

Newsletter

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Welcome to the CCHT e-newsletter!
Keeping you up-to-date with the VCH
Cumbria project.



CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND
ANTIQUARIAN AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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With all the recent rain, I'm hard pressed to remember the warmth of the sun that I and VCH Volunteers enjoyed on our visit to Waberthwaite back in August. Still, there's plenty to look forward to over the coming months, including the printing of a new Volunteers' Handbook, a guest lecture in November, and the start of a new training programme.
Sarah Rose, Assistant Editor VCH Cumbria

Cumbrian Scientists - Lecture 28 November 2019

We are delighted to announce that Robert Fox, Emeritus Professor in the History of Science at the University of Oxford, has kindly agreed to give a talk to VCH Volunteers and members of CCHT on the theme of Cumbrian scientists. This will take place on **28th November** at Penrith Methodist Church at 12pm, immediately after a VCH Drafters' meeting. As spaces are limited, please get in touch to book your place via Sarah Rose (s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk; 01524 593141).

VCH Volunteers' Annual Field Trip, 28th August

For our field trip this year, we sampled the delights of West Cumbria, focusing on the ancient parish of Waberthwaite. Although it measured less than 2,000 acres, part of which is uninhabited open fell, Waberthwaite holds plenty of interest, including the remains of a 10th century Anglo-Norse cross (right).

This, our first and long over-due foray in the west of the county, was motivated by the fact that Alan Clegg, a resident of Waberthwaite, recently joined our ranks as a VCH volunteer. Having already drafted several sections of his article on Waberthwaite, Alan made the ideal guide for the day. It was also one of the first field trips in a long time where the weather was kind!



Anglo-Norse cross-shaft in churchyard

We met at the village hall in Waberthwaite's largest settlement, the hamlet of Lane End, which lies on the southern border of the ancient parish. The boundary stone can still be seen across the road from the school that now serves the united civil parish of Waberthwaite and Corney. We received a warm welcome and Alan talked about some of the highlights of Waberthwaite's history. This included the Woodall family, who have been producing hams and sausages in Waberthwaite since 1828. They have supplied the Titanic, Concorde and, more recently, Her Majesty the Queen.

Our first site visit was to the former quarry (Alan having helpfully cut through the brambles so we could get a closer look). Now conserved as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, the quarry was once the main employer in the parish and many of Waberthwaite's houses were built for quarry workers. We then headed to St John's church, which lies on the estuary of the River Esk. Though it is next to a working farm, it is a very peaceful spot, with a view of the railway bridge (below).



Railway bridge crossing the Esk estuary

St John's has many historical features. Originally dedicated to St James, the church is thought to lie on medieval foundations, and its two bells date from the 15th century. But the remains of a 9th-century Anglian cross shaft and a 10th-century Anglo-Norse cross shaft in the church yard shows that the site has long been a place of worship.

The Georgian interior of the church is also rather special, having remained untouched since its refurbishment in 1807. If you compare the image below with one from 1890 on the [Cumbria Image Bank](#), you can see little has changed. In addition to the box pews, key features include the coat of arms of George II on one of the walls; a carved Wooden pulpit with the date 1630; and a medieval sandstone font reputedly made from a Roman pillar. Hyde and Pevsner described the interior as 'homely', but we spent quite a bit of time discussing the various features. The local community have set up the St John's Heritage Project to raise money to preserve and conserve the church and its artefacts. You can find out more via the group's Facebook page.



Interior of St John's church



VCH Volunteers at St John's, Waberthwaite

After lunch, some of us sampled the delights of Woodall's shop before we made the short journey to Ravenglass to take a look at the Roman Bath House. At four metres high, the walls are among the tallest Roman remains in the north of Britain. The bath house stands just outside a Roman Fort, of which only the earthworks can be seen. This ended a very enjoyable field trip – hopefully the first of many to this part of Cumbria.

Skills Training

Some of the funding that CWAAS has generously provided VCH Cumbria will be used over the next three years for training events and materials. This will include a new edition of the **VCH Volunteers' Handbook** and a research skills training programme. As well as cultivating an interest in history and archaeology among members of the public, we hope this will make more people aware of the VCH and CCHT, and possibly help us recruit more volunteer researchers to the project. We are currently in talks with Morecambe Bay Partnership about the delivery of training sessions in the Furness Peninsula, which is a key target area for new volunteers. Potential topics could include how to access archival sources; geology and geography; cartography; palaeography; place and field names; vernacular architecture; reading the archaeological landscape. So please watch this space for further updates.

Research Grants

Are you researching an aspect of the history of Cumbria and require some financial assistance? If so, the Friends of Cumbria Archives (FoCAS) may be able to help you. FoCAS offers grants of up to £250 to support research and writing on an aspect of the history of Cumbria. This might include costs such as travel and photography. Normally, funded research will be undertaken in one of the four branches of the Cumbria Archive Service and or/ in local studies libraries in the county. Successful applicants will be encouraged to publish their work and will be expected to contribute a summary to FoCAS's newsletter. To be eligible for your application to be considered, you have to be a member of FoCAS. Further details, including and application form, can be found on [FoCAS's website](#).

News from Cumbria Archive Service

In May 2019, new access arrangements were brought in on a six-month trial basis at Kendal Archives, following its re-opening after a major refurbishment. Many of us were unhappy with the new system, particularly the limit on the number of documents that could be ordered in a day. Over the summer we encouraged VCH volunteers to contribute to the consultation exercise held by Cumbria Archive Service and in September CCHT, together with other local organisations like FoCAS and CLHF, wrote to Cumbria County Council about our concerns over the changes. We are now delighted to say that all the feedback has been taken on board in a positive way. Many thanks to all who took part – it seems to have made a difference.

CAS are now [proposing the following changes](#), subject to staff availability:

- A minimum of 24 hours' notice to reserve a space in the searchroom
- Documents may be ordered on the day rather than in advance.*
- No pre-set restriction on the number of documents that can be seen in a day.
- The archive centre will be open 3 days a week, Wednesday to Friday, 09.30am to 16.30pm.
- The searchroom will remain open over lunchtimes subject to staff availability, lunchtime closures will be notified on our website. Productions will not be possible over lunchtime.

*some documents are stored in an out store and will require a week's notice.

CAS are looking for feedback on these proposed changes by **1st November 2019**. Please complete their short [online survey form](#). You can also give your comments by completing a consultation form at [Kendal Archive Centre](#), or by using their [feedback form](#) to contact the Senior Archivist.

These proposals mean visits will have to be limited to Wednesday – Friday, but this restriction allows for greater flexibility when it comes to making an appointment and document ordering. The removal of restrictions on the number of items, and the ability to order on the day is a very welcome move as far as researchers are concerned, particularly those involved with the VCH Cumbria project.

Your feedback really does help, so please submit your thoughts about the new proposals before the 1st November deadline.

In other archive news, the [planned closure of Whitehaven Archive Centre](#) has been postponed until 2020.

Report from CLHF Convention, 5th October 2019

For the second year running a major contribution was made by VCH volunteers to the annual convention of the Cumbria Local History Federation (CLHF) which this year was held at the Helena Thompson Museum, Workington.

Bruce Bennison, who is researching the parishes of Croglin and Cumrew for VCH Cumbria, spoke on the subject of 'Early Medieval West Cumbria', drawing on his extensive knowledge as both an archaeologist and museum curator to summarise all that we know about West Cumbria between the departure of the Romans and the arrival of the Normans. He stressed the importance of the Irish Sea and close contact of the coast of Cumberland with Ireland, the Isle of Man and Galloway. There were several significant 'players' in Cumberland, including the descendants of the pre-Roman tribes, the Northumbrians and the Scandinavians both from Ireland and east of the Pennines. Roman roads continued to provide the infrastructure, stressing the importance of Carlisle which had been a Roman military base of strategic importance, and continued to be an important central place after the departure of the legions. So did Birdoswald, and (here he introduced the evidence of LIDAR) the Roman bases at Maryport and Ravenglass. Bruce also considered the survival of Christianity, referring to a letter from St Patrick to a Cumbrian chieftain called Coroticus, and the strong survival of stone monuments from the Northumbrian and Scandinavian periods (Addingham, Bewcastle, Irton, Workington, Gosforth – all illustrated by fine photographic slides).

Harry Hawkins, a VCH volunteer working on Ainstable, spoke on the connections between Cumbrian monasteries and the Irish Sea Province. His talk followed on comfortably after Bruce's being concerned mainly with the two centuries after the Norman conquest when many religious houses were founded throughout Europe. In Cumbria there were twelve monasteries, Lanercost, St Mary's Priory, Carlisle, Wetherhal, Armathwaite Nunnery, Holm Cultram, St Bees, Calder, Seaton Nunnery, Furness, Conishead, Cartmel and Shap. In Dumfries and Galloway there were nine, Souleseat, Glenluce, Whithorn, Tongland, Sweetheart or New Abbey, Drundrennan, St Mary's Isle, Holywood and Canonbie. St Mary's, Carlisle, had an interest in St Thomas' Priory in Downpatrick. Holm Cultram had large estates in Dumfries and had to agree with Drundrennan not to acquire any more land east of the river Nith. Holm Cultram also had saltpans on the coast near Colvend and sent monks to recolonise Grey Abbey in Ulster. St Bees also had saltpans on the north coast of the Solway, links with Nendrum Priory in Ulster and several manors on the Isle of Man. Furness Abbey had connections, which were sometimes strained, with at least six monasteries in Ireland, most of which had ended by 1300.

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The one abbey on the Isle of Man Rushen, was a daughter house of Furness with which it maintained connections until the Dissolution. Cartmel priory was given a church in Kilrush, Ireland, and Conishead freedom from tolls throughout the Isle of Man. Lanercost, Wetherhal, Shap and the two nunneries had no known connections around the Irish Sea. Harry stressed the importance of the Irish Sea to his study and showed the many connections in religious relationships, ownership of land and trade between the monasteries. To end he described the design and evolution of sea going vessels ships available in the 12th and 13th centuries, several accounts of shipwrecks at Skinburness reinforced the hazards of navigating the Irish Sea.

Richard Brockington

Lake District Archaeology Conference

CCHT will be represented at the Lake District National Park Authority's annual Lake District Archaeology Conference on Saturday 9th November at the Rheged Conference Centre, Penrith. So please come and say hello! The conference costs £15 (including refreshments), with a lunch option for an additional £10. For more information and to book, call 01539 724555 or visit the [LDNP website](#).

Regional Heritage Centre

The RHC's Programme of events for 2019-20 has now been released, starting with a Study Day to mark the 200th anniversary of the Lancaster Canal. Held in collaboration with the Canal and River Trust, **Lancaster Canal – Past, Present and Future** will be held on **Saturday, 30th November**. For further information and to book your place, please visit the [RHC website](#).

This will be followed by an event on **Saturday 25th January, 2020** that examines North West Antiquaries and the development of historical writing (c. 1650-1850). Speakers include some familiar faces, such as Sarah Rose and Bill Shannon, and so the contributions antiquaries have made to the VCH will get a mention!

CCHT Associate Membership

CCHT has recently introduced an Associate Membership scheme. This allows postgraduate students to join CCHT for free, for the duration of their studies. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please ask them to contact the Membership Secretary, Lorna Mullett (wastwater@talktalk.net).

New Online Resources

We are continually adding new resources to the CCHT website. Recent additions on the [‘About County’](#) page, includes a compilation of all historic population data for Cumberland and Westmorland since 1563. There is also a guide to the various national trails in the county.



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Volunteer Profile: James Renwick-Smith

Venturing into the history of a rural parish community within Cumbria has been a new and exciting challenge for me. Having recently graduated from University I have been keen to use my knowledge and experience to good use. My studies as a history undergraduate primarily focused on national political discourse whether in seventeenth century England or twentieth century Europe. Therefore, investigating the social history of a rural parish community will be a new experience.



Having lived within Orton village since 1997, I have been eager to discover more about the history of this hidden gem in the Eden Valley in the former county of Westmorland. Being one of only a handful of English villages still to hold a Manor Court which currently manages various heritage buildings, monuments and parcels of land immediately sparked my curiosity as to the extent of economic success within the settlement. Despite having always been a village, it received a market charter in 1336 with fairs granted by the Crown over succeeding centuries which eventually became the monthly Farmers Market existing today. From this, I plan to explore when and how Orton benefited the most from economic developments. When exploring the fellsides of Orton you immediately understand the importance of a primarily rural sheep farming economy with hundreds of field enclosures scattered across the landscape. Industries of quarrying and lime-burning which existed within Orton during the eighteenth and nineteenth century can be appreciated by visiting the limestone pavements atop the ridges of Orton Scar and Great Asby Scar.

Before and after University I participated in excavations for the Lunesdale Archaeological Society outside the neighbouring village of Tebay. This involved uncovering a Roman fort in the heart of the Lune Gorge and Iron Age settlements below the Howgill Fells, providing me with a framework for landscape studies. When at University I studied to some degree the economic history of England in the late Medieval era which although challenging at times allowed me to appreciate feudalistic and early modern economics. Nevertheless, the study of Manorial Records and Trade Directories will be a new experience for me and learning how to use these resources will require careful attention.

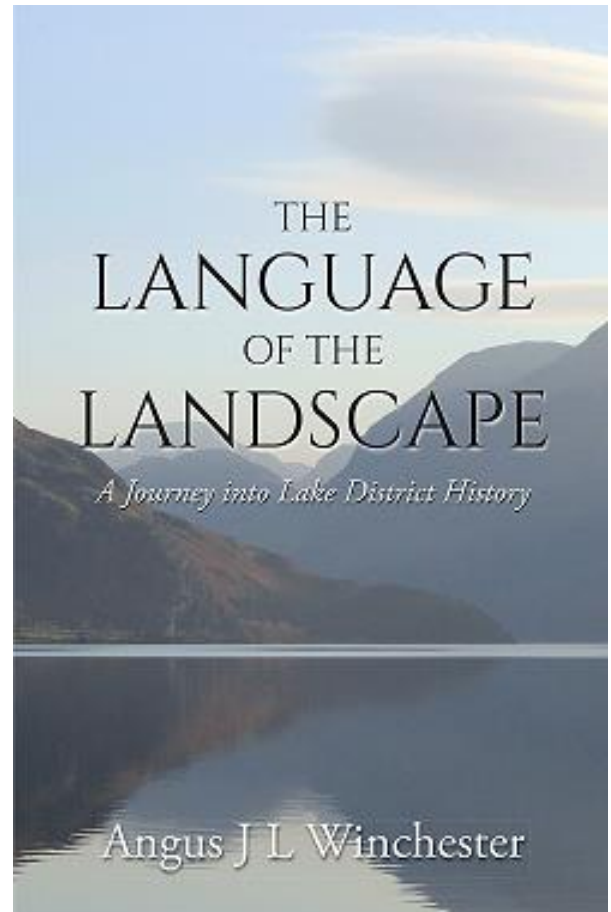
Currently, I am volunteering for the Westmorland Landscape Partnership Scheme specializing in local heritage projects.

James Renwick-Smith, VCH Cumbria Volunteer

New Book on Landscape of the Lake District

Angus Winchester, Emeritus Professor of Local & Landscape History at Lancaster University and the former Director of VCH Cumbria, has written a new book – *The Language of Landscape: A Journey into Lake District History*.

On a journey from Cockermouth through the Vale of Lorton, to Crummock Water and Buttermere, part of the Lake District he has known intimately since childhood, Angus Winchester shows how clues to the evolution, history and culture of the Lakeland landscape may be found in the names given to its farms, becks, villages, fields and boundaries. The language of the landscape can speak to us, not only in place-names but also in tangible features and through layers of memory and meaning built up across the centuries.



‘A marvellous book. An engaging and inspiring read – the fruit of a lifetime’s scholarship and love of place. Its insights into upland life and landscape through the centuries reach far beyond the Cumbrian valley it depicts.’

– Professor Diana Whaley. Author of *A Dictionary of Lake District Place Names*.

‘This book is an eloquent expression of that deepest of human needs, the longing for roots. The author has poured into it the distillation of a lifetime’s devotion to the history, people and terrain of five parishes in the north western Lake District, all of whose streams flow into the River Cocker (‘the crooked one’).’

– Philip Walling. Author of *Till the Cows Come Home* and *Counting Sheep*.

The book will be published on 8th November by Handstand Press. Priced £10 (ISBN: 9780957660977), it will be available from bookshops, via email handstandpress2019@gmail.com, or [online](#).

Copies of Angus’s *Lake District Field-Names: a guide for the local historian*, is also still available to buy, priced £4, from the [Regional Heritage Centre](#).

Parish packets – a neglected source?

This article was first published in the May 2018 issue of the Newsletter of the Friends of Cumbria Archives (FoCAS), 'FOCAS 102', and is adapted and reproduced here by kind permission of the author, Adrian Allan.

In a series of over 300 packets of 'parish deeds, terriers and inventories', the Carlisle Archive Centre holds an important class of record of the diocese of Carlisle (ref. DRC 22) which usually supplement the surviving records of individual parishes. These notes are based on my work, as a volunteer, checking the contents of the packets to supplement the Centre's list of the packets to note their covering dates and exceptional contents. It should be noted that at any one time some of these packets may be with the diocese's Registrar and that access to the packets is ordinarily restricted to those who are researching an article on the parish in question for VCH Cumbria.

Since the Middle Ages, it has been a requirement that bishops conduct periodic visitations of their dioceses. In a canon of the Church of England in 1571, a duty to make and present copies of terriers of the property of individual churches was enjoined; in the diocese of Carlisle, such terriers, drawn up by the incumbent and the churchwardens, were normally presented on the occasion of the bishop's visitations and form a principal element of the parish packets, the earliest dating from 1579 (for Addingham). Generally speaking, relatively few copies of such terriers can be found amongst the records of individual parishes. In addition, we are fortunate that William Nicolson, who as bishop of Carlisle (1702 – 18) exceptionally held regular visitations in 1704, 1707, 1710, and 1713, compiled a record, *Miscellany Accounts of the Diocese of Carlile, with the Terriers delivered in to me at my Primary Visitation [in 1704] by William Nicolson, late Bishop of Carlile*, which, in an edition by Richard S Ferguson, was published by CWAAS in 1877; this text reproduces the text of over a half a dozen glebe terriers of 1704, copies of which do not survive in the DRC 22 sequence.

The quality of information in the terriers varies considerably but in every case where glebe land exists it is described, so revealing agricultural systems and the enclosure of fields which might otherwise be unrecorded. A significant minority describe livings' buildings in some detail, often recording their dimensions and whether they are thatched or slated. For example, Bromfield in 1682 recorded that the vicarage had a kitchen, hall, parlour and buttery below, with four chambers above and a study above the entry; Matterdale's vicarage in 1777 was still thatched.

Some parish terriers additionally record the tithes payable by parishioners. The packet for St Lawrence, Appleby, for example, includes a valuation of the corn, hay, etc. tithes due to the vicar, dated August 1816, listing the names of the landlords and occupiers and the acreages of barley, wheat, etc., per individual township.

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Some early terriers enumerate churches' plate and furnishings, those of the latter half of the 20th century very occasionally supplementing their lists with photographs or perhaps a full record created by members of NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies). Clearly the wholesale destruction of church art and furnishings at the Reformation resulted in exceptionally few chalices and other church plate surviving.

Nowadays, Carlisle Cathedral's Treasury displays the communion cups and other church plate of a selection of individual parishes, including a 14th century holy-water stoup from Wreay Church (which may have originated in Suffolk or Essex), a 15th century chalice from Old Hutton, and communion cups and other vessels dating from the reign of Queen Elizabeth I onwards.

Unexpected details of religious affiliation are provided by Burgh-by-Sands whose 1704 terrier, besides recording that its vicarage house was in repair, noted that 'besides Quakers, we have these Dissenters in our parish [listing eight persons] who neither come to church nor baptise their children with us' and by Orton, Westmorland, which in an undated terrier possibly of a similar date also makes reference to Quakers.

Besides the series of terriers, the parish packets in some cases include such records as the sentences (pronounced by the bishop) of consecration of churches and churchyards (and their extensions), with associated plans, generally dating from the 19th and 20th centuries and, in more recent decades, copies of the Privy Council's authorisations of the amalgamation of livings, and in several cases ecumenical agreements for the sharing of church premises (as in the case of the parish of Lamplugh with Ennerdale & Kirkland Methodist Church, 1995). Also in the same sequence of packets are the sentences of consecration and associated plans and papers concerning civic and other cemeteries, including Carlisle Cemetery, 1855, Kendal Cemetery, 1868, and Workington Cemetery, 1878.

The earliest record found in the sequence of parish packets is the unique letters testimonial of the consecration of the chapel of the Virgin Mary, Crosthwaite, Westmorland, by Cuthbert Scott, Catholic bishop of Chester (in whose diocese Crosthwaite then was), in January 1557. A former Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, Cuthbert Scott, an eloquent preacher, was to lead resistance to the Oath of Supremacy in Queen Elizabeth's first Parliament, and in consequence to be deprived of his see in June 1559.

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