The following is a draft section for an expanded and revised edition of the VCH Cumbria Volunteers' Handbook, which will aim to combine the guidance on 'Writing a Parish History' on the national VCH website and the Cumbria-specific guidance in the current Volunteers' Handbook.

3. Economic History

Aims and approach

This section is concerned with how the people of a parish or township made their living from medieval times onwards. Every village and town had its own economy and this economy is related to surrounding markets and to communications networks.

You should open the section with an overview that portrays the balance over the centuries between primary (agriculture, fisheries, mining, quarrying), secondary (manufacturing) and tertiary (services) activity in your parish.

Your account should be structured thematically, and should cover the following topics:

1. Agriculture (and Fishing and Forestry, if appropriate)
2. Mining and Quarrying
3. Manufacturing Industry
4. Service Industries and other businesses
5. Economic History since 1945

There will be something to say about Agriculture for all rural parishes/townships and you should aim to include material on Economic History since 1945 whatever the nature of the community. How much material, if any, you include under the remaining headings will obviously depend on the particular history of the place in question.

The following notes are arranged under the five headings listed above and include guidance on approach and content, as well as key sources for each section.

Starting Points

The 'Jubilee Digest' for the place you are researching (accessible online at http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/places-township-list) will provide a brief overview, based on the following key sources, which you should use as a starting point:

- **Ordnance Survey Six-Inch maps and 1:2,500 plans.** Where economic activity affects the landscape – a forestry plantation, mill, mine, quarry or factory, for example – large-scale OS maps and plans enable you to pinpoint it on the ground. Comparing a succession of editions of the 6"/1:10,000 maps should allow you to chart such features from the mid-19th century to the present day.
- **Directories.** Trade directories often mention such activity as mining, as well as listing businesses. Again, consulting successive directories, from Parson & White (1829) to Kelly's Directories of the early 20th century, will provide an overview of economic activity at local level in the modern era.
- **Census Returns.** Check the population statistics on the project website (click on the appropriate ward under 'Census for Cumberland and Westmorland 1801-2001' at http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/cumbria-wide-resources to see whether there are any comments on the reasons for population increase or decrease (new mines opening, for example). See also below ('Census Enumerators' Books').
- **Seventeenth-century antiquaries**. For earlier periods, the writings of some of the antiquaries can be useful. In particular, Thomas Denton (*Perambulation of Cumberland and Westmorland, 1687*-8) provides a considerable amount of evidence for economic activity in the later 17th century. Sir Daniel Fleming's 'Description of Cumberland, Westmorland and Furness' (1671) and Thomas Machell's account of southern Westmorland in 1692 (printed as *Antiquary on Horseback*, ed. Jane M Ewbank (1963)) are also worth consulting. For a later period, John Housman's 'Notes' at the foot of the page in William Hutchinson's *History of Cumberland* (1794) also provide some local economic information.

Two obvious sources of evidence for local economic history may simply require too much time-consuming analysis for the purposes of a VCH parish/township article, though you might consider whether they could be sampled or whether you might be able to make use of analyses carried out by other local historians:

- **Census Enumerators' Books.** The occupational data recorded from 1841 (heads of household only; comprehensively from 1851) to 1911 provides a very fine-grained picture of economic activity, including (under the name of the proprietor) details of the numbers of men employed on farms and in other businesses. For a modest-sized township or parish, extracting the latter data would not be too time-consuming. Remember also that for parts of north Westmorland only a census of 1787 survives, which provides comparable data: published as *Vital Statistics: the Westmorland 'Census' of 1787*, ed. Loraine Ashcroft (1992).
- **Probate inventories**. A vital source for reconstructing local economies in the period c.1550 to c.1750. For farming, they often provide details of crops grown and livestock kept, and valuations of tools, raw materials or stock in trade can provide

evidence of crafts and manufacturing. Full analysis of all inventories across this period would be very time-consuming, even for a small rural community. Sampling might be possible (all inventories over a couple of 10-year periods?) or selected inventories might be examined. For places in Carlisle diocese details of occupations are given in *Index to Wills proved in the Consistory Court of Carlisle 1661-1750*, ed. Susan Dench (1998), which also contains a place index.

1. Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry

These, along with mining and quarrying (which should form a separate section of the chapter), are classed as 'primary production', that is, the direct exploitation of resources from land and water. In most rural parishes/townships these aspects of economic history predominated until comparatively recent times, so this section of the chapter is likely to be the longest.

Farming.

We suggest that you divide the treatment of agriculture into three sub-sections, taking a broadly chronological approach to each:

1. The physical framework. By this, we mean the building blocks of land use within the parish/township and how the balance between them has changed over time. The physical framework includes the location and extent of: arable land (both open fields and enclosed fields, depending on period); grassland used as hay meadows; enclosed permanent pasture; common waste. Please include the following in your account if possible:

- Location and extent of each land use category (open fields, meadows, common pastures, etc) and, if possible, an assessment of the relative proportion of arable, waste and woodland in the Middle Ages
- Boundaries of open fields, names of fields and evidence of amalgamation or subdivision.
- Areas of early enclosed fields, often originating in medieval assarting (reclamation) from the waste.
- Evidence of the existence of an 'outfield' (a section of the common grazings enclosed for cultivation).
- Evidence for the management of commons, including pasture rights and other common rights (such as 'turbary' – the right to dig peat and turf; and 'estovers' – the right to gather vegetation such as bracken, heather and rushes).
- Enclosure, both piecemeal 'agreement' enclosure through time and Parliamentary enclosure post-1750. Remember that it is important to distinguish between enclosure of open fields and meadows (often occurring in piecemeal fashion in the period c.1550-c.1750 in Cumbria) and enclosure of common wastes (the 'moor' or 'fell' belonging to the township)
- The impact of enclosure on farming structure and occupancy: were new farms established on newly-enclosed lands?

2. Agrarian institutions. These include how the land was held (forms of tenure; rents and services, etc) and how farms were run (By a farm manager or by an owner? As family farms or employing labourers?). It is not necessary to record the history of individual families or of individual farms; what is required is an overview for the parish/township as a whole. Please include the following aspects in your account if possible:

- The tenurial structure of the manor or manors in the Middle Ages, in particular the balance between the demesne and tenant holdings, and between free and unfree tenures.
- The evolution of tenure through time, including the survival of copyhold tenures (including, in Cumbria, customary tenantright) into the 19th century. Where applicable, the types of lease found in the parish at different periods should be noted.
- The proportion of owner-occupied farms (in Cumbria 'owner-occupier' includes those who farm land they hold from the lord of the manor by customary tenantright) and how this changed
- Medieval labour services and other 'boon works', where recorded.
- Farm sizes, where known, and how these changed over time; any evidence of cottage holdings.
- Numbers employed in agriculture at different periods, although they will generally be available only for the 19th century.
- Wage rates and terms of employment for farm servants and agricultural labourers, where known, also any evidence of agricultural disputes.

3. Outputs: crops and livestock production. The aim here is to chart the types of husbandry carried out in the parish/township: was the focus on crop production, dairying or sheep farming, for example? And how did this change across the centuries? The main topics should include:

- Land use, particularly the types of crops grown, animals kept and agricultural specialisation. It is often helpful to tabulate material found in the 1801 crop returns, the tithe files, and in the agricultural returns from 1866. Did enclosure result in significant changes in land use?
- Farming systems, husbandry practices and rotations over time, where known. Is there evidence of 'infield-outfield' arrangements, whereby parts of the common were enclosed for cultivation, either on a temporary basis or resulting in an 'outfield' cultivated on a 'long ley' rotation (a few years' cropping followed by several years as pasture)?
- Any forms of specialised cultivation such as market gardening or fruit growing should be noted separately.

Key Sources

- Manorial and estate records (surveys, estate plans, manor court records, estate accounts, etc, from 13th century to 20th)
- Probate inventories can be used to obtain data on crops and livestock. Early inventories (pre-1640) are often provide more detail on specific crops and types of animal than later ones (which generally only give an overall valuation for 'corn' sheep' etc).
- The 1801 Crop returns (TNA, HO 67) can be found on www.VisionofBritain.org.uk or at www.ahds.ac.uk Returns do not survive for every parish: coverage is fairly extensive for Cumberland and Lancashire but returns survive for only two parishes (Brougham and Morland) in Wesmorland.
- Tithe plans (Cumbria Archive Service, DRC 8): for patterns of occupation and land use c.1840; also field-name evidence of past land use patterns.
- The Tithe Files (TNA, IR 18) sometimes contain considerable detail about farming at the level of the individual parish.
- Tithe disputes can shed valuable light on agricultural production: they will be found in the Consistory Court Records of Carlisle or Chester diocese, with appeals ('transmitted causes') being forwarded to the Prerogative Court of York. For an index to the latter, see W. J. Shiels, *Ecclesiastical Cause Papers at York: files transmitted on appeal 1500-1883* (Borthwick Texts & Calendars, 1983).
- Enclosure awards: CAS, QRE/1 (for Cumberland) and WQ/RI (for Westmorland)
- Land Tax returns provide data on patterns of owner-occupation. For Cumberland (CAS (Carlisle), Q/RP/1) they survive for the period c.1750-1829, though few years are complete; fewer survive for Westmorland (CAS (Kendal), WQ/R/LT) but there is a full set for 1742 for East Ward (WQ/SR/148).
- Agricultural statistics: parish summaries, 1866 to late 20th century (TNA, MAF 68)
- 1910 Valuation Office records ('Lloyd George Domesday'). The 'Domesday Books', which are held in Cumbria Archive Centres, provide details of land holdings and businesses in 1910. The 'Field Books' (TNA, IR 58) provide much more detail on the use of buildings, etc.
- National Farm Survey, 1941-3 (TNA, MAF 32)
- Snapshots of 20th-century land use patterns are provided by the maps of the Land Utilisation Survey of Britain, carried out in the late 1930s and published at One-Inch (1:63.360) scale, and the Second Land Utilisation Survey, carried out in the 1960s and published at 1:25,000 scale, but which only covers 10% of the country.
- Common land database: searchable database, giving acreage of each common and number of rights registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965, at: http://common-land.com/

Fishing and Forestry

The exploitation of resources from woodland and waters is traditionally classed as 'primary production', along with farming and mining and quarrying. If fishing and woodland/forestry have been part of the economy of a parish/township, they should be dealt with as a separate sub-section following Agriculture.

Fishing. In coastal communities look for evidence of the exploitation of sea food from the medieval period: shellfish, 'fishgarths' (inter-tidal fish traps), ownership of fishing boats. By the 18th century, some coastal communities were engaged in larger scale sea fisheries (such as the herring fishery) and fish-curing. In inland parishes/townships remember the importance of river and lake fisheries, not only the well-known salmon fisheries on the major rivers and estuaries but 'eel arks' (where migrating eels were trapped) and other small-scale fisheries.

Woodland and Forestry. The extent of woodland and how it has changed across time will have been described in the Introduction (under Landscape and Settlement); in this section the aim should be to chart its history as part of the economic land use of the parish/township. You should draw a distinction between *'ancient' (i.e. semi-natural deciduous) woodland*, used for charcoal manufacture and swill basket-making, for example, and *forestry plantations*, usually coniferous, which have been deliberately planted for timber production. You should seek to establish the ownership of woodland, who exploited it and how (by lease or by custom, for example?), what woodland products were obtained and sold – in the case of 'ancient' woodland, you should try to chart the changing patterns of use from the medieval period to the present. For forestry plantations, try to establish ownership, date of planting, the species planted and the intended market, and the numbers employed in forestry.

Key Sources

- Manorial and estate records, as both woodland and fisheries were lordly monopolies. Where woodland and forestry plantations were managed by large landed estates (including The National Trust), modern estate records are a key source.
- Cartographic sources (successive editions of Ordnance Survey Six-Inch (1:10,560) and Twenty-five Inch (1:2,500) maps; tithe plans; estate plans, etc) can be used to chart the changing extent of woodland and to identify fish traps etc.
- Records of the Forestry Commission Censuses of Woodlands, 1924-87 are preserved at TNA, classes F22 (reports and data) and F30 (microfilms of Six-Inch OS maps)

2. Mining and Quarrying

The extractive industries form part of the economic history of very many parishes and townships in Cumbria, even in areas not normally considered to have been 'industrial'. This section should attempt to establish what minerals were extracted (from stone, sand and gravel to coal, metal ores and more localized resources such as gypsum and diatomite) and when. It should be arranged by the type of mineral being exploited and should, at the very least, provide the broad chronology of each (earliest reference to a mine/quarry in the parish; final demise of the extractive industry in question). Ideally, the history of each major mine or quarry should be traced, particularly those operating on a large scale during the 19th and/or 20th centuries. Large-scale mining and quarrying businesses should be treated in the same way as larger industrial operations (see 'Manufacturing Industry' below). Processing of extracted materials which took place at or close to the mine/quarry (such as stone crushing or lime burning) should be dealt with in this section but use of the mineral as a raw material (e.g. lead smelting; iron making; monumental masonry) should come in the 'Manufacturing Industry' section.

Key Sources

- OS maps and plans; directories (see above)
- National sources, particularly systematic lists of collieries (post-1854), naming owners and after 1881 supplying other information. These were published annually, first by the Geological Survey and later by the Home Office Mines Inspectorate, which continue until after 1947. . A good introduction to sources held at The National Archives can be found at http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/mines-and-mining.htm
- Records of mining and quarrying companies, which may have been deposited in local record offices (check CASCAT)
- Manorial and estate records (since mineral rights were usually vested in the lord of the manor)
- Thomas Denton's *Perambulation of Cumberland, 1687-8* (ed. Winchester with Wane, Surtees Soc. Vol. 207, 2003) is a useful source for mining and quarrying in the 17th century.
- Two secondary sources, which provide a wealth of information on individual mines are:
  - John Postlethwaite, *Mines and Mining in the Lake District* (1913)
  - Oliver Wood, *West Cumberland Coal 1600-1982/3* (1988)

3. Manufacturing Industry

This section should deal with the making of saleable things, which embraces a wide range of economic activity, from processing of foodstuffs (milling, brewing, meat packaging, for example) through the traditional heavy industries (iron and steel, textiles) to modern 'light' industry and power generation. For some parishes there may be little more to be said about manufacturing than can be found in evidence for early modern cottage industry (spinning, handloom weaving, basket making, for example) or short-lived activities recorded in 19th century trade directories. The order in which different industrial activities are discussed will vary from place to place, but in general the manufacture of *producer goods* (iron and steel, engineering, tanning etc.) should come before the production of *consumer goods* (textiles, hosiery etc.) or industries that date only from recent times (electrical and electronic engineering, plastics etc.).

Mills. The history of milling will often be the only type of manufacturing to be discussed in rural parishes. All references to both water- and windmills should be collected, as should any mention of horse-mills in the medieval period. In Cumbria many rural communities also had fulling mills in the medieval period. Remember that water-mill sites could change use across the centuries, switching between corn milling and fulling, for example, or being converted into saw mills. The history of each mill site should be traced chronoloigcally.

Crafts. All but the smallest rural parishes had a fairly standard range of village craftsmen, certainly in the post-medieval period. There is normally no need to refer to individual blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters and the like, unless one of the businesses was of special interest, for example where a smithy evolved into a foundry or engineering works.

Larger-scale industrial activity. In parishes with distinctive industrial activity, each industry should be considered in turn, drawing together references in chronological order. Sometimes this will involve discussing a series of individual entrepreneurs or single businesses; elsewhere an industry may be represented by several firms. In either case, an attempt should be made to trace the origins, growth and (where appropriate) decline of a particular activity. This should include:

- the origins of those involved and their sources of capital
- the organisation of the business (sole proprietorship, partnership or limited company)
- its products, markets and number of employees.

Please also discuss, where appropriate, the transition from domestic to factory production or from the use of water-power to steam-power, or other technological changes appropriate to a particular industry.

In the case of limited companies, it would be appropriate to comment on the circumstances in which the company was founded'; the ownership of shares (were they held by members of one or two families or marketed more widely?); and when such companies ceased to be locally owned and became part of larger groups with headquarters elsewhere.

Key Sources

The standard general sources listed at the beginning of these guidance notes (maps; trade and local directories; census enumeration returns) should provide the starting point. Local newspapers (advertisements, as well as reports) are another important source for the 19th and 20th centuries. Once you have the names of companies or businesses active in your parish/township, it is worth checking CASCAT for any company records which might have been deposited and the catalogue of the local studies library for any press cuttings etc. about the firm in question.

For limited companies, check The National Archives website at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/business-history.htm At TNA, Class BT 31, files of dissolved companies from Companies House, are among the most useful sources. If the company has been active in the last 20 years, go to the Companies House database itself (www.companies-house.gov.uk).

For the centuries before 1800 remember to check the following:

- Manorial and estate records – particularly for mills, since these were in origin manorial monopolies
- Travellers' diaries, particularly from the 18th century, e.g.
  - K. Morgan (ed.), *An American Quaker in the British Isles: the travel journals of Jabez Maude Fisher, 1775-1779* (British Academy, 1992)
  - *R.R. Angerstein's Illustrated Travel Diary, 1753-1755: Industry in England* (ed. T and P Berg, 2001)

4. Service Industries and other businesses

The service sector ('tertiary production') is now overwhelmingly the most important branch of the economy in all but a few parts of the United Kingdom. In some parishes there may be little to say other than can be found in 19th- and 20th-century trade directories, as the service sector in the past was mainly concerned with the distribution and sale of agricultural and manufactured goods. However, most parishes/townships in Cumbria contain more recent businesses which are part of the 'visitor economy'; these should be included here.

Retailing. It is desirable, though not always easy, to establish what shops existed in a rural community from how early a date, what other retail traders (perhaps itinerant) served the community, and where such people obtained their goods. Please mention the Post Office, pubs and any service activity specific to the parish of special interest. Much of the information will come from trade directories.

Markets and fairs. If there was a market or fair in the parish/township (and they were found in rural communities as well as in towns), the vitality of the market/fair at different periods should be assessed (rather than merely narrate the chronology of grants). What goods were traded? What distance did buyers and sellers travel to attend the market/fair?

Transport services. Road carrying services (always far more important than passenger traffic on roads until quite recent times) should be mentioned, as should the main traffic flows on canals and railways. Roads themselves were not large employers but the inns that formed staging posts along main routes were, and innkeepers were often involved in other businesses connected with road transport. Their modern equivalents, filling stations and motels, should also be mentioned.

Railways were major employers in many parts of the country, rural as well as urban, between the mid-19th and the mid-20th centuries. Even small country stations had a staff large enough to make an impact on a rural community, and in industrial areas served by several competitive lines, with extensive goods yards as well as passenger stations, the railways were generally among the most important (and most secure, if poorly paid) sources of employment. Their impact was heightened in places with engine sheds and workshops, not to mention independently owned but closely related activities such as the manufacture, repair and hire of railway wagons.

'Visitor economy'. This part of the service sector includes hotels and guest houses, Bed & Breakfast establishments, camping and caravan sites, visitor attractions (open farms; visitor centres, etc), and specialist outlets (cycling and outdoor pursuits, for example). Dates and circumstances of establishment and numbers employed should be sought for major businesses. Individual guest houses and B&B establishments do not need to be mentioned;

the aim should be to provide an overview of the origins, growth and importance of that sector of the local economy.

Key Sources

- Trade directories – probably the key source for this section. Remember to include 20th-century directories as well as the better-known Victorian ones.
- London Gazette (and also Belfast and Edinburgh Gazettes): these official newspapers are useful for business history, recording bankruptcies, dissolution of partnerships etc. Fully searchable scans, available online at www.gazettes-online.co.uk
- Gazetteer of Markets/Fairs: list of markets and fairs, with brief historical background; well researched. Cite as Samantha Letters, Gazetteer of Markets & Fairs in England and Wales to 1516 (+ last updated date). See: http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/gaz/gazweb2.html

5. Economic History since 1945

Dramatic changes affected all communities during the second half of the 20th century, as the service sector has come to dominate the economy. In rural areas, alongside the decline in agricultural employment (and employment closely connected with farming), home and workplace have come to be separated (often by a considerable distance) as increasing numbers of professional people have chosen to live in the countryside while working elsewhere. The nature of their employment, overwhelmingly in the service sector, is as much part of the local economy as was the work of farmers and farm labourers at an earlier period.

In Cumbria, key themes include:

- the transformation of the economy of former mining and industrial communities since the 1960s (high levels of structural unemployment, replacement industries; Sellafield and the 'energy coast')
- the growth of tourism and the visitor economy, especially, but by no means only, in the Lake District.
- new forms of exploitation of the uplands, including forestry, wind farms, grouse shooting etc
- the growth of rural 'craft' industries, not only handicrafts (potteries, wood turners, toy makers etc), but also other small-scale manufacturing (such as water bottling)

Key Sources

Oral testimony. The best approach may well be to start with oral testimony. Ask yourself or ask older neighbours and longstanding residents:

- Where do most people who live in your parish today work?
- How have employment patterns changed since the Second World War?
- How many working farms are there in your parish?
- Has this number fallen since 1945?
- Are the farms now mostly owner-occupied? If so, were they previously part of a larger landed estate and have been sold off (if so, by which estate and when)? If not, who owns the land?
- Are there any employers in your parish itself apart from farms and shops?
- How many shops are there in the parish?
- Has this number fallen since the 1950s?
- Do you still have a Post Office?

- How have bus services to your parish changed over the last fifty years? (dates of closure for local railway stations can be checked from a standard reference book; buses are harder to find out about)?

If you assemble the answers to these questions you should have enough to write a couple of paragraphs on the economic history of the parish since 1945, i.e. after the last Kelly's Directory was published.

Documentary sources:

- *Local authority reports*. It is worth checking in the local library catalogues for any unpublished local authority planning reports on particular areas, which often include an analysis of employment at the time they were written, sometimes with data at parish level. They may be published only in A4 loose bound copies, but should not be ignored.
- *Community and parish plans* (will also be useful for Social History section): for overview of occupations etc in early 21st century. These were prepared for over 70 parishes in Cumbria: for a list, see http://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/images/uploads/Parish_Plans_Gazette_October_2004.pdf. Those for Carlisle District are available in full at: http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/business/rural_communities/community_and_parish_plans.aspx
- *Village profiles*. The village profile articles published over many years in county glossy magazines (*Cumbria; Cumbria Life; Lakes & Cumbria Today; Lancashire & North West Magazine*) are a neglected source for recent economic history.
- *Google* (www.google.co.uk) Useful for modern businesses and leisure, cultural and conservation activities (e.g. sports clubs, village halls, nature reserves). Some villages have their own community websites.

AJLW
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