

November 2017

The Derwentfells Wanderer

www.derwentfells.com

Last Call for Carlisle

Outing to Carlisle 1st November

There are sufficient members interested for the trip to go ahead, and space if anyone else would like to go. Please let Tim Stanley-Clamp know on 01900 336542 or at tdsc50@icloud.com

Just to remind you of the itinerary; 10.30 Museum of Military Life at the Castle (where arrangements have been made for parking), 12.30 - lunch at the Fraternity, 2.00 - Guildhall Museum.

John Hudson 1662 - 1719. Wythop to Oxford

An article by Walter Head.

John Hudson was born at Routenbeck in the township of Wythop in 1662. (Possibly the son of John Hudson and Janet Dawson who married at Crosthwaite on 21st July 1622). I have so far been unable to find any early education records for the Wythop area so I have no details of his early education but on 13th March 1677 at the age of 14 years he was admitted to Queen's College Oxford just prior to matriculating. He entered the college as a *batler* meaning that he had to pay for *batells* (tuition, accommodation etc) but did not have to pay for his commons (basic meals). This suggests that he did not come from a wealthy family and as such was known as a 'Taberdar' or 'Poor Boy' which was a way of providing some financial support for those studying for an MA.

In February 1681 he achieved a Master of Arts and in 1685 he became a fellow of University College. At this time it was expected that a student after studying for an MA would take one of the higher degrees in Divinity, Law or Medicine. Between the years 1686 and 1711 John Hudson achieved Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Divinity degrees.

In April 1710 John married a 26 year old widow the daughter of Sir Robert Harrison

and they had one daughter Margaret born in 1711. While studying to become a Doctor of Divinity in 1701 John Hudson was appointed Keeper of the Bodleian Library. The Bodleian Library, which was the main library at the University of Oxford, was founded by Sir Thomas Bodley in 1598 and the first Librarian in 1602 was Thomas James. John Hudson worked to expand the collection of the library despite its financial difficulties. He personally donated 600 books and was successful in persuading authors and publishers to present copies of their books to the library. Although enthusiastic, he had a reputation as a negligent if not incapable librarian with some of his critics claiming that he confused his book business with his responsibilities as librarian. As an editor and commentator he enjoyed a high reputation both at home and abroad. It is said that his political views stood in the way of his preferment in the church and university. He continued



in the role of keeper until his death in 1719.

He did have some advancement at Oxford as in 1712 he became the 6th Principal of St Mary's Hall, Oxford. St Mary's Hall was originally established as part of Oriel College in 1326 but became an independent hall in 1545 when the door between St Mary's Hall and Oriel was blocked up on the orders of Bishop Longland of Lincoln. It was finally

incorporated back into Oriel College in 1902. New Principal's lodgings were built by John Hudson on the north-west side of the quad on the site of the old refectory. Following his death in 1719, John Hudson was followed as Principal by William King, a leading Jacobite.

Queen's College has strong links with Cumberland having been founded in 1341 by Robert de Eglesfield.

Subscriptions are due - new rates

Along with your Wanderer you will have received a reminder to pay your annual subscription. The AGM in June approved the reduction in subs rates consequent on the demise of the Journal. The new rates are £8 for full membership, £15 for two members at the same address. The country rate is £5. This is a closed category for people who live outside Cumbria and does not include free admission to talks. It is the committee's intention to produce four Wanderers per year, but this does depend on there being sufficient content. Please contact the secretary to discuss any potential submissions, or ideas for topics to be covered.

"A Passionate Sisterhood"

A review by Charles Lambrick of the recent Talk by Kathleen Jones.

On 14th September, the well known author Kathleen Jones gave a stimulating talk to L&D/LHS members and visitors on the lives of women who were sisters, wives or daughters of the Lake District poets Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth. Based on the research she had undertaken for her book of the same title, she managed to condense into about an hour a fascinating insight into the family connections, and the close relationships that developed between the women and the well known poets. They all formed a fascinating and unique circle, from which much documentary material has survived.

Despite a number of the women in the poets' lives sharing the same first name, Kathleen Jones deftly differentiated for example between Mary Wordsworth and Mary Lovell, who was sister to both Sarah Coleridge and to Edith Southey. The latter two ladies themselves needed

to be distinguished from their respective daughters, Sara Coleridge and Edith May Southey. During the course of the Talk she gave lively pen portraits of each of the women, all of whom were well educated, articulate and strong-minded. Some or all of them and the men shared a number of common experiences in their formative years, including unhappy childhoods, loss of a parent at an early age, fragile health, making impetuous marriages, and becoming addicted to laudanum.

The Talk was illustrated by contemporary images of the individuals discussed, and Kathleen Jones combined observations on the influence the women had on the poets with her narrative, adopting a broadly chronological approach to unfolding the lives, both in well known places in the Lake District and also locations such as Bath and Oxford, of those the subject of her research.

For those members of the audience who had read 'A Passionate Sisterhood' the Talk was a reprise of what Kathleen Jones had so expertly woven into her historical narrative, and an opportunity to raise questions with a distinguished author. For those like me who had not read the book, the Talk provided a most interesting introduction to aspects of the lives of the Lake Poets which in the past were perhaps hardly known about.

Cockermouth's relationship with the railways

A report by Tim Stanley-Clamp on the recent Bernard Bradbury Memorial Lecture delivered by Eric Cass.

Medieval Cockermouth is visible to us not only in maps or via Google Earth, but in what we see around us as we walk along Main Street or down South Street to the river. The bowed shape of Main Street and the many narrow passageways leading off it toward the Derwent were visible to people 800 years ago, as was the gentle slope down to the Cocker from South Street's junction with Station Street.

We have to look much harder for traces of the railway which served this part of West Cumbria until 50 or so years ago. Dog walkers and children on their way to school pass along the old railway line beside the cemetery, but before long new housing will obliterate the section which led on to Embleton and from

there to Bassenthwaite, Braithwaite, Keswick and beyond.

Similarly, while the site of the old railway station is still just about detectable near the building that used to have fire engines in it, before long even its fading footprint will have vanished, covered over by the new Lidl supermarket the town can expect in the next year or two.



Embleton Station; image courtesy of Eric Cass.

Nevertheless, railways and their contribution to the economic and social life of communities are still compelling story tellers. Eric Cass gave his audience proof of this in the 6th Bradbury Memorial Lecture on 13th October at the Kirkgate Centre. Knowledgeable and very obviously in love with his subject, he took his audience through the conception, planning and construction of the railways which brought West Cumbria, and particularly Cockermouth, up to speed with the country's industrial revolution in the middle of the nineteenth century. The incentives were very great - the economy could profit from local mining, mainly of coal and limestone, exporting them south via the Penrith to Euston line and east to the industrial cities across the Pennines. Fortunes were made, and lives enhanced as the passenger traffic grew, taking people to work and providing them with opportunities for travel. Morecambe was an especially popular destination for family days out. The trains would also bring tourists and their spending power direct from London on the handsome Lakes Express.

The engineering was immensely complex. There were eleven bridges across the Derwent and its tributaries along the eight and a half mile route from Workington to Cockermouth and very severe gradients

to contend with in the journey from Keswick to Penrith. Motorists today using the A66 alongside Bassenthwaite Lake would recognise the prolonged difficulties they had then in making the railway safe in that part of the journey to Keswick. (It was very prone to flooding and alarmingly unstable.) Initial plans would have seen the route follow the north-eastern side of the lake, but these were vetoed by the landowner who did not wish to have his lifestyle disturbed.

A very large part of the lecture's appeal lay in the sense it gave us of Cockermouth's physical history. Railways were - to use the jargon of the post dotcom era - disruptive. The first station, on the site of the Lakes retail park, was replaced by a newer, much more imposing one above the town to allow better access to the Keswick line and provide facilities in keeping with an ambitious town's self-respect - the new station provided refreshments and a First Class Ladies' waiting room. One unfortunate homeowner on Main Street had his home demolished to make way for access to it via Station Street but the town, with its smart, handsome new station probably thought it a sacrifice worth making now that the journey to Keswick and Penrith was so much easier.

For railways were an embodiment of Victorian optimism, as well as a tangible sign of its ingenuity and capacity for innovation. Many in the audience responded to the lecture's final slide - a photograph of the forlorn remnants of Cockermouth's railway station in 1966 after its closure - with a sense that something had been lost, perhaps that the confident optimism which brought the railway into being had gone with it.

What's in a name?

In May the society visited Lanercost Priory and Holme Cultram Abbey. The two elements of the Abbey's name are Holme - an islet or land almost surrounded by water; from Old Norse *holmr* and Cultram which is from the same root as coulter, the vertical cutting blade placed in front of a ploughshare, from which we also get cultivate; from Old English via the Latin *culter* meaning knife. The name 'Lanercost' is thought to be derived from *Llanerch*, a British or Gaelic word meaning an open space in a wood - and indeed there is still much woodland around the Priory site.

Our future programme 2017 / 2018

01 November	Outing to Carlisle - details on page 1	Tim Stanley-Clamp
09 November	From barren waste to National Treasurer: how we learned to love the Lake District	Grevil Lindop
11 November	Melbreak Communities coffee morning 10.30 - 12.00 Yew Tree Hall	Assistance please. Offers to secretary.
11 January 2018	The Derwentwater Disaster	Ray Greenhow
08 March	The Great War - Ambleside's Story	Judith Shingler
10 May	The Remarkable Literary History of Mirehouse	John Spedding
Wednesday 23 May	Visit to Mirehouse, hosted by John Spedding. Full details in due course	Tim Stanley-Clamp
14 June	AGM + Stone Circles of Cumbria	Tom Clare
12 July	William Brownrigg MD, FRCS 'a physician and philosopher eminently distinguished'	Dr Phil Sykes
13 September	'Breaking up is hard to do': selling the Lowther Estates in West Cumberland	Dr Alan Crosby
08 November	TBA	

Talks are at the Yew Tree Hall at 7.30pm unless stated otherwise. We are asked not to park to the left of the entrance (when looking at the hall) as the road is narrow there and can cause problems for passing vehicles. Visitors £3.00.

Officers and Committee 2017/18

President Professor Angus Winchester Financial examiner Peter Hubbard

Charles Lambrick <i>Chairman</i>	01900 85710	Lena Stanley-Clamp <i>Membership</i>	01900 336542
Sandra Shaw <i>Secretary and Wanderer</i>	01900 829812 <i>sandra.m.shaw@btopenworld.com</i>	Tim Stanley-Clamp <i>Outings</i>	01900 336542
Christopher Thomas <i>Treasurer</i>	01900 822171	Richard Easton <i>Talks</i>	01900 85708
Mike Bacon <i>Committee member</i>	01900 812188	Vice-Chairman	vacancy

The archive is still housed at the home of Dr Derek Denman who is willing to assist members with their own research within the archive. He is at 19 Low Road Close, Cockermouth CA13 0GU. Please contact him in the first instance at derekdenman@btinternet.com or by phone on 01900 829097.

The next issue of the Wanderer will be published on 1st February 2018. Please send any short items to the Editor, Sandra Shaw in early January.

The Wanderer is published by the Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society, Pardshaw Hall, Pardshaw, Cockermouth CA13 OSP.

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