to Paul and Jean Eurich, who ran the shop until it closed in about 1986, being no longer viable as a business.

Paul was born in Manchester in 1936 and married Jean in 1963, in Northampton, where they lived and worked before coming to Lorton. Sadly, Jean died of cancer early in the new millennium, while Paul continued to live in Lorton until his death in April 2023. Some photographs of the shop during their ownership have come to Society member Ann Peck, and a few of these are reproduced here with some notes about Paul and Jean.



Left: Paul and Jean in the shop in the early 1980s

Below: a photograph, taken from Holme Cottage, of the shop and house. Pack Horse Cottage is attached to the right, while Fell View, built for the Kennons, is behind.



Paul was a tool-maker, and when he and Jean came to Lorton he worked in engineering at Silloth Airport. He had many skills and that allowed him to establish a property maintenance business

in Lorton, after the closure of the shop. In time both he and Jean found increasing employment and support through working to maintain and keep Lorton Hall Tower, owned by Lawrence and Linda Kelly.



Above: a Christmas window at the shop

Below: Jean and Paul in a very well presented shop

