

Newsletter



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Welcome to CCHT'S quarterly e-newsletter keeping you up-to-date with the VCH Cumbria project.



CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND
ANTIQUARIAN AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

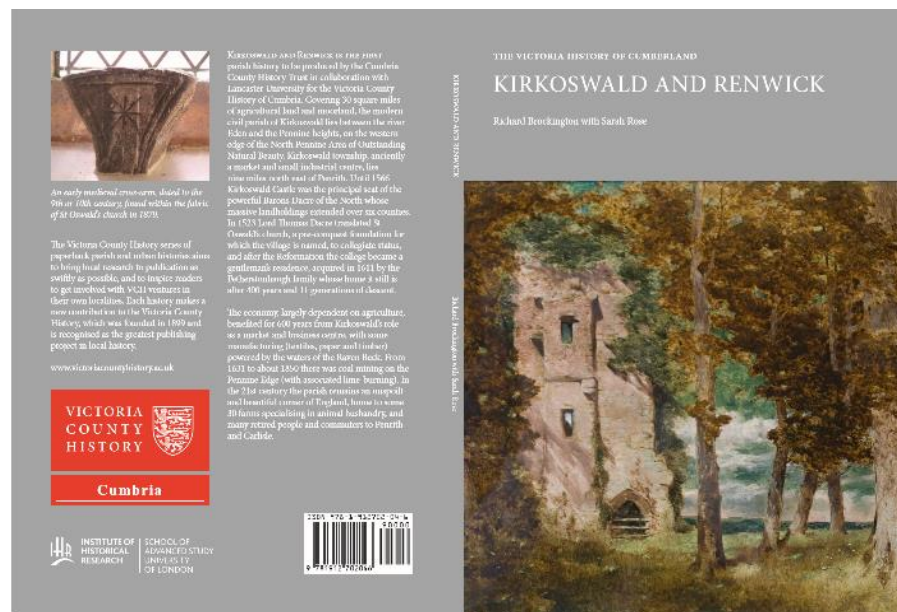


Welcome to our autumn 2018 newsletter! As well as helping to put the final touches to the forthcoming book on *Kirkoswald and Renwick*, I've also had the chance to escape the office and spend time with volunteers and project supporters at a number of VCH-related events. Highlights include our annual volunteers' field trip in September and the CLHF annual conference which was devoted to the VCH project.

Sarah Rose

Kirkoswald & Renwick

Production of the first parish history for VCH Cumbria in print, *Kirkoswald and Renwick*, is well underway. Now that the layout, maps and typesetting have almost been completed by the team at VCH Central Office in London, we expect the proofs very soon.



The eagle-eyed among you may notice that the series title is 'The Victoria History of Cumberland'. The reason for this is lies in the history of the VCH itself, for Cumberland was one of the first places where work started when the VCH was established in 1899 and there already two general volumes for VCH Cumberland: Vols I and II printed in 1901 and 1905, respectively. For publication purposes, the VCH still works on the basis of ancient counties. Our planned red book for Lonsdale ward will be the first publication of any kind for VCH Westmorland.

VCH Celebrated at CLHF Annual Conference

The VCH Cumbria project took centre stage at this year's Cumbria Local History Federation (CLHF) conference, held on 6th October at Newbiggin Village Hall. There were four speakers on the programme, all of whom have contributed to the VCH Cumbria project. This is especially true of the first speaker, Richard Brockington, who was not only instrumental in establishing CCHT, serving as its first chair then secretary, but also as the author of *Kirkoswald and Renwick*. Richard's talk focused on some of the most interesting aspects of Kirkoswald's history, which at times served as a microcosm of the history of the county as a whole. He also discussed the processes involved in VCH research; how you might have to look for sources in far-flung and unexpected places; and the importance of working with other people. Kirkoswald is an excellent example of the importance of wider community involvement – as attested by the acknowledgement of no fewer than 60 people in Richard's forthcoming book.



Richard Brockington speaking about Kirkoswald

Next to speak was Jane Penman, who is the VCH volunteer working on Martindale, a very rural upland township on the banks of Ullswater. Jane offered a fascinating glimpse into Martindale's past, particularly with her use of lidar evidence, which she has combined with documentary sources to reconstruct tenements across the township, where the division of land proved to be surprisingly egalitarian. Animals were also a key theme in this talk, as Jane presented the case that the township was named after the Marten, rather than St Martin. Other four-legged former residents of Martindale included the delightfully named 'Burgess' and 'Spinke', two oxen named in an early will of one of the farmers there.

After lunch, we heard from Dr Jane Platt, whom you will know as the editor of *The Diocese of Carlisle 1814-1855: Walter Fletcher's "Diocesan Book"*, and who has written about the religious history of Stanwix parish for the VCH. Jane has undertaken the tremendous task of transcribing for publication the several volumes of notes that Thomas Machell, the 17th century antiquarian compiled for his own county history. Machell's project failed, but he has many pearls of wisdom for anyone wishing to write their own local history. Dr Platt gave us a light-hearted look at Machell's methodology, including his several ingenious inventions. Dr Platt drew uncanny parallels between the issues faced by the 17th century and modern local historian,

including the difficulty of accessing primary sources, and the threat of others trespassing on your work. Hopefully archive conditions have improved sufficiently that VCH researchers no longer run the risk of death from catching a chill as one of Machell's acquaintance did!

The final speaker of the day was Bill Shannon, Trustee of CCHT and the author of the online VCH article on Angerton Moss. The latter served as the focus of Bill's talk, which was aimed at showing the important role maps have to play in VCH research. Angerton is the smallest place in Cumbria with a population of just 14! But this belies the complex history of land ownership and management, which Bill discussed, both before and after the Dissolution. The main value of Angerton Moss to the abbots of Furness, and to their successors, lay in leasing the 'moss rooms', some of which are still marked on OS maps. Angerton's story is that of a changing landscape: partly due to changes in the course of the River Duddon, and partly through its exploitation as a resource for fuel and later rough grazing. Bill has estimated that around 100 acres of peat has been removed over the past 500 years. As the river has both reclaimed and created land over the centuries, disputes arose over ownership and turbary rights. This has resulted in a wealth of primary source material, including 'dispute maps', which offer a snapshot of the landscape over 400 years ago.



L-R: Jane Penman, Bill Shannon, Richard Brockington & Jane Platt

Updates from the RHC

Lancaster Castle serves as the backdrop to what is known as a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC for short), all about northern English History. And it is totally free! To register for 'Lancaster Castle and Northern English History: the View from the Stronghold', visit: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/lancaster-castle>

There will be a study day devoted to Political Radicalism and Dissent in the Early 20th Century – from soldiers to suffragettes on Saturday 17 November. Visit <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/users/rhc/events/details/2018/Radicalism&Dissent.html> And don't forget that the Elizabeth Roberts' Working Class Oral history archive now has its own website where you can read transcripts of oral testimonies taken from the residents of Barrow, Lancaster and Preston in the mid-20th century: <https://www.regional-heritage-centre.org/>

Exploring Dalston Parish

This year's volunteers' field-trip was to the lovely parish of Dalston near Carlisle. Unfortunately, the day of the excursion, 19th September, was also the day the first major storm of the season hit: something which made our trip all the more memorable! Despite the inclement weather, there were a dozen in our party, including our guide for the day, David Wilcock. A Dalston resident, David is also the author of *Dalston: The Story of a Cumberland Parish*, which he wrote while volunteering for the VCH project, and which explores Dalston's 900 years of history



Exploring Rose Castle

in detail and helps to place it in the national context (published by Bookcase, £15). Our party assembled in the conveniently located Victory Hall in Dalston, where David gave a brief talk highlighting key aspects of the parish's history. We then proceeded by car to visit the grounds of Rose Castle, which only until recently had served as the palace of the Bishops of Carlisle since the Middle Ages.

Thoroughly drenched but still keen, we then made our way to Thackwood Nook, where our group was warmly welcomed by the owner, Bill Hogg, who gave us a tour of his home. The house is one of the few surviving examples of a 'Red Spear House', so-called because they were home to the medieval bailiffs of Inglewood Forest who were armed with red, six foot-long spears. The Blamire family also once lived at Thackwood Nook, including the Romantic poet Susana Blamire (d.1794). Described

as 'the muse of Cumberland', three of her works were set to music by Joseph Haydn. Her nephew William Blamire (1790-1862) was MP for Cumberland and Chief Tithe Commissioner for England and Wales. Before returning to Dalston for lunch, we



VCH Volunteers outside St Michael's. All still standing despite the gale!

made a brief visit to Highhead Chapel, which was founded in 1358. Now a private house, the chapel retains several interesting architectural features relating to its former ecclesiastical function. Later that afternoon we headed to the parish church of St Michael, which was used by medieval bishops for ordinations. There are a number of notable figures among Dalston's former vicars, including the philosopher William Paley (d.1805), who developed the analogy of the watch mechanism to justify the existence of God. The longest serving vicar was the former Chancellor of the diocese, Walter Fletcher (d.1846), who was a meticulous collector of tithes during his half century in office. Fletcher's marble memorial in the church was carved by local sculptor Musgrave Lewthwaite Watson, whose most famous work stands on the pedestal of Nelson's Column. From the Church we headed to our final stop, the 15th century Dalston Hall, now a hotel. On the way we caught a glimpse of the Bishop's Dyke, a medieval defensive barrier or head dyke which still stands at 1.5 m. in places. Our thanks to David for sharing his knowledge of the parish and for organising such a full and interesting itinerary. Better luck with the weather next year!

Hutton Roof in the Spotlight

Since 2012 the Arnside and Silverdale Landscape Trust have held a four-day village festival packed with free lectures, guided walks, workshops and exhibitions. This year's event, held 14th-17th September, focused on Farleton Knott and Hutton Roof Crag and the villages around the bases of these hills. Given that Hutton Roof is part of Lonsdale ward, and would therefore feature in our future 'big red book', I went along to the launch event in Hutton Roof Village Hall. One of the organisers, Peter Standing, gave a short lecture on the township's fascinating geology. Exploration of the local area is

encouraged by Peter's Geotrail guide (£4), which is richly illustrated and packed full of useful information. After an excellent buffet lunch, which afforded an opportunity to peruse the exhibition curated by the local community about Hutton



Hutton Roof village in the sunshine



Aqueduct inspection gate

Roof, I joined the afternoon excursion around the village led by local historian Kath Hayhurst. This included a visit to an inspection gate that marks the route of the pipeline which carries water from Thirlmere to Manchester entirely by gravity.

Sarah Rose

Volunteer Profile: Patricia Garside



Pat Garside

Though I spent my working life as a social historian, I felt very much a beginner when I was recruited as a volunteer on the VCH Cumbria project. None of my previous research had been connected with Cumbria, none of it had been concerned with rural matters and little related to anything before 1850. As a committed urban historian, with a passion for housing, planning and environmental issues, I peered with trepidation at my new terrain that initially lacked any of the landmarks that I was interested in. Tackling the history of Bampton, a sparsely populated upland parish, was new ground indeed.

Two things drew me on – one was that living in the parish since 1996 had given me the chance to get involved personally.

Many people relate first to the landscape of the Lake District but my key was its history, especially as local people had experienced it. Unravelling the past through conversation was essential and oral history projects, especially about the impact of the Haweswater reservoir, quickly followed. Entering what for me were the equally forbidding waters of Bampton's medieval history remained daunting. But the excellent Volunteers' Handbook produced for the project proved a great guide and support, backed with personal assistance from the Volunteer Coordinator and the regular volunteers' meetings.

Through my involvement with CCHT and the VCH, I feel I have gained a level of understanding about local and regional history that would have been impossible working independently. It has rekindled my interest in periods that I haven't thought about for decades and has introduced me to sources that I had no previous knowledge of. And it keeps my computer knowledge up to date!

Pat Garside

Archive Closure Update

Kendal Archive Centre is not expected to reopen now until early in 2019, though the microfilm collection can still be accessed through Kendal Library. Whitehaven Archive Centre is still on course to close towards the end of 2018 for around 12 months.

Victoria Cross Recipients

To mark the 100th anniversary since the end of WW1, the CCHT website has new pages devoted to the men who were awarded the Victoria Cross. Nationally, 628 individuals were singled out for the highest award for bravery. Of these nine were Cumbrians born and bred, whilst two more, born elsewhere had become residents of Cumbria by the time of the war. In the case of each name listed, we will be adding a link to the citation for the award, with further links to each individual's story.

<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/heroes-wwi>

Cumbrian Sources at Lancaster University Library

Whilst based at Lancaster University in the early 1970s Professor Alan Macfarlane carried out research on Kirkby Lonsdale parish. His papers include notes and photocopies of material at Carlisle (D/LONS collection), Kendal (parish records), Lancashire Record Office (wills and inventories) and from other miscellaneous repositories including Trinity College, Cambridge and libraries in Leeds. Much of this was published in his classic works. His notes and photocopies of original documents are held at in Special Collections at Lancaster University Library providing a further resource and ready access to documents held elsewhere. A list of this material was recently compiled by James Bowen and can be made available by Sarah Rose.

Creating a 'Story Bank'

Given our plans to write and publish a red book on Kirkby Lonsdale, it is timely news to hear that the Kirkby Lonsdale Community Interest Company has successfully bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (£9,900) and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Sustainable Development Fund (£3,044) to create 'The Vault: A Story Bank'.

The plan is to turn the original strong room, in the Visitor Information Centre in The Old Bank on Main Street, into an interactive installation where safety-deposit boxes can be unlocked and the stories of the objects within revealed. Locals will be encouraged to share their knowledge and passion for the area and its heritage by making 'deposits' to The Vault.



Bank on Main Street as it was in 2012; now a Visitor Information Centre. © English Heritage

Remembering Women's Protest in the North

Remembering Resistance: A Century of Women's Protest in the North of England is a HLF project being run by Dr Sarah Marsden and Dr Chris Boyko of Lancaster University to examine women's involvement in protests in the north of England. As well as events and talks, they plan to use volunteer researchers to collate artefacts associated with protest movements, gather oral histories, and archival accounts of protestors, past and present. To learn more about the project, including how to become a volunteer researcher, visit <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lica/news-and-events/news/2018/290618--remembering-resistance/>

And to continue this theme, 'Woman on Fire' is a one-woman show coming to Carlisle on 10th November. Written as part of the 'Vote 100' celebrations, the play will be performed at Stanwix Main House Theatre, University of Cumbria, Brampton Road, Carlisle. Tickets £10. <http://bit.ly/wofCarlisle>

Poor Law Project

The Universities of Keele and Sussex are running a project to investigate the poor law in Cumberland, Staffordshire and East Sussex by focusing on Overseers' vouchers, which are receipts listing goods provided to the poor. Volunteers are supporting the Cumberland part of the project, meeting at Carlisle Archive Centre on Wednesdays to look at vouchers for Wigton parish. The aim is to use the vouchers to write partial biographies of pauper, tradespeople, administrators, and workers who are not represented elsewhere in the historical record in consistent ways. To find out more about the project or to volunteer, visit <https://thepoorlaw.org/> or email direct Dr Peter Collinge p.r.collinge@keele.ac.uk

Thanks to a grant from FOCAS, Carlisle Archive Centre has recently acquired a copy of Steve Hindle's *On the Parish? The Micro-Politics of Poor Relief in Rural England c.1550-1750* (Oxford 2006). The author acknowledges Cumbria's wealth of material on this topic: 'one of the finest archives on negotiations over the entitlement to relief is that of the Cumberland magistracy in the late 17th and early 18th centuries'. Petitions for poor relief are in the Quarter Sessions Rolls.

CONTACTS

VCH Cumbria Project Director: Dr Fiona Edmonds, History Department, Bowland College, Lancaster University, LA1 4YT. Tel: 01524 594297. Email: f.edmonds@lancaster.ac.uk

VCH Cumbria Assistant Editor: Dr Sarah Rose, History Department, Bowland College, Lancaster University, LA1 4YT. Tel: 01524 593141. Email: s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk

CCHT Secretary: Ms Tiffany Hunt, Yew Tree Cottage, Barn Garth, Cartmel, Cumbria LA11 6PP. Tel: 015395 36302. Email: tiffanyhunt59@gmail.com