

Newsletter

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

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‘CCHT is for Life, not just for Lockdown’: A message from the Chairman

The tenth anniversary of the CCHT passed quietly in 2020 due to Coronavirus. We started out in 2010 to create a community-based Victoria County History including the parishes and townships for the whole of the modern county of Cumbria.

We are making good progress thanks to our volunteers, our directors and colleagues, our trustees and our supporters. Our website <https://cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk> is very popular and is updated regularly.

Our approach to finances has been to look ahead and secure funding for periods of three years. This we have done successfully and have funds to cover our work until September 2022. We are a membership organisation: the support of our members is vital. In 2018 we introduced life memberships. We had a good response, and so I am writing now to ask those who are able to consider life membership.

You can become a life member, whatever your age, for a one-off payment of £1,000 (or more if you wish). If you are a tax payer we can claim Gift Aid making your gift worth £1,250. (Higher rate taxpayers can reclaim tax, which means that a gift worth £1,250 to us costs only £750 if you pay tax at 40%.)

If you wish to become a Life Member please contact the Trust’s Secretary, Lorna Mullett (contact details at the end of the Newsletter) and we will send you a form to complete. Our existing annual membership will continue; we are always keen to attract new members.

Thank you for your support,

Bryan Gray

Thank you to Richard Brockington

From all of us at CCHT, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Richard Brockington who has served the Trust for 12 years, first as its Secretary and latterly as a Trustee representing CLHF. Richard was also one of the first VCH Cumbria volunteers and in 2019 his book on Kirkoswald and Renwick, the first parish history for the VCH Cumbria project, was published. The new Trustee representing CLHF is Ruth Lawley who is also actively researching Croglin for the VCH.

Reflections by a life member

It's now more than a decade since the CCHT was launched, and it's quite difficult to recall the sense of anticipation, coupled with deep uncertainty, that marked the beginning of the Cumbria VCH project. Reflecting on that time, it was the foresight and determination of Richard Brockington, Bryan Gay, and Angus Winchester that ensured the project got launched when it did, with the magnificent results we all celebrate. Fiona Edmonds and Sarah Rose have taken on that mantle and there is much more to come.

Recently I was one of a group of people who accepted the invitation to become a life member, by payment of a single £1000 subscription, with Gift Aid adding a bonus. I did so because I am clear about the quality of the project and have confidence in its future. The work combines the best elements of a long-term project: absolute adherence to the highest standards of scholarship; diligent deployment of primary sources; and the vital involvement of trained volunteers that makes the volumes produced belong to the communities they describe.

As hopes rise of a return to libraries and archives by members of a vaccinated population, more life members would be a wonderful stimulus to VCH Cumbria and an investment in its future . . . and, in case you are wondering, this comment was offered to, not solicited by, the Editor. It seemed a good moment to sound this word of encouragement to anyone who might be thinking about joining in the project in this special way.

Marion McClintock

VCH Workshop Recordings

In the autumn, VCH Central Office organised a series of online workshops related to VCH topics. If you missed them, you can watch the videos via these links:

<https://www.history.ac.uk/whats/ihr-events-archive/analysing-historic-settlement>

<https://www.history.ac.uk/whats/ihr-events-archive/national-archives-medieval-state>

<https://www.history.ac.uk/whats/ihr-events-archive/reading-and-writing-historic-buildings>

History of Croglin Church

The Fellfoot Forward project, run by the North Pennines AONB, covers an area where VCH research is underway on several townships. VCH volunteer Ruth Lawley has contributed to the project blog, Fellfoot Voices, with a piece on the 800-year history of Croglin church: https://www.northpennines.org.uk/croglin_church_history/

CCHT Associate Membership

Since establishing its Associate Membership scheme, CCHT is delighted to welcome three new members, all of them postgraduate students.

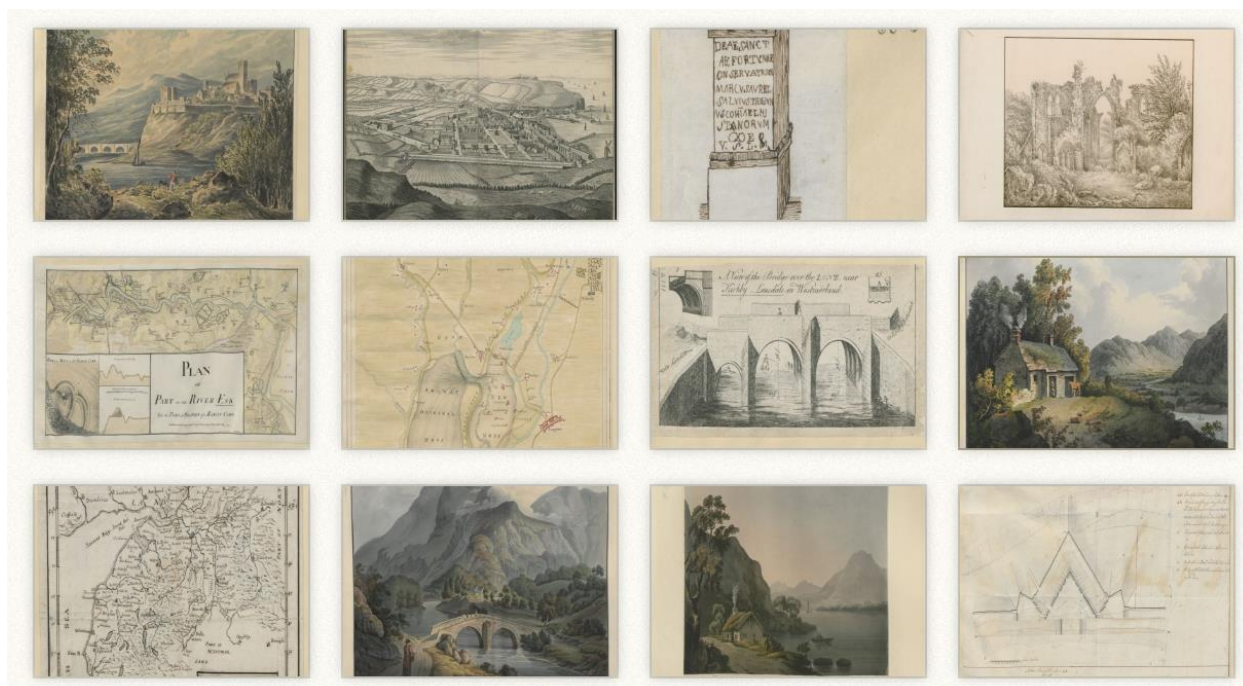
New Membership Secretary Needed

As I have moved to the position of Secretary of the CCHT there is still a vacancy for a Membership Secretary. If you are at all interested in considering taking this on please do contact me at wastwater@talktalk.net and I will let you know what it entails. Many thanks.

Lorna Mullett

CCHT website going from strength to strength

One of the effects of Lockdown has been more people using online resources at home. CCHT has benefited from this, with a highly satisfying 5000 – 6000 unique sessions (visits) per month to the site since March last year. During this period, a considerable effort has also been made in adding more resources and improving existing content. Among the new additions had been extensive material relating to county-wide tithes (as Eric Apperley explains below) and images from the King George III archive. The latter has c.7000 items of which 500 relate to Cumbria and 12 of these have, with permission from the British Library, been put on our website. One of the biggest drivers of traffic to the website has been our 'Interesting Facts'. We are up to 65 and counting but aim to reach 100! If you can help us reach our target then please get in touch.



Images relating to Cumbria from the King George III archive:

<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/gallery/king-george-iii-topographical-collection>

Tithe Commutation Information Online

It was recently realised that there is a wealth of historical information in the documentation that arose from the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836, yet there is little mention of it in our database. A project has now been completed to post this data on each township page containing the key information where this is known (usually the tithe map, landowners and the apportionment agreement) and where the source data can be found (mainly Cumbria Archives). In addition, there is an extensive [Explanatory Article](#) which can be accessed from the Map section of the Resources Home Page or the Landownership section of the About County Home Page. Researchers wishing to follow up on such material need to contact County Archives (when they reopen) well in advance to establish when, and where access is possible. There are tithe maps recorded for 216 out of the 348 townships which are being used for the VCH project, and there may be more material for 105 more, with 27 where no record is known.

Eric Apperley

Penrith and the POTUS

The recent inauguration of Joe Biden as president of the United States included the traditional swearing-in of the new incumbent with an oath, with his hand on the Bible, to uphold the constitution of the Republic. In President Biden's case, the oath of office was taken on an heirloom family copy of the Scripture. Broken lettering on the spine of the opulent, if now somewhat distressed, volume reads

HOLY BIBLE

DOUAY & RHEIM[S]

[GEORGE LE]O HAYDOCK'S

[NOTES &] REFERENCES

[ILLUS]TRATED]

What might be the link between this Biden family Bible and Penrith?

George Leo Haydock was born in 1774 into an old north Lancashire Catholic gentry family. Following early education in a Lancashire Catholic school, he completed his preparation for the priesthood at the expatriate seminary at Douai ['Douay'] in France. After the seminary was closed down in 1793 by order of the French revolutionary government, it was re-settled in County Durham, where George Leo was ordained in 1798 and took up teaching, with special references to Scriptural studies. From 1806 onwards, encouraged by his publisher brother Thomas, Haydock began work on a new edition of the whole Bible in English that had been originally produced in the Continental seminaries of Douai and Reims ['Rheims'] between 1582 and 1609. Aided by the work of an accumulated mass of Biblical commentaries over the centuries, the production was to be enriched with ample notes that were 'historical, critical explanatory and controversial'. Miraculously labouring on this immense task amidst demanding parochial work for Catholic congregations on the Yorkshire coast, George Leo Haydock and his brother delivered an initial complete two-volume set of the work in 1814.

The 'Haydock Bible' became an instant success throughout the Catholic English-speaking world, the last British editions in Haydock's lifetime coming off the presses in London, Glasgow and Edinburgh in 1845-8. The product found a ready market in the United States, the first American edition being produced in President Biden's home state, Pennsylvania, in 1823-5. Over the decades, the text became more and more lavishly produced and richly illustrated, a cherished icon in Catholic homes. A copy purchased by an immigrant Irish couple named Fitzgerald was passed on over the generations to their descendant John Fitzgerald Kennedy, who used it at his own swearing-in January 1961, when Joe Biden was his young Democrat hero-worshipper – so January 2021 was not the first time that a Haydock Bible has featured in a United States presidential oath-taking: indeed, Mr Biden brought his family copy to the podium for the solemn vows at his inception as vice-president in 2008. This family heirloom may date from c.1893, when an edition was issued by C. R. Parish of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, within the general area of Joe Biden's birthplace of Scranton, PA.

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The George Leo Haydock Scripture remains enormously popular in the United States, with online and CD versions continuing to appear. The beloved, battered item used in the recent inauguration might, however, benefit from the attention of a good Cumbrian book restorer.

George Leo Haydock was transferred in 1839 to the little Catholic 'mission' of Penrith, where his inherited means spared him from being a financial burden to his pauper Irish parishioners, who at that time worshipped in a dark, dank chapel in Bishop Yards. His care and compassion for his people - poor migrants, like President Biden's Irish forebears - is demonstrated in his parish registers, which have recently been transferred to the Cumbria Archive Service, Carlisle. Rev. George Leo Haydock's best-remembered action in Penrith is his intervention to becalm rioting between English and Irish navvies during the railway construction on 1846, without which many lives would certainly have been lost. His lasting local achievement before his death in 1849 was the construction of the beautiful church of St Catherine of Alexandria in Drovers Lane, Penrith, where the recently completed Haydock Centre commemorates his great life.

Michael Mullett

New PgCert in Regional and Local History

The Regional Heritage Centre at Lancaster University will be offering a PgCert course in Local and Regional History via distance learning from Autumn 2021. The online course consists of two taught modules focused on the history of the North of England from the Viking Age to the Victorian industrial era, followed by an independent research project for which you will receive one-to-one supervision. For more information about the course, please follow this link:

<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/postgraduate-courses/regional-and-local-history-distance-learning-pgcert/#overview>

BALH Podcast

In addition to its digital events and workshops, the British Association for Local History (BALH) has also recently launched a podcast series: Local History Matters. This bi-monthly programme features Dr Claire Kennan in conversation with key people from the local history world. The podcast is available to listen either through the [BALH website](#) or search for 'Local History Matters' in your favourite podcast player. It is also available via Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

Township in Focus: Casterton

Casterton is one of the eleven townships in Lonsdale Ward that will feature in our first 'Big Red Book' and was the first place that Emmeline Garnet completed a draft article for back in 2014. I undertook some further research on Casterton before the pandemic hit. The act of poring over records in the archives feels like a distant memory now! I was also able to make some use of some oral testimony thanks to a transcript of the 'Reminiscences of William Makinson (1921-2007)' being made available on the Casterton village website. This provided valuable insights about aspects of local life in the first half of the 20th century for which there is often little documentary evidence.

Casterton lies on the east bank of the Lune, opposite the town of Kirkby Lonsdale. The name Casterton, meaning 'farmstead near a fortification,' suggests it had a relationship with Roman

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military infrastructure and a Roman road ran through the township. There are two main areas of settlement: High and Low Casterton. The latter underwent significant development in the 19th century, largely due to the activities of the Carus Wilson family who founded the Casterton Schools and Holy Trinity Church. Within what was a predominantly agricultural community, the Schools once provided an alternative source of employment, with 17 domestic staff working there in 1861. Relations between the township and Schools were not always cordial; in the 1860s, the decision to alter the church by the Trustees of the Clergy Daughters School provoked much complaint by local residents and William Wilson Carus Wilson (d.1883), son of the founder, accused the school's teachers of 'ruling the township'.

Perhaps less well known is that in the south of the township, at a place called Chapel Houses, once stood the chapel of St Columba. This unusual dedication, first recorded in 1356, hints at a Gaelic-Scandinavian connection through the earliest lords of the manor, the de Kaberghs. This family also held Warcop, whose church has the same dedication. There is reference to the chapel being visited by pilgrims, while the antiquary Thomas Machell recorded a story about a man (aged 120) being temporarily revived by the waters of a local spring and then praying at the chapel. Services seem to have ended in the early 16th century when a dispute arose between rival patrons. Sir Roger Bellingham reportedly kept his horse in the chapel close and took possession of the chapel key, locking out the new clerk appointed by neighbouring lord of the manor, Francis Morley. The chapel was subject to another dispute not long after when Alan Bellingham, one of the commissioners for the Chantry Act (1547), was accused of carrying away materials from the chapel building to his own house and keeping the rents for himself. Bellingham was not punished but had to reimburse the crown. A transcript of the case is published in *CWAAS Transactions*.

Casterton belonged to that part of the barony of Kendal known as the Richmond fee. This meant that it was at one point divided between the dower lands assigned to two major female figures of the 15th century: Jacquetta of Luxembourg, duchess of Bedford and mother of Edward IV's queen, Elizabeth Woodville; and Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond and mother to Henry VII. In the 1460s, the lord of the largest freehold or sub manor, Sir Henry Bellingham, was attainted not once but twice for his die-hard Lancastrian sympathies. From the late 16th century, Casterton was leased separately from the rest of the Richmond fee by the Wilsons of Levens and their descendants the Carus Wilsons. In 1652, the Wilsons also claimed to lease a coal mine on Casterton Fell, but could provide no proof to the Commonwealth surveyor. Mining continued on the Fellside until the mid 19th century. The Wilsons owned two out of three buildings in the township that have all been referred as Casterton Hall, the newest of which was built in 1811 in a neo-classical style. A guide book of 1820 recommends that travellers passing through Kirkby Lonsdale, should take the time when visiting the church, to admire the view from the churchyard from which Casterton Hall is 'a prominent feature in the charming scene.'



Casterton Hall: © Chris Heaton and licensed for reuse under this [Creative Commons Licence](#).

Sarah Rose

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