

Victoria County History of Cumbria Project: Work in Progress

Interim Draft

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Parish/township: **KIRKBY LONSDALE** (township)

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SOCIAL HISTORY

The social character of Kirkby Lonsdale must have been influenced from an early period by the presence of a very large church and the clergy who were needed to serve the town and its eight outlying townships. The first recorded mention of a school is in the later sixteenth century but its presence in a building close to the church suggests a much earlier foundation.¹ This small town or large village had therefore a greater proportion of educated inhabitants than most places of its size. On the other hand, owing to St. Mary's York being the landowner, there could be no important lay inhabitants until after the Reformation, and thereafter until the nineteenth century the larger landowners were absentees or lived on their estates outside the town. Although the 'Kings Arms' near the church, which still has many sixteenth-century features,² was probably built by Thomas Carus when he acquired the manor in 1558, his duties as a serjeant-at-law and subsequently judge of the queen's bench make it extremely unlikely that he ever lived there.³ His grand-daughter, Lady Elizabeth Curwen, may have done so briefly between the death of her husband, Sir Nicholas Curwen of Whitehaven, in 1605, and her own death in 1611. By 1638 it would seem that the building was already an inn, according to the rhymes of 'drunken Barnaby'.⁴ At that time the other important houses in the township were outside the town - Sir Thomas Preston at Biggins

¹ See under 'Schools'.

² W. H. Chippindall, 'The Hall in Kirkby Lonsdale', *CW2*, xxx (1930), 125-7. Since he described it, the original building has been divided into three. This was the inn mentioned by Lady Anne Clifford (see 'Economic History').

³ J. H. Baker, 'Thomas Carus (c.1510-1571)', *ODNB*.

⁴ Chippindall, 'Hall in Kirkby Lonsdale', quotes 'Thence to Lonsdale where I view'd/ An Hall, which like a Tavern Shewed'.

and Joseph Booth the lawyer at Deansbiggin. Henry Wilson who owned Underley in the seventeenth century and did much for the school and the church, was based at Blackwell Hall in London, where he made his fortune.⁵ The Lowthers were represented by an agent.⁶ The descendants of William Thompson at Underley, between 1854 and 1943, seem to have been the first to live locally and to have a strong personal interest in, and influence on, the town.

In the eighteenth century the Lowthers, as lords of the manor, owned the market rights and considerable land. It was worth their while to keep an agent in the town.⁷ Later the most powerful influence, particularly in the later years of the nineteenth century until the Second World War, was that of the Underley estate and its owners, as landlords of considerable property, as employers (in their heyday just before the First World War they were said to have 150 indoor and outdoor servants on the estate),⁸ and as customers for local services. Alderman William Thompson and his descendants, particularly his grand-daughter and her husband, Lord and Lady Cavendish-Bentinck, were almost synonymous with Kirkby Lonsdale, which they ruled, since they were landlords to a very large proportion of the town,⁹ with the exception of the doctors, lawyers, and a few other middle-class inhabitants, as kindly, often generous, but absolute, monarchs,¹⁰ a rule which came to an end in 1941 with the death of Lady Cavendish-Bentinck and the break-up of the estate.

Kirkby Lonsdale, as the centre of a sparsely populated area, has always provided the services, economic and social, of a much larger town. The expansion of the town in the forty years after 1970 led old inhabitants to regret the days when, in the small and close-knit community with many related families, everyone knew everyone else by name. To newcomers, however, it remained a close-knit and friendly town, with a distinct life of its own which carried on under the crowded surface presented by thousands of tourists. Many of the most influential

⁵ Ewbank, *Antiquary on Horseback*, 22-3.

⁶ Above, 'Landownership'.

⁷ Above, 'Landownership'.

⁸ J. D. Battle, ed. *Underley Hall: A History of the House and Occupants* ([Kirkby Lonsdale], n.d. [1965?]) [Copy in Kendal Public Library] This may be an over-estimate, but the 1891 census shows 40 indoor servants waiting on two family members.

⁹ It is not clear when acquisition of properties in the town began, but the Inland Revenue Valuation Record of 1910 lists over 500 separate properties, a large proportion of them within the town: CAS (Kendal), WT/DV/2/52

¹⁰ Pearson *et al*, *Annals Today*, 261-4.

inhabitants were born there, some of them the product of long-standing families. Between 1902 and 1988, with a gap of only seven years in the 1920s, the doctor's practice was in the hands of three generations of the Mathews family.¹¹ The first Pearson, a surgeon, came to the town from Longmarton in 1780,¹² and his son established a firm of solicitors in 1820 which continued into the twenty-first century, although there was no longer a Pearson in it after Alexander Pearson's death in 1954.¹³ The Wilman family appear as plumbers and glaziers in the census of 1851; soon afterwards they acquired the Green Dragon, and then the Royal Hotel, which they kept until 1957.¹⁴ The family of Jonty Wilson, for many years the town blacksmith, has a family tradition that goes back to Cromwell's day.¹⁵

Since the eighteenth century Kirkby Lonsdale has not lacked for social amenities. In 1791 it was called 'a pretty town and inhabited by genteel people'.¹⁶ In 1829 eight inns were listed: the Fleece, Green Dragon, Red Dragon, Kings Arms, Sun, Talbot, Wheatsheaf, Rose and Crown, the last renamed the Royal after Queen Adelaide's visit in 1840. Two of them, the Green Dragon and Rose and Crown, were posting houses.¹⁷ Old posters show that travelling theatrical companies gave performances in the assembly rooms behind the Green Dragon. A Savings Bank was set up in 1818.¹⁸ In 1854 the 'Market House' was erected at the corner of Market Street and Main Street, financed by a joint stock company.¹⁹ It held a Mechanics' Institute, a circulating and reference library, and a hall used for concerts and other entertainments, and for the monthly county court. Part of the ground floor was also used for the weekly corn market.²⁰

The growing social needs of the town outgrew this building, although it continued in some form until 1960, when it went into liquidation, and the ground floor was taken over by shops, the upper floor becoming two flats. In 1892 the

¹¹ Inf. Dr. G. Mathews.

¹² Pearson, *Annals*, 210.

¹³ Local inf.

¹⁴ A. Pearson, D. Kyle, A. Phillips and M. Gresson, *Kirkby Lonsdale and Lunedale Today* (London, 1996) 296-300.

¹⁵ Inf. Audrey Phillips, née Wilson.

¹⁶ Walker, *Remarks in a Tour of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, 50.

¹⁷ Parson & White, *Dir. C. & W.* (1829), 694.

¹⁸ Mannex, *Dir. Westm.* (1851), 350.

¹⁹ CAS (Kendal), WD/PP, box 6, minute book 1854-1961.

²⁰ Kelly *Dir. Cumb. & Westm.* 1873, 928.

Rev. John Llewellyn Davies²¹ had circulated a statement outlining the need for 'Public Rooms' in Kirkby Lonsdale. He specified a parish room for classes, a gymnasium for the young men, a library and reading room, and possibly a hall for lectures and concerts. He had consulted Lord Bective, who would provide land for such a venture, and he himself headed the list of donations with £500. The resulting Institute opened in 1895 in the New Road with no debt, a handsome building on two floors, designed by Vernon Crompton,²² which continued to be well used by the town in the twenty-first century.

The first lending library in Kirkby Lonsdale was in the early seventeenth century, when Henry Wilson of Underley 'made a small library in the Church of Kirkby, and gave several books.'²³ What happened to these is not known; some may have lasted long enough to be absorbed into the book club set up in 1794, and possessing by 1829 some 500 titles, kept at the house of the printer, Arthur Foster, whose 60 subscribers paid 14s. per year.²⁴ This book club was still active in 1851,²⁵ and was perhaps absorbed into the Mechanics' Institute which then, in common with others of the movement, outlived its usefulness and probably closed in the 1890s.²⁶ Davies' plans for the Kirkby Lonsdale Village Institute in 1892 included an 'adequate and creditable' library, and the building when complete had both a library and reading room. Exactly how it was organised in its first few years is not clear, but in 1903 the local council adopted the Libraries Act²⁷ and took over the responsibility. It was probably at that point moved to the large house at 10, Beckhead, which in 1894 had been taken over for the new council offices,²⁸ and where it remained for nearly a century, on the first floor and difficult of access for the less able part of the population. In 1980 the old Sandemanian chapel, which had had various educational uses,²⁹ was taken on a

²¹ See 'Religion'.

²² CAS (Kendal), WPR 19/3/2/1.

²³ Ewbank, *Antiquary on Horseback*, 23.

²⁴ Parson & White, *Dir. C. & W.* (1829), 688.

²⁵ Mannex, *Dir. Westm.* (1851), 350.

²⁶ J. Burgess, *Libraries of Cumbria* (Carlisle 1989), 26

²⁷ CAS (Kendal), WPC/7/102A Free Public Library Rules 1903

²⁸ Kelly *Dir. Westm.* (1894), 90.

²⁹ See 'Education'

long lease by Cumbria County Council from the district council, and the library was rehoused once again.³⁰

The social groups in the town at the beginning of the twentieth century included the Agricultural Society and sports clubs, Free Gardeners', Druids and Oddfellows' Lodges, and the temperance groups - Rechabites, Band of Hope, Church of England Temperance Society.³¹

The Rugby Club was founded in 1877, the bowling club in 1888, both with the help of the Underley Estate. The Cricket Club was well-established by 1852, but it did not acquire the ground on Lunefield Park, near the Devil's Bridge, until the beginning of the twentieth century.³² In 1906 a nine-hole golf course was laid out at Woodend Farm, Biggins, approached from the Whittington Road. In 1938 the lease was terminated, and the club moved to another site on the Whittington Road, outside the township boundary. In 1954 it moved to Casterton and in 1991 to Barbon.³³

In 1927 the Miss Wearings of Eavesleigh donated a piece of land in the town, between Tram Lane and the New Road, for a children's playfield, which remains a grassy space, but with amenities such as a large cycling area added more recently.³⁴

The Gardening Association, with over 300 members in 1996, was started in 1841 as the Lunesdale Floral and Horticultural Association.³⁵ The Kirkby Lonsdale Band was founded in 1815 as the Brotherly Band and has continued, it is believed, ever since, although details have been lost for parts of the nineteenth century; since 1988 it has organised an annual contest held in the Market Square on the third Saturday in June, drawing brass bands from a wide area.³⁶ The earliest Women's Institute in Westmorland was set up by Lady Bentinck in 1917 at Kearsrick.³⁷ Meetings were held in a strangely ecclesiastical building, now a

³⁰ Local inf.

³¹ Bulmer, *Dir. Westmd* (1906), 520-1.

³² Pearson *et al*, *Annals Today*, 395-6.

³³ J. Parsons (ed.), *Kirkby Lonsdale Golf Club 1906-2006 The Centenary Book* (Kirkby Lonsdale Golf Club 2006), 18, 27

³⁴ Inf. Audrey Phillips

³⁵ Pearson *et al*, *Annals Today*, 411-13.

³⁶ Pearson *et al*, *Annals Today*, 389.

³⁷ Pearson *et al*, *Annals Today*, 419.

dwelling, which was built as a memorial to the Earl of Bective who died in 1893.³⁸

The Women's Institute closed in 1997 when membership had dwindled to thirteen, those who wished to continue as members migrating to Casterton.

In the 1960s social groups in the town were listed as: Chess Club, Gardening Association, Bell-ringers, Royal Observer Corps, Young Farmers, Camera Club, Mothers' Union, Metropolitan Club, Open Youth Club, Over Sixties, Fellowship, Badminton, Young Wives, Young Communicants' Guild, Women's Institute and Girl Guides.³⁹

The Kirkby Lonsdale Civic Society was founded in 1972. It spearheaded objections to the District Council's proposal, subsequently withdrawn, to establish a country park at the Devil's Bridge.⁴⁰ In 2012 a plaque was set on a house in Queen's Square to celebrate the Society's foundation, which had arisen from a group of residents objecting to proposed development of that area.

Education

Edward Godsolve of Whittington in Lancashire,⁴¹ some time before 1580, promised £100 for the founding of a free school in Kirkby Lonsdale, provided that a similar sum could be raised in the township.⁴² In 1581 the churchwardens and 24 principal inhabitants of the whole parish were ordered to appear before the court of Edwin Sandys, archbishop of York, to report progress. The vicar and Edward Middleton of Middleton, whose names appear at the head of the list, were to ensure that all parishioners contributed, and if they refused their names were to be forwarded to the ecclesiastical court at York.⁴³

This was not the first school in the town. In his will of 1550 William Helme, priest, left his copyhold lands and £3 6s. 8d. for his 'scole at Kyrkby'.⁴⁴ His successor as schoolmaster, William Burrow of Biggins, died in 1591, and in that year the committee of Kirkby Lonsdale residents petitioned the Queen for a

³⁸ Bulmer, *Dir. Westmd* (1906), 517.

³⁹ Kendal Public Library *Kirkby Lonsdale parish leaflet* Jan. 1967.

⁴⁰ Westmorland County Council, *Devils Bridge Kirkby Lonsdale: A Plan for a Country Park* (1972)

⁴¹ There was a family of this name in Whittington, but no Edward is mentioned in the parish register.

⁴² CAS (Kendal), WDS/1/6

⁴³ Borthwick Institute, York, Ecclesiastical Commission Court Book 1580-1 ff. 90, 98, 106

⁴⁴ Lancashire Archives(Preston) WRW/L Will of William Helme 1550. The will is much damaged, but can be seen to distinguish between the 'mayntenance of the scole' (probably the testator's copyhold) and the 'upholdyng of the same Scole' for which he leaves £3 6s. 8d. The latter may be for the master's remuneration.

charter for a free grammar school.⁴⁵ As well as some difficulty in raising the sum needed, it would seem that they waited for the earlier school to be abandoned. The fact that the money raised was invested specifically for a schoolmaster's salary seems to show that they took over an existing school building, which only 30 years later. 'being but a mean thatched house', needed total renewal.⁴⁶

The charter for the Queen Elizabeth School was granted to a committee of 24 feoffees.⁴⁷ John Willinson, vicar of Kirkby Lonsdale from 1559 to 1607, headed the list. Apart from Christopher Bainbridge, of Hawkin Hall in Middleton, a fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, but also a considerable landowner, no other feoffees were churchmen. It is not clear exactly how the twenty-four were chosen, but all seem to have been men of standing, drawn from all the townships in Kirkby Lonsdale parish. Chief among them and the only one to be designated esquire, was Edward Middleton of Middleton Hall. In the acquittance of 1582,⁴⁸ which passed the original gift of £100 to Henry Wilson for the use of the proposed school in perpetuity, they refer to themselves as having been appointed, but nothing is known of the process or whether it was a peaceful one. However achieved, the charter was firmly established, the school being largely organised under its terms until 1882.

The original school, rebuilt by Henry Wilson of Underley, whose datestone gives him as 'Fundator 1628',⁴⁹ was on land given by Dame Elizabeth Curwen, the lady of the manor, who also donated land for its upkeep just outside the town, near Biggins.⁵⁰ The turnover of teachers at first was rapid: seven are listed between 1628 and 1655.⁵¹ Staffing was generous by the standards of the time. Although not specified in the letters patent, there was from an early date a second master, or usher, who taught in the second ground-floor room,⁵² allowing a division between older and younger pupils. In 1724 Mr John Pooley was mentioned as 'Head Schoolmaster'.⁵³ The usher was typically a young man

⁴⁵ CAS (Kendal), WDS1/6.

⁴⁶ Ewbank, *Antiquary on Horseback*, 22.

⁴⁷ CAS (Kendal), WDS1/7.

⁴⁸ CAS (Kendal), WDS 1/6.

⁴⁹ This was moved to the first building erected for the new school, where it remains.

⁵⁰ N & B, I, 246.

⁵¹ P. J. Wallis, 'Westmorland Schools about 1676: Christopher Wase's Survey', *CW2*, lxvii (1967), 168-85.

⁵² Ewbank, *Antiquary on Horseback*, 22.

⁵³ CAS (Kendal), WPR/19/1/1/9

waiting to go to university, but one of them, Thomas Johnson, who took holy orders during his tenure, was in post at least from 1727 until his death in 1750.⁵⁴ The school was well provided in other ways: a note of 1661 records a generous £3 12s. spent on books.⁵⁵

Over time the building deteriorated both in itself and in its position. It was surrounded by tanpits and skinyards, a bonemill and a warehouse for bones, and roadway through which ran an open sewer.⁵⁶ So it was described in the early nineteenth century, at which time the building itself had barely altered since Henry Wilson described it to Thomas Machell in 1692.⁵⁷

The new site chosen was the land at Biggins Lane originally donated by Dame Elizabeth Curwen, and the first building was erected there in 1848, designed for both day boys and boarders. Throughout the nineteenth century the number of pupils rarely rose above twenty, taught by a single master. The Endowed Schools Act of 1869 led to new schemes of management countrywide, one of which was implemented at Kirkby Lonsdale in 1882.⁵⁸ This aimed to broaden the recruitment of the governing body, to bring the curriculum up to date,⁵⁹ to impose a fairer system of fees and scholarships, and to raise the standard of teaching. Unfortunately these admirable demands were not backed by any system of inspection. However, by degrees and under a series of increasingly efficient head masters, the tide turned.

A photograph taken in the 1890s shows only 26 boys,⁶⁰ but by 1930 there were 142 pupils, about equal numbers of boys and girls, 54 boarders and 88 day students.⁶¹ This rise meant that diversity was guaranteed by the employment of assistant teachers, and a list of salaries from 1921 shows six women and two men on the staff.⁶² Through the twentieth century, in spite of two world wars, the

⁵⁴ CAS (Kendal), WPR 19/1/1/9

⁵⁵ CAS (Kendal), WD/PP, Box 7.

⁵⁶ Rev. James Harrison, Vicar of Barbon 1872-127, educated at Queen Elizabeth School, Kirkby Lonsdale, contributed 'More School History' to the School Magazine, Christmas 1919. Quoted in P. W. Randell *400 Years a School* (Cumbria C.C., 1991), 15

⁵⁷ Ewbank, *Antiquary on Horseback*, 22.

⁵⁸ CAS (Kendal), WDS1/30: Scheme for the Administration of Kirkby Lonsdale Grammar School 1882-1910

⁵⁹ To comprise reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, English grammar, composition and literature, mathematics, Latin, French, natural science, drill, vocal music. Greek was an optional extra.

⁶⁰ P. W. Randell *400 Years a School* (Cumbria C.C., 1991), 21.

⁶¹ CAS (Kendal), WDS 1/34: minutes of Governors' Meetings.

⁶² CAS (Kendal), WDS 1/38: minutes of Governors' Meetings.

second of which brought 137 evacuee girls and eight teachers from South Shields with only a day's notice, the school continued its upward trend. An analysis from 1944 shows that the pupils included 60 from the Kirkby Lonsdale locality, 50 from Sedbergh, 50 from the Bentham and Ingleton area of Yorkshire, 56 boarders from a wide variety of counties, and the last eleven South Shields evacuees.

In 1946 it was proposed to restructure Kirkby Lonsdale education, to shrink the Grammar School to 300 who would have passed the 11-plus exam., and build a Secondary Modern School for 150 children aged 11 to 14, including those from local villages as well as the town. This plan was not implemented, and was overtaken by later developments.⁶³ The school became comprehensive in 1985, and lost its boarding element. By the 1990s there were 600 pupils, and in 2011 there were some 1,370 names on roll.⁶⁴

In the mid-nineteenth century there were alternatives to the Queen Elizabeth School. The Independent minister conducted a school at the chapel; three were probably small 'dame schools', though one was conducted by a man; and the Misses Ann and Ellen Johnson kept a 'Ladies' Boarding School' in the Market Place.⁶⁵

A more comprehensive establishment, for the education of the children of poor parents, known as a subscription school, was opened in 1856 by a committee of Kirkby Lonsdale residents. The pupils paid a penny a week for tuition and a penny a week for coal.⁶⁶ Within twelve months 145 children were attending, but the accommodation in part of the old workhouse was overcrowded and unhealthy. A public meeting in March 1857 had decided that 'National Schools in Connection with the C. of E.'⁶⁷ should be erected and the two organisations combined to plan a National School a short distance outside the town, on the old Kendal Road, designed for 100 boys, 100 girls, and 50 infants under the age of seven. It opened in 1858 with 70 boys and 45 girls.⁶⁸ The head teacher was Jonas Gill until his death in 1880⁶⁹, when he was succeeded by John Taylforth, who had himself been through the school as pupil and pupil-teacher, and who

⁶³ CAS (Kendal), WC/E, box 10, *Development Plan for Primary and Secondary Education : County of Westmorland*

⁶⁴ Local information

⁶⁵ Mannex, *Dir. Westmd* (1851), 358.

⁶⁶ CAS (Kendal), WDS 155/17.

⁶⁷ CAS (Kendal), WDS 155/18: National Schools Minute Book

⁶⁸ CAS (Kendal), WDS 155/18.

⁶⁹ Memorial inscription in Kirkby Lonsdale churchyard '25 years schoolmaster of this parish'.

remained in post until 1918.⁷⁰ In 1894 the school was extended by the building of another storey, a new classroom and cloakrooms, and central heating. It now had accommodation for 140 boys, 140 girls and 120 infants, although it did not reach those numbers,⁷¹ and was served by a staff of two men and five women with five pupil teachers.⁷² During the Second World War the number of local children remained stable at about 140, but numbers rose and fell with the inclusion of evacuees from the Newcastle area, and later from Barrow-in-Furness.⁷³

In spite of alterations and additions the buildings became increasingly dated and unsatisfactory. An attempt to raise money for a new school in the 1960s was unsuccessful⁷⁴ and it was not until 1986 that a new school, St. Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School was built on a site nearer the town, next to the Queen Elizabeth School. By that time it served children from all the Kirkby Lonsdale townships, as the local schools closed,⁷⁵ except those from Firbank, Killington, and the northern half of Middleton, who moved to Sedbergh.

By the end of the nineteenth century the dame schools had vanished. In 1906 there was, however, a Pupil Teachers' Centre at the Institute, though it is not clear whether this was authorised as part of the state system, or was a private venture.⁷⁶ In 1891, the building in New Road which had been the Sandemanian chapel and would later house the public library,⁷⁷ was home to an interesting experiment. Alfred Harris, a banker from Bradford, had settled in the town at Lunefield, which he rebuilt about 1870 to plans by Alfred Waterhouse.⁷⁸ He was a rich man and took a particular interest in art and architecture. His initials occur on several buildings in the town, all of which are in a Gothic style. His chief contribution to the life of Kirkby Lonsdale was the establishment of the school of handicrafts with places for 60 pupils.⁷⁹ The prospectus announced 'The aim of the

⁷⁰ G. Pepperell, A. Phillips, J. Sparrow-Niang, *Kirkby Lonsdale National School & St Mary's Church of England Primary School* (Kirkby Lonsdale, 2008), 22. His children and grandchildren were connected with the school as pupils, teachers and governors until 1981.

⁷¹ Kelly, *Dir. Westmd* (1910) p. 91

⁷² CAS (Kendal), WDS 155/18.

⁷³ Pepperell *et al*, *Kirkby Lonsdale National School*, 73.

⁷⁴ Pepperell *et al*, *Kirkby Lonsdale National School*, 86

⁷⁵ Middleton and Mansergh closed 1952, Casterton 1972, Lupton 1980, Barbon 1982, and Whittington in Lancashire, which was also included, in 1973.

⁷⁶ Bulmer, *Dir. Westmd* (1906), 524.

⁷⁷ *Westmorland Gazette*, 1 Jan. 1982.

⁷⁸ Dalziel, *Kirkby Lonsdale and District*, 42.

⁷⁹ CAS (Kendal), WDSO 135/1/1.

classes is to provide instruction in Drawing in its application to various handicrafts.....In connection with the Board of Education and the County Council of Westmorland.⁸⁰ Classes were held two or three times a week. By January 1891 43 students had been enrolled, the majority boys aged between fourteen and sixteen. The students paid a penny or two pence per session. The first subjects covered were freehand, model drawing, and design, but by 1894 prizes were being awarded for painting, drawing, design, pottery, metalwork, photography, woodcarving and leatherwork.⁸¹ Alfred Harris was chairman only until 1899, leaving the area in 1900 and dying soon after, the classes continuing under the chairmanship of Dr. Paget-Tomlinson.⁸² The scheme flourished - by 1907 75 students were enrolled, and although at starting the age of entry was thirteen, Saturday morning classes for children of ten to thirteen were added. With the advent of war, the curriculum widened to include subjects such as first aid. A later wartime poster advertises poultry industry, wartime cookery and food production, cheesemaking and gardening.⁸³ After the First World War enthusiasm and support declined, although the 'Art Class Room' was improved in 1938 at a cost of £200.⁸⁴ There was still a dressmaking class in the winter of 1946-7, but thereafter the movement seems to have dwindled to nothing, and without a precise date of closure the movement seems to have dwindled to nothing, presumably as improved transport made the better facilities of Kendal readily available.⁸⁵

Another educational venture in the town was at Cressbrook, the house on the Kearstwick Road which had belonged to the Gregg family (see Hutton Roof). In 1913 a boys' preparatory school was established there by Felix Needham Dowson, one of its masters for a short time being the Rev. Theodore Bayley Hardy⁸⁶. When Mr. Dowson retired in 1949 the school under David Donald enlarged from 30 pupils to 110, but in time even this was too small to be viable, and in 1976 the board of governors decided to close it.⁸⁷

⁸⁰ CAS (Kendal), WDSO/135/1: prospectus 1903-4.

⁸¹ CAS (Kendal), WDSO/135/2.

⁸² CAS (Kendal), WDSO 135/1/1.

⁸³ CAS (Kendal), WDSO/135/33

⁸⁴ Kelly *Dir. Westmd* (1938), 82.

⁸⁵ Pearson *et al*, *Annals Today*, 388.

⁸⁶ He was a decorated soldier: V.C., D.S.O., M.C. See D. Raw *'It's only me'* (Gatebeck 1988).

⁸⁷ Pearson *et al*, *Annals Today*, 383-5.

Underley Hall passed through various hands after the estate was broken up following the death of Lady Bentinck in 1941. From 1939 to 1940 it had been a reception centre for children evacuated from the north-east. A boys' preparatory school, Hordle House from Hampshire, then rented it for the rest of the war. A girls' school, Oakfield, acquired the property and was there until 1959.⁸⁸ In 1960 it became a junior seminary⁸⁹ and in 1976 was bought by Acorn Care and Education for use as a school for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. In 1990 the Garden School was established in another building on the same site, for children with physical problems added to their other difficulties, the combined establishments being rechristened the Hall School.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ H. A. L. Rice, *Kirkeby Lonsdale and its Neighbourhood* (Kendal n.d.), 16.

⁸⁹ See 'Religious History'

⁹⁰ Local information.