

Newsletter, No. 30 Autumn 2017

www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk

Victoria County History of Cumbria (VCH) Update

Since the last update I have worked closely with Richard Brockington on the history of Kirkoswald and Renwick which has now been submitted in draft to Central Office based at the Institute of Historical Research for publication as a VCH 'Short'. The draft has been accepted for peer review and comments are awaited. Work is continuing on illustrations for inclusion in the publication, a foreword, and a glossary. This will be the first printed VCH history of a Cumbrian parish (a number of draft articles are on the Cumbria County History Trust website).

Since starting I am pleased to have made a few discoveries notably about the former Midland Bank which according to the HSBC archive opened in 1865 as a sub-branch to Penrith of the Cumberland Union Banking Company (later acquired by the York City and County Bank in 1901 and in 1909 the London Joint Stock Bank). The Kirkoswald branch became part of the Midland Bank network in 1918 when the London Joint Stock Bank was purchased as part of the bank's expansion in the early 20th century. The branch features in the May 1983 edition of the branch directory but had closed by December 1983.

On Friday 22nd September I led a field trip to Troutbeck with twelve volunteers participating. We explored various themes of economic, social and religious history as well as points of architectural interest, all of which are relevant to VCH research. The day began with a visit to Jesus Church viewing the Pre-Raphaelite east window before following footpaths across the former town fields and meadow land as far as Ings Lane from where we could see the tongue of the valley and Troutbeck Park Farm. The group then followed Brunskill's vernacular trail from Townhead as far as the Institute viewing a range of traditional houses and farm buildings with slatestone walls, Lake District slate roofs, crow stepped gables, inscribed stones, corbelled or cylindrical chimneys and mullion windows. In the afternoon the group visited Townend, a National Trust property which has undergone recent restoration (photograph on next page).

The CCHT website has been updated and is still available at <http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/>. Bill Shannon has led on the updating of the website so that it can be easily viewed on mobile devices. We are in the process of revising the content and several volunteers are taking the lead on specific parts of the county. In early September we launched a media campaign seeking Cumbrian facts for the 'Did you know?' section of the website. Fiona Edmonds was interviewed on BBC Radio Cumbria and several celebrities namely Lord Melvyn Bragg and Sir Chris Bonington have provided facts. We encourage you to submit your facts to the project. A twitter feed has been set up so please follow and tweet the project (https://twitter.com/VCH_Cumbria). If you are interested in volunteering please contact me at j.p.bowen@lancaster.ac.uk.

James P. Bowen

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VCH Cumbria volunteers outside National Trust Townend, a traditional 17th century farmhouse and home of the Browne family, a wealthy yeoman dynasty.

Drafters' Meeting

The drafters' meeting was held between 11am and 1pm on Thursday 2nd November in the Beacon Room at Penrith Methodist Church. The first half of the session consisted of a presentation by Dr Fiona Edmonds, Director of the Regional Heritage Centre (RHC) and VCH Cumbria project on 'Church dedications and religious history'. The second half of the session concentrated on 'Writing a Parish History' and gave those attending the opportunity to raise issues and share experiences of research. In total 7 volunteers attended. The next drafters' meeting will be held in February 2018.

VCH at external events

Dr Fiona Edmonds gave a talk entitled 'Furness Abbey and the Irish Sea Region in the Medieval Period' at the Cumbria Local History Federation Convention on Saturday 14 October at Askam Band Hall. On Sunday 5 November James Bowen represented VCH Cumbria and Lancaster University's RHC at the Cumbria Family History Society Conference, which was held at Crooklands near Kendal. His talk, 'Family history and local history: new opportunities and approaches', discussed the challenges and opportunities which VCH research provides for modern family historians, the sources available and approaches that can be adopted. It outlined how you can explore the history of your ancestors through local, regional and contextual family and community history. On Saturday 18 November Dr Fiona Edmonds will be speaking at the Kendal Mountain Festival on 'Mountain names and Myths in Medieval

Cumbria'. For further information, see <http://www.mountainfest.co.uk/programme/event/dr.-fiona-edmonds>.

Volunteer Profile: Jane Penman, Martindale

This is the first in a series of profiles of CCHT volunteers, which will provide insights into their wide-ranging expertise, and updates on their valuable work:

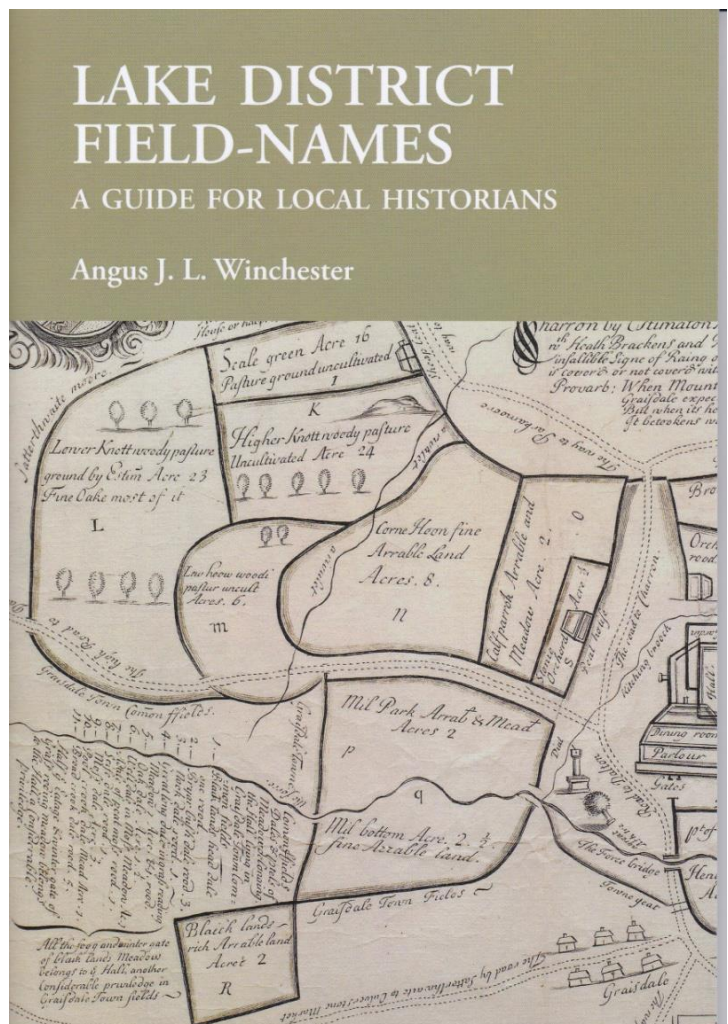
'My academic background is in Classics and Ancient History. I graduated from St Anne's College, Oxford, in 1971 in Literae Humaniores ("Greats") and spent several further years in Oxford researching for a D.Phil. in Hellenistic history. My thesis, on the historian Hieronymus of Cardia, was subsequently published in the series Oxford Historical Monographs by the OUP. After a series of jobs as a research assistant and in university teaching I was appointed Head of Classics at Wycombe Abbey School and remained in this post till I retired in 2008. I then returned to the north, to live in the family home in Martindale, an upland valley on the east side of Ullswater.

I was delighted to hear of the VCH Cumbria project, which offered an opportunity to research the history of the place I live in with the guidance of a first class team of scholars. British history was a new field to me and one I have thoroughly enjoyed exploring. My knowledge of Latin has been an advantage in reading older documents, though palaeography remains a challenge. Currently I am working on the religious history of my township and on landownership. Discovering (from his will) the existence of a Martindale curate in the mid-16th century, 70 years earlier than the first curate previously known, also (from a sketch in Thomas Machell's marginalia) that our 17th church originally had a quite different configuration, were exciting moments. A longer term task is the matching of medieval land charters to archaeology on the ground to form a picture of land tenure in Martindale over the past millennium – a painstaking jig-saw puzzle which constantly absorbs, frustrates and rewards me. Contact with skilled archaeologists has been yet another enlightening new experience.'

Jane Penman

New Book on Lake District Field-Names

The names of individual fields can help us to understand how the rural landscape has evolved over the centuries. Originally coined to identify a field by capturing what was distinctive about it, field-names often record how a field was used in the past, what it looked like or who owned it. Recorded on old maps and sometimes preserved in the memory of older residents, field-names provide fascinating raw material for local history. This book by Angus J.L. Winchester is a practical guide and toolkit for anyone interested in exploring field-names in the Lake District. It offers advice on the sources to consult in order to discover the field-names of a local area and on how to interpret the meaning of field-names, with a view to making sense of the history of fields in a chosen locality. It also contains a detailed glossary of obsolete and dialect terms encountered in field-names and a series of local maps, to illustrate field-naming patterns in different parts of the Lake District. It is conceived as a handbook for all



who are interested in the local history of Cumbria and adjacent areas. The book is now in print and will shortly be available to order through the RHC (<http://online-payments.lancaster-university.co.uk/product-catalogue/books-and-publications/regional-heritage-centre>) at £4.00 or £2.60 for Friends of the RHC.

'The Disappearing Yeoman: Windermere 1640-1841' by Pauline Wharton

'The Disappearing Yeoman: Windermere 1640-1841' by Pauline Wharton, is based on a dissertation submitted as part of an M.A. at the Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester in 2008. Both the dissertation and the book contain a reconstitution of the inhabitants of Applethwaite and Undermillbeck in 1675, and the book also contains a database of tenements with information about their ownership during the period covered. The dissertation was intended as a contribution to the debate on the reasons for the decline of the yeoman in the Lake District, by taking a different approach to previous researchers. It aimed to identify families and follow their history to find out what actually happened to them. Of course, the particular circumstances in Windermere made it different from other manors, but the conclusion she came to was that yeoman families were not generally driven out by debt – more often it was the lack of male heirs. By the late eighteenth century, there were individuals looking to build up estates, and in the nineteenth incomers wanting gentlemen's residences, who bought up tenements as they became vacant. The book is self-published and available through Amazon and costs £4.99, see https://www.amazon.co.uk/Disappearing-Yeoman-Windermere-1640-1841/dp/1974062775/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1507830802&sr=8-1-fkmr0&keywords=The+Disappearing+Yeoman%3A+Windermere+1640-1841%E2%80%99.

VCH Cumbria is on Twitter

A new Twitter feed @VCH_Cumbria has been launched. The profile page features Mercator's colourful 1595 map of Cumbria. It is planned that in the next few months Cumbria facts will be posted drawing people's attention to the project. To view the profile and follow the project, see: https://twitter.com/VCH_Cumbria. If you have any Cumbrian facts then please send them in!

Regional Heritage Centre 2017/18 Programme


The new RHC programme has been released (see next page). The first event focused on the White Lund explosion and took place on Saturday 30 September at the Storey Institute in Lancaster. This event was organised in collaboration with Lancashire Museums Service. The full programme which runs until March 2018 is given below.

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The Regional Heritage Centre offers a programme of study days and other events on the heritage of North West England which are all open to members of the public. These informative and stimulating events are very popular: early booking is recommended.

September 2017

Saturday 30: White Lund Exploration Day, marking the 100th anniversary of devastating explosions at White Lund National Filling Factory 1-3 October 1917.
Held at the Storey Institute, Lancaster

October 2017

Saturday 21: All in Good Taste - Regional Food in History and Archaeology

November 2017

Saturday 18: Space and Dissent - evidence from Lancaster Castle

January 2018

Saturday 20: Water in the North West with *Dr Alan Crosby*

February 2018

Saturday 3: Northern Names - regional aspects of the names of places and people

March 2018

Saturday 3: 45th Annual Archaeology Forum

April 2018

Saturday 28: The North Britons from the Sixth Century to the Tenth, a collaborative event with CWAAS and DGNHAS
Held at the University of Cumbria, Carlisle

May 2018

Saturday 19: Oral History in the North West. A special conference to launch the website of the Elizabeth Roberts Working Class Oral History Archive

Full details of our booking procedure are available at www.lancaster.ac.uk/rhc
To request a paper booking form please contact rhc@lancaster.ac.uk or 01524 593770

All events are held at Lancaster University unless otherwise stated.

For full details of all our events and other activities which are arranged through the year please visit our website www.lancaster.ac.uk/rhc Why not join our mailing list? Contact us on rhc@lancaster.ac.uk or call 01524 593770.