

Newsletter

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Welcome to the latest issue of the CCHT e-newsletter intended to keep you up-to-date with the VCH Cumbria project.

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VCH History of Gamblesby now online

After what seems a very long time, I am pleased to announce that I have produced a draft VCH history for the township of Gamblesby. For those who do not know it, Gamblesby lies about nine miles north-east of Penrith, on the Pennine edge. The Hartside Café lies within its borders. Granted to Hildred of Carlisle in the early twelfth century, Gamblesby was later held by the Neville family and Richard III. In 1787 it was acquired as part of the honour of Penrith by the duke of Devonshire. The Cavendish family are still lords of the manor today. Though Gamblesby's economy was, and still is, largely agrarian, coal and ironstone were once mined on the Fell. Gamblesby's main claim to fame is its connection with John Wesley, who visited on several occasions. Methodism was strong in the village from an early date, and local tradition states that Wesley planned the Gamblesby's first Methodist chapel, constructed in 1784. A new Methodist chapel was founded in 1864 and celebrated its 150th anniversary this year. Gamblesby's chapel of ease, dedicated to St John the Evangelist, was



Gamblesby Village

built in 1868 and closed in 2002. Its conversion into a dwelling featured on Channel 4 Television's 'Restoration Man' programme in 2012. I have now moved on to researching the neighbouring township of Glassonby, which was also part of Addingham ancient parish.

Sarah Rose

New Economic History Guidelines

VCH Drafters met at Penrith Methodist Church on 9th September. After taking stock of progress, the meeting focused on the Economic History section of a VCH article, for which we have produced a revised set of guidelines. The latter combine the national VCH guidelines with the advice in our Volunteers' Handbook, to produce a far more detailed set of guidance notes. These are now available to download from the CCHT website.

The new guidelines suggest that agriculture be addressed as three sub-sections, beginning with the physical framework. This focuses on the development of structures such as open fields and enclosure. The second section, 'agrarian institutions', examines how the land was held, while the third section looks at land use. Throughout the document, specific guidance is given on what points to include, what questions should be asked, and what sources to consult. Oral history is also promoted in these revised guidelines, as a potentially useful source of information to 'Economic History after 1945'. Information on how to gather oral testimony, together with a sample consent form, can be found on the Handbook webpage. There are plans to update guidance on other article sections over the coming months.

Local History Surgeries

Sarah Rose will be available in the Kendal or Carlisle Archive Centres on the following days should you wish to speak to her about your research.

Kendal Archives:

16 & 30 October;

13th & 27th November

Carlisle Archives:

6th November;

11th December

Eric Completes Image Links

In previous newsletters we have provided regular updates about the progress of VCH volunteer Eric Apperley in his aim of linking photographs of listed buildings on the English Heritage 'Images of England' website to each of the place pages on the CCHT website. We are delighted to announce that Eric has now completed this task. There are now links to 6479 images, covering more than 300 townships! These make a valuable contribution to our website, and we hope that you will find them of interest. You can access the links by clicking on 'Historical buildings in this township', which appears on the right hand side of (nearly) every place page. Many thanks to Eric for undertaking this huge task on our behalf!

An overlooked source: the Ordnance Survey ‘Original Name Books’

Cumbria is fortunate in being one of a handful of areas for which the Ordnance Survey’s ‘Original Name Books’ survive in The National Archives (class OS 34). These are not widely known and seem to be little-used, probably because they survive only for the four northern counties and Hampshire. When I was at Kew recently, I took a quick look at some of those for Cumberland and they appear to be a potentially valuable source for VCH purposes. Arranged by ancient parish, they record all the place-names which appear on the first edition of the Twenty-five Inch (1:2,500) plans, surveyed in the late 1850s (for Westmorland) and early 1860s (for Cumberland).

Each page tabulates the name and any variant spellings; the authority for the name (usually three local men); the situation; and ‘Descriptive Remarks, or other General Observations which may be considered of Interest’. It is the last column which sometimes contains rich pickings. Although many entries are brief and state the obvious (Low Fell: ‘a considerable hill pasture’), some provide information which would be useful for a VCH article. In particular, the occupier and the name and address of the owner are recorded for small hamlets and individually-named houses, and bridges are described and the body responsible for their upkeep (township or county) given. Sometimes considerable detail is provided, as for Rubbybanks Mill at Cockermouth, which ‘Was formerly a corn mill but now in use as a Hat & Cap Manufactory by W. Smethurst & a Fulling or finishing mill for woolen goods by James Pearson, Croft Mill, Cockermouth; property of Major Green Thompson.’ Volunteers working on township histories should be aware of the potential nuggets buried in these overlooked documents.

Angus Winchester

‘Follow Us’

Thanks to the work of Bill Shannon and Hydrant (our website technicians) you can now be kept informed of all the updates we make to the Cumbria County History Trust website – all without the use of Twitter! All you need do is click on the ‘Subscribe’ button under ‘Follow’ at the bottom of our homepage. You will then receive weekly emails informing you of all new items added to the website. You can also unsubscribe at any point by clicking the same button.

History in the Community Update

The local history display at Cliburn on 21st September (Newsletter 17) was a great success, attracting people of all ages. As well as raising over £400 for St Cuthbert's Church roof fund, VCH Drafter James Underwood was able to make use of the photos and documents that were brought in to help in his research.



LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2015

The BALH's Local History Day will be held in Birmingham on Saturday 6th June, 10.30-16.30.

The annual lecture will be given by our very own Angus Winchester: 'By ancient right or custom': the local history of common land in a European context'.

Tickets: £25 for members (£35 for non-members)
For more details visit: www.balh.org.uk

'By ancient right or custom': the local history of common land in a European context.

Angus Winchester

Professor of Local & Landscape History
Director: Regional Heritage Centre, Lancaster University



Image courtesy of North Yorkshire County Record Office

Cumbrian History in Unlikely Places

Research relating to aspects of Cumbrian history can be found in all sorts of publications. One example of this is a recent article by Guy Woolnough of Keele University on 'Blood Sports in Victorian Cumbria: Policing Cultural Change', published in the *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 19.3 (2014). So it's worth keeping your eyes peeled!

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