

Victoria County History of Cumbria Project

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Parish: **WABERTHWAITE**

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1. LANDSCAPE, SETTLEMENT AND BUILDINGS

Waberthwaite was a small, rural parish and township of scattered farmsteads and small hamlets on the southern bank of the estuary of the River Esk. Situated 12 miles (20 km) north of Millom and 22 miles (36 km) south of Whitehaven, it lay within the south-western part of what became the Lake District National Park. The largest hamlets were Hall Waberthwaite and Newbiggin in the extreme west of the township, and Lane End on the southern border, near the main road through the township. The township covered an area of 1,771 a. in 1860.¹ In 1897, after a detached part of Corney civil parish containing Grange farm was subsumed into Waberthwaite, the area was 1,887 a.² Since 1934 Waberthwaite has formed part of the civil parish of Waberthwaite and Corney. The name Waberthwaite came from Old Norse and meant the fishing (or hunting) booth clearing.³

Boundaries

The township was long and narrow. It was little more than a mile (1.7 km) across at its widest point and extended approximately four miles (6 km) from its western boundary on Eskmeals

¹ OS 1:10,560 map, Cumberland. sheet 82, surveyed 1860, published 1867.

² OS 1:10,560 map, Cumberland. sheet 82, surveyed 1860, revised 1897, published 1900.

³ *PNC*, XXI, 439-440.

Pool, to its eastern boundary on a ridge formed by the peaks of Burn Moor, Whitfell, Fox Craggs and Sergeant Crag. The northern boundary followed Rowan Tree Gill, Samgarth Beck and Broad Oak Beck before crossing open fields to the river Esk 500 yds. (470 m.) north of its confluence with Broad Oak Beck at Hall Waberthwaite. From there it followed the Esk to its confluence with Eskmeals Pool which formed the western boundary. The southern boundary ran north-west from Burn Moor, traversing topographically featureless open fell where the boundary was marked with piles of stones,⁴ before turning west to follow field boundaries to a boundary marker-stone near Lane End, and thence to Eskmeals Pool at Stockbridge.

Landscape

The land rises steadily from the saltmarshes on the bank of the Esk to the township's highest point of 1,877 ft. (572 m.) at Whitfell. Above 600 ft. (183 m.) the land is steep, open fell, which covers approximately half the parish. An area in the middle of the parish, called Waberthwaite Wood, as its name and the names of surrounding properties (Woodside, Woodgate) suggest, was once a source of timber,⁵ but had become pasture by the 17th century⁶ and was denuded of any significant timber by the 21st century.

The overburden across the whole parish is principally Devensian-diamicton till.⁷ Apart from a small area of sandstone in the extreme west of the parish, the underlying rock is almandine-biotite-rich granodiorite lying in the surrounding granite and granodiorite of the Eskdale intrusion.⁸ The distinctive grey granodiorite was quarried on a commercial basis between the

⁴ OS 1:10,560 map, Cumberland. sheet 82 and 86. Surveyed 1860, published 1867; *Ibid*, revised 1897 published 1900

⁵ Below: '*Economic History*'

⁶ CAS (W), DPEN/320/206, Joseph Pennington lease of pasture in Waberthwaite wood to Christopher Troughton and his son, William.

⁷ <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?location=waberthwaite&gobBtn=go> (accessed 24 Feb. 2019).

⁸ *Ibid.*; <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/gcrdb/GCRsiteaccount290.pdf> (accessed 24 Feb. 2019).

late 19th and the mid 20th century to produce roadstone, setts and kerbstones.⁹ The quarry was designated as an SSSI in 1985.¹⁰ The soil in the western half of the parish is a slightly acid, loamy and clayey soil of moderate fertility with impeded drainage. It is seasonally wet and best suited for producing grass and some cereal for fodder.¹¹ Saltmarsh covers the south bank of the Esk between Newbiggin and Hall Waberthwaite. The marsh is superficially drained with gullies to allow the tide to run off. On the high ground to the east the soil is very acid, slowly permeable, wet, upland soil of low fertility, supporting only rough grazing.¹²

Communications

Roads and Bridges

Hamlets, farmsteads and the church were interconnected by a network of footpaths, bridleways and tracks, many of which were still rights of way in 2020, and an ancient ford across the Esk connected Hall Waberthwaite to Ravenglass. Two routes from Whitehaven to Millom (and on to Lancaster and London) went near or through the parish. One passed through Ravenglass and then crossed a tidal ford over the Esk to Eskmeals, where it passed about half a mile (0.8 km) west of Newbiggin and ran on to Bootle.¹³ The second route was a loop off this road which branched off north of Ravenglass, looped to the east and by-passed the village, and passed over the western end of Muncaster Fell. It then went through Waberthwaite passing west of Bridge End to join the Ravenglass road at Bootle. A road from Duddon Bridge passed over Stonehead

⁹ J. Postlethwaite, *Mines and Mining in the (English) Lake District*, Whitehaven (1913), 3rd edition, 157.

¹⁰ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1003191.pdf> (accessed 24 Feb. 2019).

¹¹ <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/#> (accessed 24 February 2019).

¹² *Ibid* (accessed 24 February 2019).

¹³ J. Hodkinson and T. Donald, *Map of Cumberland*, surveyed 1770-71, published 1774; Ford, *A Map of the Lake District of Cumberland Westmorland and Lancashire*, 1839; J. Ottley, *The District of the Lakes*, (Keswick, 1818); D. Lysons and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia: a concise topographical account of the several counties of Great Britain*, London (1816), Vol. 4, cx.

Fell (now Stoneside) and Corney Fell, and passed through the northern part of the parish to Muncaster and Ravenglass.¹⁴

None of these routes was ever turnpiked. A Parliamentary Bill authorising turnpikes to be built from Egremont to link the turnpikes of Whitehaven to Santon Bridge, Duddon Bridge and the sands crossing at Salthouse (Millom) was passed in 1750 but it was not implemented.¹⁵ Renewed attempts to establish turnpikes in 1805 and 1842 were either not followed through, or never received approval.¹⁶

The road over Muncaster fell became the main route between Whitehaven and Millom. After road numbering was introduced in 1913, that road became part of the A595 trunk road. In 1927 it was widened, and realigned to cross Broad Oak Beck on a new bridge erected east of Bridge End.¹⁷ In 2006 the A595 was detrunked.¹⁸ In 2020 the A595 was the only direct route between Millom and Whitehaven.

Railways

The Whitehaven and Furness junction railway, completed in 1850,¹⁹ by-passed Waberthwaite, crossing the Esk to Ravenglass on a viaduct half a mile (0.8km) west of Newbiggin, but there were stations at Eskmeals and Ravenglass just outside the township boundaries. The station at Eskmeals closed in 1959.²⁰ The station at Ravenglass was still in operation in 2020.²¹

¹⁴ T. West, *A Map of the Lakes in Westmorland and Lancashire*, 1784.; J. Ottley, *The District of the Lakes*, Keswick (1818); D. Lysons and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia*, (London, 1816), Vol. 4, cx.; Hodkinson and Donald, *Map of Cumberland*.

¹⁵ Act of Parliament, 23 George II c.40.

¹⁶ *Carlisle Journal*, 17 Aug. 1805, 1; *Cumberland Paquet*, 22 Nov; 1842, 1.

¹⁷ *Yorkshire Post*, 13 June 1925.; *Millom Gazette*, 4 Feb; 1927.

¹⁸ A595 Trunk Road (Calder Bridge to A5092 at Grizebeck) (Detrunking) Order 2006, Statutory Instrument 296.

¹⁹ Pastscape at https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=1372719 (accessed 28 Jul. 2019).

²⁰ G. Daniels and L.A. Dench, *Passengers no More 1952-1962: Closure of Stations and Branch Line*, 2nd edition, (Brighton, 1963), 13.

²¹ Local inf. (Author 2019).

Post, Carriers, Buses and Telecommunications

No public goods carrier ever operated from Waberthwaite, but a passenger service was provided by Cumberland Motor Services who ran buses through the parish from the early 20th century²² till about 1970.²³ In 1996 the Muncaster Microbus was set up by volunteers to run regular bus services from Waberthwaite and the surrounding parishes.²⁴ In 2020 the bus was the only public transport available in the parish, and ran services to Whitehaven twice a week, and day trips every other Saturday. The bus was also made available for the use of community groups.²⁵

A post office opened at Lane End in 1849 was still in operation in 2020.²⁶

The parish was served by the Ravenglass telephone exchange. By 2020 the exchange was optic fibre enabled²⁷ and superfast broadband was being rolled out across the parish.

Population

In 1563 there were 45 households in the ecclesiastical parish of Waberthwaite, indicating a population in the region of 213.²⁸ In the year 1687-88 the number of houses was recorded as 75 indicating a population of 338.²⁹ Another estimate for 1688 gives a population of 375.³⁰ Estimates based on the average annual number of baptisms in each decade between 1680 and

²² *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 3 May 1929, 2.

²³ Local inf.

²⁴ Inf. from Mrs E. A. Clegg (founding member) March 2019.

²⁵ http://muncastermicrobus.org.uk/html/about_us.html (accessed 3 Mar. 2019).

²⁶ List of Cumbria Post Offices compiled by Ken Smith https://79f21e9d-a-62cb3a1a-s-sites.googlegroups.com/site/ukpostofficesbycounty/home/england/Cumbria.pdf?attachauth=ANoY7cr1A4WFFXxXyKcS4wEIv9tETGcXnMfoWe901a8TaOz80qyJN_oIbHVjTdyVA6Y6UBiYYREhBZAhRM0JeAW4CunE41opLgFI4r1FIYD6uKy6gIPD41GljX0sWXtO6So4fI3CGA8jXxscluvdyk2vzIX2JLKTgUx5If-nfPqnkibmgp00U0QD9T8IXax-SnVIZSDIoxtShsUs968aUrEOrcwySUEfJy_xlLrfcKyY74Z2XJFZR4uKEeP2jvxaW0D7UBXrEM&attredirects=3 (accessed 28 Feb. 2019); Local inf.

²⁷ <https://telephone-exchange.co.uk/Ravenglass-LCRAV.html> (accessed 3 Mar. 2019).

²⁸ A.B. Appleby, *Famine in Tudor and Stuart England*, Liverpool (1978), Appendix A, 201. A multiplier of 4.75 per house has been used to estimate the population.

²⁹ *Ibid* (using the same multiplier).

³⁰ D. Lysons and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia*, xliii.

1720 indicate a population of 412-435 in the last two decades of the 17th century which fell sharply to 277 between 1700 and 1720.³¹ In 1791 it was 134.³² By 1801 the population had dropped to 122 and in 1811 it was 114,³³ which may indicate that the township did not escape the fever epidemic that caused many deaths in the neighbouring parish of Corney around the end of the 18th century.³⁴ The population never recovered its late 17th century levels, but it did increase decade on decade till 1851 when it stabilised at around 200 for three decades. The opening of the first commercial operations at Broad Oak quarry in Waberthwaite in 1883³⁵ had a significant impact on the population: by 1891 there were 35 quarry workers lodging in the parish, most coming from outside the county, and the population had risen to 237.³⁶ With the cessation of operations at the quarry in 1895³⁷ many quarry workers and their families moved on. By 1901, quarry workers were no longer evident in the township³⁸ and the population had dropped by 34%. Quarrying restarted in 1905, and in 1911 quarry workers from outside the area were once again in evidence and the population began to recover.³⁹ It peaked at 279 in 1921 but dropped to 234 by 1931. The reduction in population between 1921 and 1931 is probably due to the closure of the quarry in 1930.⁴⁰ No separate figures are available for Waberthwaite after 1931.

Settlement

Early Settlement

³¹ G.P. Jones, 'Some Population Problems relating to Cumberland and Westmorland in the 18th Century', *CW2*, 58 (1958), 127.

³² Hutchinson, Vol. 1, Houseman's notes, 564

³³ http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10178484/cube/TOT_POP (accessed 3 May 2019)

³⁴ Hutchinson, Vol. 1, Houseman's notes, 563.

³⁵ J. Postlethwaite, *Mines and Mining in the English Lake District*, 3rd edition, 157.

³⁶ *Census* 1891.

³⁷ *West Cumberland Times*, 13 Dec. 1893, p.2.

³⁸ *Census* 1901.

³⁹ *Maryport Advertiser*, 25 Nov. 1905, p.2; *Census 1911*.

⁴⁰ Below: '*Economic History*'.

Archaeological evidence from Waberthwaite, and from sites within a few kilometres of its boundaries, indicates habitation of the land for at least six thousand years. A scattering of flints found near Eskmeals pool, an axe-hammer found in Whitrow Beck, funerary cairns on the summit of Whitfell and at Stainton Ling, and prehistoric cairnfields on Waberthwaite Fell near Rowantree Force and Red Gill Head indicate occupation of the land during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods and in the Bronze Age.⁴¹ At another site on Waberthwaite Fell, earthworks, the remains of a prehistoric stone circle, a trackway, cairnfields, funerary cairns, hut circles, a Romano-British farmstead and a medieval enclosed field system provide evidence for continuous occupation of the site from prehistoric to medieval times.⁴² Much of the surviving evidence for early (neolithic to early medieval) occupation and use of land lies on open fell above 600 ft (180 m.).⁴³

The presence of a cross dating from the later 9th or 10th century in the churchyard of the parish church at Hall Waberthwaite indicates an Anglian (Northumbrian) Christian presence. A second cross, which incorporates Anglian and Scandinavian motifs, in the same location is evidence of a Viking presence in the mid 10th century.⁴⁴ Given the Norse origins of its name, it is possible that Waberthwaite was a new settlement in the Viking Age.⁴⁵ Waberthwaite is derived from *veiði buð þveit* meaning ‘the fishing (or hunting) booth clearing’⁴⁶, and it may indicate that early settlers were attracted by the salmon and sea trout that run the river Esk from spring to autumn, an annual event⁴⁷ that led to the building of a fish trap downstream of

⁴¹ J. Cherry and P.J. Cherry, ‘Prehistoric Habitation Sites in West Cumbria: Part IV, The Eskmeals Area’, *CW2*, 86 (1986), 13-14; Rev. C. Caine, ‘Notes on Waberthwaite’, *CW2*, 23 (1923), 132; National Heritage List for England, list entry numbers 1017182; 1017176; 1016893; 1017177.

⁴² National Heritage List for England, list entry number 1016988.

⁴³ Below: ‘*Economic History*’.

⁴⁴ W.G. Collingwood, ‘The Waberthwaite Crosses’, *CW2*, xxv (1925), 81-85.

⁴⁵ R. Cramp, ‘Crosses of the Cumbrian coast in the pre-Viking Age’, in D. Shotton and M. McClintock (eds), *Exploring Antiquities and Archaeology in the North West: essays in commemoration of the life and work of Ben Edwards* (CWAAS, extra ser. 47, 2017), 67.

⁴⁶ *PNC*, XXI, 439-440.

⁴⁷ Local inf. Author, 2019.

Waberthwaite at a later date. The fish trap was still in evidence in 2019, but in an advanced state of decay.⁴⁸

Late Medieval and Early Modern

Post-medieval cultivation and settlement were confined to land below 400 ft (120 m.) and eventually established a pattern of dispersed hamlets and scattered farmsteads in the western half of the parish, with no habitations east of the 400 ft (120 m.) contour – a pattern that was still in evidence in 2020. By 1563 there were enough buildings to accommodate 45 households in Waberthwaite, with the number of households rising to 75 a little over a century later.

Settlement from the 18th to 21st century

In 1771, Hall Waberthwaite, nestling around its 13th century church, though small, was the major settlement in the parish.⁴⁹ Newbiggin, a mile (1.7 km) south-west of Hall Waberthwaite, and Lane End about a mile (1.7 km) south-east of Newbiggin were insignificant settlements not shown on maps of the late 18th and early 19th century.⁵⁰ By the time the tithe map was surveyed (1838), Hall Waberthwaite had almost achieved its maximum growth and very little changed over the following one and a half centuries apart from the replacement in 1877 of an earlier hall, or house, with a fourteen-roomed Victorian mansion,⁵¹ which was itself demolished in 1953,⁵² and the building of a detached house for an agricultural worker in 1979.⁵³ In 2020 the hamlet was a collection of 18th and 19th century farm buildings and dwellings and a 20th century detached house clustered around the church.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Hodkinson and Donald, *Map of Cumberland*.

⁵⁰ Hodkinson and Donald, *Map of Cumberland*;

C. Smith's Map of England, 1806 at http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/smith_1806/smith4_1806 (accessed 1 Apr.2019).

⁵¹ *Census* 1911.

⁵² St John's Church inventory, 1963.

⁵³ Local inf.

At Newbiggin, a farmhouse, Newbiggin House Farm (a Grade II listed building) was built in 1768⁵⁴, possibly on the site of an earlier building (Newbiggin means “new building” in Middle English,⁵⁵ implying that a building was newly-built there in the period 1150 – 1500). In 1816 A second farmhouse, Newbiggin Farmhouse (also listed) was built and subsequently subdivided into two dwellings, one of which was still a farmhouse for a working farm in 2020.⁵⁶ A double pile ‘gentry’ residence followed in the early 19th century. By 1876 a malthouse in the hamlet had been converted to two cottages and outbuildings and after further conversions in 1914 there were five cottages on that site.⁵⁷ No further development occurred after 1914. In 2019 the two farmhouses and their farm buildings were still extant and the row of five terraced cottages on the site of the old malt kiln lined the road through the hamlet opposite the double pile detached ‘gentry’ house.

At Lane End, the establishment of a school in the vicinity of Lane End Farm,⁵⁸ followed by a shop in 1828⁵⁹ and a post office (opened in the shop) in 1849,⁶⁰ provided a new focus for the township, and resulted in further growth of the hamlet. From five dwellings, including the shop, in 1851, the hamlet grew to become the principal settlement in Waberthwaite by 2020 with

⁵⁴ Datestone; Historic England, list entry number 1086645.

⁵⁵ *PNC*, XXI, 440; *Ibid* 464.

⁵⁶ Datestone; Historic England, list entry number 1086646.

⁵⁷ Deeds belonging to one of the cottage owners.

⁵⁸ Parochial returns to the select committee for the education of the poor, abstract, 1818, 129; location shown on OS 1:10,560 map, Cumberland, sheet 82. Surveyed 1860.

⁵⁹ Local inf., supported by W. Parson and W. White, *History, Directory and Gazeteer of Cumberland and Westmorland*, (1829), 280.

⁶⁰ https://79f21e9d-a-62cb3a1a-s-sites.googlegroups.com/site/ukpostofficesbycounty/home/england/Cumbria.pdf?attachauth=ANoY7crb7tTtyc-CARAvAKzLdoyzWt9haxedGaDJWZg8fhOxwci2n7kkDBNWjL-AFVDAvB9r2G1BgddiPuorau1Zx6jOJEk62i55iVQ6B4fS1HXSu_69ydByyK9Y8kD58m_xfyJqU9BMIQbw_3ouKNi29Hiyo7Cga2A0VCWEbCsOl_aSnyuv3KWjvaOnvebin74tuyA9dhrG1G_5SmDFgBEn1AIHYmdXSM-X1BNemmYR4dxN5dC9HOz0n60Dm14qEt-dx2J8XV7b&attredirects=0 (accessed 25 February 2019).

nineteen dwellings, a school, the village hall, a post office and grocery/butcher's shop, a small agricultural and garden machinery engineering workshop.

In 1756, there were 21 houses (tenements) in Waberthwaite township.⁶¹ This had increased to 22 by 1821.⁶² From 1821 to 1851, the housing stock rose by 77% to 39, largely due to the growth of the settlements at Newbiggin and Lane End.⁶³ A 38% increase of housing between 1901 and 1921 was due to a detached house built by the Eskmeals Granite Company for the quarry manager and a semi-detached pair of houses built for staff of the quarry in 1911⁶⁴ followed by a terrace of eight cottages for quarry workers completed in 1912 on the site of some wooden huts on Lowther Street.⁶⁵ A number of reconstructions and conversions in 1914 also contributed. These additional 15 houses came at a time of plentiful employment, and a scarcity of housing.⁶⁶

In 1951, houses in Waberthwaite were still fed by private water supplies drawn from local sources, and though discussions regarding the provision of mains water were entered into that year,⁶⁷ the supply of mains water to Waberthwaite was not completed until 1965 when 44 properties in Corney and Waberthwaite were connected to the supply system.⁶⁸ Supply of mains electricity to Waberthwaite was planned in 1959⁶⁹ and was initiated and completed by the mid 1960s.⁷⁰ No gas supply main was installed; this remains the case in 2020.⁷¹

⁶¹ CAS (W), DPEN/14/35, an account of the customary messages taken by James Lancaster, October 1756.

⁶² W. Parsons and White, *History, Directory & Gazetteer of Cumberland & Westmorland* (1829), 173.

⁶³ Comparison of detail in *Census* 1841 and *Census* 1851.

⁶⁴ Inf. from deeds of the current owner (2019).

⁶⁵ CAS (W), DBT/12/122, letter from architect confirming houses are complete; Bootle Rural District Council, Annual Report for the Year 1911, 15.

⁶⁶ Bootle Rural District Council, Annual Report for the Year 1914-15.

⁶⁷ Millom Rural District Council, Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1951, 16

⁶⁸ Millom Rural District Council, Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1965, 19

⁶⁹ *Penrith Observer*, 17 Feb 1959, p 4

⁷⁰ Local inf.

⁷¹ Local inf.

The Built Character

The built environment varies from hamlet to hamlet in its mix of building ages, types and styles, reflecting the periods of development of the hamlets. Across the township, surviving buildings range from the mid 18th century to the 21st century, the earliest being dated 1759.⁷² The church is an exception: one window in the present building dates back to the 16th century, although the foundations are possibly much older.

The absence of surviving buildings older than the 18th century may indicate that earlier houses were demolished to make way for new buildings built with improved, more stable structures, and/or that earlier buildings were constructed of short-lived materials – there is evidence that as late the mid 18th century wood harvested locally was used for the construction and repair of houses and farm buildings, while manorial tenants were able to take bracken, heather and ferns for thatching as well as fuel.⁷³ In 1756 thatched buildings still survived amongst those roofed with slate.⁷⁴ The last two wooden houses (of unknown age and type) were condemned in 1914.⁷⁵

The oldest surviving buildings are typically farmhouses and farm buildings built of coursed or uncoursed rubble (undressed stone, probably sourced locally), and roofed with slate.⁷⁶ There were no immediately local sources of slate, but Burlington slate quarries lay only 16 miles (25 km) away, and Coniston slate mines lay 25 miles (40 km) away. Rendering with roughcast was reserved for farmhouses and dwellings, though not all were rendered. Farm buildings were mostly left naked of any dressing. The farmhouses at Newbiggin, Newbiggin House and

⁷² Datestones, where they exist indicate nothing earlier than this.

⁷³ CAS (B), Z 103/1 Transcript Entry Book of Decrees and Orders (Chancery) A. fol. 103 d.

⁷⁴ CAS (B), Z/103/1 CAS (Whitehaven) DPEN/14/35, account of the customary messuages Oct. 1756.

⁷⁵ Bootle Rural District Council, Annual Report for the Year 1914, 15.

⁷⁶ The oldest buildings are identified by their datestones.

Newbiggin Farmhouse, were both built of uncoursed rubble, but Newbiggin House is unique in the parish in having its front wall decorated with incised stucco. These farmhouses are surrounded by farm buildings built mainly of un-rendered, uncoursed rubble, with one building built of coursed sandstone. All are slate roofed.

By the 20th century brick, and later breeze block, was used for building and the advent of improved transport, particularly the railway, enabled material to be accessed from further afield. The various houses built by the Eskmeals Granite Company in 1911-12 were all built of brick, rendered with roughcast and roofed with Welsh slate⁷⁷.

Continuous growth at Lane End from the early 19th century resulted in a wide variety of buildings: rendered and un-rendered converted farm buildings, a converted school, an early 19th century double-pile house, council houses and bungalows, 20th century private bungalows, and 21st century detached houses, provided a variety within an overall pattern that illustrated the development of the hamlet into the 21st century.

Many social types were represented among the sixty houses in the township in 2020: 18th century farmhouses, 19th, 20th and 21st century detached residences, 19th and 20th century terraced cottages, some of which were built for quarry workers, standard design 1954 council houses⁷⁸ and 1972 old peoples' bungalows⁷⁹, and 20th and 21st century private bungalows all occur in different parts of the township.

⁷⁷ Local inf.

⁷⁸ Rural District Council of Millom, Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health and Chief Sanitary Inspector, 1954, 37.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 1972, 21.

The amalgamation of farms under increasingly fewer farmers and families resulted in farmhouses and farm buildings becoming vacant and unused. Many were bought and converted for purely residential purposes. As a result, a significant social type of housing in the 21st century became farmhouses or farm buildings converted into private residences often with extensions.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Planning Applications at: <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/WPHAPPSEARCHRES.displayResultsURL?ResultID=1952906&StartIndex=181&SortOrder=rgndat:desc&DispResultsAs=WPHAPPSEARCHRES&BackURL=%253Ca%2520href%253Dwphappcriteria.display%253FpaSearchKey%253D1046963%253ESearch%2520Criteria%253C%252Fa%253E%2520>, (accessed November 2019)

2. LAND OWNERSHIP

Pattern of Landownership

Given the small size of the ancient parish, it has been suggested that Waberthwaite was carved out of a larger territory in the Viking Age, with a stone cross possibly marking a change in lordship.⁸¹ By the 12th century, Waberthwaite was one of six parishes in the seigniorship of Millom (see MILLOM), which stretched from the river Duddon to the river Esk. Technically held of Egremont Barony (see EGREMONT), in practice the seigniorship was an independent lordship in which the lord held *jura regalia*.⁸²

From the 12th to the late 18th century Waberthwaite comprised a single manor dominated by a lord who held it in socage of the lord of Millom.⁸³ The lord's dominance waned as enfranchisement progressed from 1771, and with the demise of the court baron in the 19th century the manor was all but extinguished, though one customary tenancy survived till 1916. After enfranchisement, a patchwork of small freehold farms developed. By the mid 19th century accruals by two individuals resulted in the emergence of two large estates. These were holdings in which individual farms were aggregated under a single owner, but remained as unamalgamated, distinct units run by tenants, thus the patchwork of small farms remained unchanged. By the 20th century these estates had been broken up. From the early 20th century Muncaster Estate bought properties in Waberthwaite as opportunity arose and by 1950 it held about 600 a. of land in Waberthwaite. In 1951 Muncaster Estate auctioned off its holdings in Waberthwaite.⁸⁴ By 2020 most of the land was owned by four farmers and many farmhouses had been sold off.

⁸¹ Cramp, 'Crosses of the Cumbrian coast'. 67, 69.

⁸² <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/projects/manorialrecords/cumbria/cumberlandlist.htm#Millom>; S. Jefferson, *The History and Antiquities of Allerdale ward Above Derwent*, (Carlisle, 1842), 149, 152, 156.

⁸³ CAS (W), DPEN/156/18, Inquisition post mortem on Joseph Pennington.

⁸⁴ CAS (C), DX 68/66, Schedule of Sale.

The Manor of Waberthwaite

The eastern boundary of the manor, described in a perambulation of 1512, was mostly coterminous with that of the later civil parish.⁸⁵ One 17th-century observer stated that the rabbit warren at Eskmeals⁸⁶, which now lies in Bootle parish, constituted the whole demesne of the manor; if so, the western border of the manor lay further west than that of the later civil parish where the border was on Eskmeals Pool.⁸⁷ A suggestion that Graymains farm, now in the civil parish of Muncaster, was also part of the manor of Waberthwaite,⁸⁸ is not supported by other evidence that places it in the township of Birkby in the Parish of Muncaster.⁸⁹

Hugh fitz Edward fitz Ulf and his descendants, who took the name de Waberthwaite,⁹⁰ held the manor from the 12th to the 14th century. They also held land in Bolton (Gosforth) and Kelton (near Arlecdon). No records of transactions involving Waberthwaite manor prior to 1347 have survived, but the family are known from their transfers of land from their other estates at Kelton and Bolton and their presence as witnesses to various documents. Hugh fitz Edward fitz Ulf, whose name occurs in a number of documents from 1160 to 1200,⁹¹ had a son, William, who took the name de Waberthwaite and appears in a number of documents between 1208 and 1230.⁹² During William's time as lord of the manor, Alicia de Lascy of Crumwelbothym (Cromwellbottom), a widow and the daughter of Alan de Pennington, granted him her land and appurtenances in 'Wytewra' (Whitrow) in the Territory of Cornay'. Whitrow, a holding of 62

⁸⁵ CAS (W), DPEN/198/5, perambulation of Waberthwaite boundary in the 3rd year of Henry VIII.

⁸⁶ Denton, *Perambulation*, 75–6; Hutchinson, 563.

⁸⁷ OS 1:10,560 map, Cumberland. Sheet 82. Surveyed 1860, published 1867; *Ibid revised 1897, published 1900*

⁸⁸ Denton, *Perambulation*, 75–6;

⁸⁹ CAS (W), DPEN/74A, court rolls of the manor of Austhwaite and the Manor of Austhwaite and Birker, Janet Askew requesting jury to try her case against her son for the title to Graymains; DBN/24/12/76, terms of agreement for letting Graymains, Birkby; DPEN/59, schedule of deeds relating to Graymains and Cropplehow in Muncaster parish.

⁹⁰ *Reg. St. Bees*, 275 note 1, 276, 277.

⁹¹ *Ibid* 470 note 2; Rev. W. S. Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants', *CW2*, 41 (1941), 131–32.

⁹² *Ibid*, 132–33; *Reg. St. Bees* 275, 276, 277, 278 and 279.

a., was thus absorbed into the manor of Waberthwaite by which it was surrounded.⁹³ William's son, Adam, who occurs in a document of 1250⁹⁴ and was deceased by 1255,⁹⁵ was succeeded by William II, who occurs between 1250 and 1310.⁹⁶ He was succeeded by his son, Adam II, who is named in a document dated between 1272 and 1279⁹⁷ and was rector of Waberthwaite in 1316 and 1317.⁹⁸ Adam II died without issue⁹⁹ and the manor passed to his brother, John, in 1347,¹⁰⁰ then to John's son, James. In 1383, James de Waberthwaite transferred the manor and its appurtenances to Thomas de Berdesey for a rent of 12 marks a year.¹⁰¹ In 1387 William de Waberthwaite, James's brother, confirmed James's grant of the manor to Thomas de Berdesey¹⁰² and quitclaimed his own interest in it.¹⁰³

In 1391 Thomas de Berdesey sold the manor to Sir Richard de Kirkby. The sale included the reversion of all the tenements that Isabella, James de Waberthwaite's widow, then held in dower.¹⁰⁴ In 1406 Richard de Kirkby granted a feoffment-to-use of the manor to Robert de Ferreby, rector of Egremont, and William de Brygham, rector of the church of Waberthwaite.¹⁰⁵ Later, William de Borrowdale somehow acquired an interest there, for he released all his right in the manor to Isabella, wife of Richard Kirkby, and his son, John, in

⁹³ CAS (W), DPEN/10/1.

⁹⁴ *Reg. St. Bees*, 472 note 1.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 281 note 1.

⁹⁶ Sykes, CW2, xli (1941) 133–34; Quitclaim of John, Abbot of Rushen in the Isle of Man in *Lists and Indexes: Duchy of Lancaster Cartae Miscellaneae* (1964), vol 2 no.91; CAS (W), DPEN14/1 and DPEN/14/2

⁹⁷ Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants' 134–35.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*; *The Register of John de Halton Bishop of Carlisle A.D 1292 – 1324*, Vol 2, (London, 1913), 136, 139,141 at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924065036554;view=1up;seq=146> (accessed 2 April 2019).

⁹⁹ Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants', 131-35.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid* 134-35; CAS (W), DPEN/14/2, Grant of Thomas de Irland *et al* to John, son of William de Waberthwaite.

¹⁰¹ CAS (W), DPEN/14/3.

¹⁰² CAS (W), DPEN/14/5, confirmation of grant.

¹⁰³ CAS (W), DPEN/14/6, William de Waberthwaite quitclaim.

¹⁰⁴ CAS (W), DPEN/14/7, charter of Thomas de Berdesey granting the manor to Sir Richard de Kirkeby.

¹⁰⁵ CAS (W), DPEN/14/8.

1432,¹⁰⁶ though John appears to have already been in possession of the manor in 1427.¹⁰⁷ John leased the manor and its demesne lands to William Rowecroft in 1436.¹⁰⁸ The next known de Kirkby to be in possession of the manor was William de Kirkby. In 1550, he and his wife Elizabeth leased their manors of Waberthwaite and Kelton to their son Henry.¹⁰⁹ In 1607 William de Kirkby sold the manor to Joseph Pennington¹¹⁰ and it remained with the Pennington family into the 20th century. In 1917, the lord of the manor, Jocelyn Francis Pennington, died without heirs¹¹¹ and the manor passed to his cousin Sir John Frecheville Ramsden (the nephew of Jocelyn's mother, Frances Catherine Ramsden) whose son, Geoffrey William, changed his surname to Pennington-Ramsden by deed poll in 1958 two years after he succeeded his father (see MUNCASTER).¹¹²

It is not known if early lords of the manor (de Waberthwaites and de Kirkbys) were resident in the manor. Some generations of the Penningtons, who held the manor from the 17th century, resided in their nearby manor of Muncaster, close enough to have been considered resident for all practical purposes, while others chose to live on their estates elsewhere. There is no surviving record of a manor house or demesne (apart from the rabbit warren at Eskmeals). If there ever was a manor house (not every manor had a manor house) it is possible that it stood close to the church in the earliest settlement, Hall Waberthwaite, where the prefix 'Hall' may distinguish the hamlet as the place with the manor house¹¹³ (though a 'Hall' could just be the grandest house in the neighbourhood and may simply be a large farmhouse in some locations), and that the demesne was nearby.

¹⁰⁶ CAS (W), DPEN/14/10 quitclaim by William Borrowedale.

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol7/pp267-273> (accessed 1 Mar. 2019).

¹⁰⁸ CAS (W), DPEN/14/16, indenture of lease between John Kirkeby and William Rowecroft

¹⁰⁹ CAS (W), DPEN/14/13, indenture.

¹¹⁰ CAS (W), DPEN/14/27, grant from William Kyrkeby to Joseph Pennington.

¹¹¹ "The Peerage" at <http://thepeerage.com/p23989.htm#i239889> (accessed 25 Jul. 2019).

¹¹² *Ibid.*, at <http://thepeerage.com/p55534.htm#i555337> (accessed 25 Jul. 2019; The descent of the Penningtons is to be fully covered in "Muncaster").

¹¹³ *Dict. LDPN*, 402-403.

Other Estates

In 1838 none of the farms exceeded 85 a., but two individuals, William Falcon and John Pearson, held more than one property and as a result they had estates of over 100 a. William Falcon of Hall Waberthwaite owned a total of 138 a. at Hall Waberthwaite and Woodside in 1838, which he let, retaining a homestead and two acres at Hall Waberthwaite for his own residence.¹¹⁴ On William's death in 1848, his estate, valued at £1000,¹¹⁵ passed to his wife, Jane, and then to her son, William. In 1876 William broke up the estate when he transferred the portion at Hall Waberthwaite to his two sisters, Dorothy (now Caddy) and Elizabeth Mary (now Postlethwaite). By 1910, Elizabeth Mary and her husband John Benn Postlethwaite owned Hall Waberthwaite and the Falcons owned only 67 a. at Woodside.¹¹⁶ In 1911, after the death of their parents, Elizabeth and John's children, Bertha and Mary Postlethwaite, sold Hall Waberthwaite to Sir John Frecheville Ramsden (later to become Lord Muncaster) for the Muncaster Estate that he was later to inherit.¹¹⁷

John Pearson, a yeoman, owned a total of 115 a. at Cross and Woodgate in 1838.¹¹⁸ On his death in 1850, the estate passed to his sister and brother-in-law, Hannah and Joseph Burrough of Gasketh in Irton, who let both properties while they resided in Irton. After the deaths of Joseph and Hannah, their son Joseph broke up the estate when he sold it in two lots in 1893.

Lot 1 of Joseph Burrough's sale, containing land at Cross, was bought by the trustees of John Caddy,¹¹⁹ a minor who had inherited significant acreages in Muncaster, as well as land at Hall

¹¹⁴ CAS (C), DRC/8/192, Waberthwaite tithe award.

¹¹⁵ Prerogative & Exchequer Courts of York Probate Index, 1688-1858, Vol 218, Folio 323.

¹¹⁶ CAS (C), TIR/4/22, 1910 Land Survey for Waberthwaite.

¹¹⁷ Copy of 'Schedule of Deeds and Documents handed over on completion of purchase of the Hall Waberthwaite estate by JF Ramsden from Bertha and Mary Postlethwaite', held by author.

¹¹⁸ CAS (C), DRC/8/192, Waberthwaite tithe award.

¹¹⁹ CAS (W), DBH/24/12/49, conveyance by trustees of the will of Hannah Burrough to JB Postlethwaite and Henry Walker, trustees of the will of Henry Caddy, 1893.

Waberthwaite, after the death of his father, Henry, in 1885. In 1897 the trustees also bought Broad Oak Farm for John.¹²⁰ Though in Muncaster, Broad Oak had about 80 a. of land in Waberthwaite. John Caddy, resident in Dalton-in-Furness, came of age in 1899¹²¹ and received his estate, now consisting of land and property at Cross and Hall Waberthwaite, which exceeded 100 a., Glenwood and Rougholme in Muncaster, and Broad Oak, which had about 80 a. of land in Waberthwaite as well as land in Muncaster.¹²² In 1905 John bought Row estate in Waberthwaite, and in 1907 he transferred all his holdings to his wife, Florence Evelyn, in a post nuptial agreement.¹²³ In 1910 John Caddy is recorded as holding 225 a. of land in Waberthwaite (not including the 80 a. of Broad Oak farm that lay in Waberthwaite),¹²⁴ though that land was by then legally Florence Evelyn Caddy's. Two years later Florence sold Cross, Row and Broad Oak to Sir John Frecheville Ramsden for the Muncaster Estate¹²⁵ (which he was soon to inherit) in order to help raise £16,000 that John Caddy had lost in a bad investment with the whisky merchants Anderson and Company.¹²⁶

Lord Muncaster held only 7.5 a. of land and a quarry in Waberthwaite in 1838. By 1910 he owned the quarry, three properties and 137 a. of agricultural land.¹²⁷ After purchasing part of the Falcon estate in 1911 and John Caddy's estates in 1912, Lord Muncaster's Muncaster Estate's holdings in Waberthwaite increased to around 500 a. Over the next forty years, Muncaster Estate continued to buy properties in Waberthwaite and elsewhere as opportunities arose. By the mid 20th century Muncaster Estate owned twelve properties and over 600 a. of

¹²⁰ CAS (W), YDGO/OD/3/40

¹²¹ Indenture held by the author: conveyance of Cross to John Caddy by Trustees of the Will of the late Henry Caddy.

¹²² Acreages compiled from data found in CAS (W), DBH/24/12/37/1.

¹²³ CAS (W), DBH/24/12/36/2.

¹²⁴ CAS (C), TIR/4/22, 1910 Land Survey for Waberthwaite

¹²⁵ CAS (W), DBH/24/12/37/1.

¹²⁶ CAS (W), DBH/24/12/35/1-5; DBH/24/12/34/1-4; DBH/24/12/36/1.

¹²⁷ CAS (C), TIR/4/22, 1910 Land Survey for Waberthwaite.

land in Waberthwaite,¹²⁸ making Lord Muncaster the largest single landowner in the parish. In 1951 the estate auctioned off these holdings.¹²⁹ Some were bought by sitting tenants, and some by tenant farmers from other parishes. By 2020 the principal tenure in Waberthwaite was freehold ownership of dwellings with most of the farmland being owned and worked by four farmers.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ CAS (C), DX 68/66, Schedule of Sale.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*; CAS (W), YDX 384/49.

¹³⁰ Local Inf. May 2019.

3 ECONOMIC HISTORY

For centuries agriculture was the mainstay of the local economy in Waberthwaite. Evidence from the Late Neolithic period indicates land preparation for arable farming, and evidence for transhumance indicates that animal husbandry, probably mixed with arable, was practiced in medieval times. Mixed farming persisted into the 20th century, but thereafter increasingly gave way to stock rearing which culminated in farming becoming a matter of managing grassland for sheep and cattle by the 21st century.

Industrial activity, in the form of quarrying accompanied by the on-site manufacture of products from the quarried stone, played a significant part in the economy between the late 19th century and the end of World War II. Beyond that, manufacturing has been restricted to food processing in the form of the production of cured meat, and sausages. Service industry was confined to services of local tradesmen and tradeswomen resident locally. Retail shops have come and gone from time to time, but one shop, a local provisions and grocery shop established at Lane End in the early 19th century, survived into the 21st century.

Between the late 19th century and the mid 20th century, Vickers Armstrong, the Home Office and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (which later became British Nuclear Fuels Limited, then Sellafield Limited) set up facilities in West Cumberland providing opportunities for new occupations for people in Waberthwaite. No separate figures are available for employment in Waberthwaite after its union with Corney in 1934, but in 2004, 30% of residents in the combined parish were retired, and agricultural occupations were still dominant among the economically active members of the community.¹³¹ Over 57% of economically active

¹³¹ Waberthwaite and Corney Parish Plan at: http://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/Portals/0/Community%20Led%20Plans/Copeland/Waberthwaite_and_Corney_PP_2004.pdf?ver=2013-05-22-090828-000 (accessed 19 May 2019)

people worked locally (i.e. in Waberthwaite, Corney, Muncaster or Bootle), in jobs provided by agriculture, the Brown Cow Inn in Corney, Muncaster Castle in Muncaster, the gun range at Eskmeals in Bootle parish, and in meat curing and sausage making in Waberthwaite, while 36% worked elsewhere in Copeland or elsewhere in Cumbria, and 6% worked outside Cumbria.

Farming

The Agricultural Landscape

The area of Waberthwaite Fell between Charlesground Gill and Samgarth Beck is rich with evidence of early land use at heights between 600 ft. (180 m.) and 800 ft. (240 m.). Cairnfields have been interpreted as evidence of Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age preparation of land for ploughing and arable farming between 3400 and 700 B.C., and the alignment of the cairns of removed stone has been interpreted as representing prehistoric field boundaries.¹³² Near Whitrow beck are the remains of a Romano-British farmstead, and close by stone from a nearby cairnfield has been taken and used to create medieval field enclosures.¹³³ At Stainton Ling, about 600 m. north-west of the site near Whitrow Beck, a medieval field system lies close to cairnfields and prehistoric field boundaries, and two medieval shielings associated with the site¹³⁴ indicate that transhumance was practiced.

Land at Waberthwaite fell naturally into three distinct areas: the common of Waberthwaite Fell in the east of the township, stinted pasture in an area in the centre (once wooded, this area was

¹³² Historic England list entry 1016988; 1017176; *Ibid* 1017179; *Ibid* 1017178; Pastscape, Monument 37533 at https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?a=0&hob_id=37533&criteria=waberthwaite&search=all&rational=q&recordsperpage=10&sort=4 (accessed 20 May 2019).

¹³³ Pastscape, Monument 37533 at https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?a=0&hob_id=37533&criteria=waberthwaite&search=all&rational=q&recordsperpage=10&sort=4; Historic England list entry 1016988.

¹³⁴ *Ibid* 1016983.

still called Waberthwaite Wood on 20th century O. S. maps) and an area of cultivated fields in the west.

Commons on Waberthwaite Fell extended to 1000 a. in 1838.¹³⁵ An Enclosure Act of 1865 authorised enclosure of some commonable land at Waberthwaite,¹³⁶ but in 2020, 637 a. of the fell above 400 ft. (120 m.) still remained unenclosed common.¹³⁷ According to the custom of the manor, reasserted in an Order in Chancery in 1756, all customary tenants in Waberthwaite held their lands by tenantright, which could be passed from ancestors to heirs and entitled them to take peat, furze, fern and bracken in the manor.¹³⁸ In 2020 commoners still had rights of turberry and estovers, rights to graze horses, sheep and cattle and to collect sand and gravel on the common of Waberthwaite Fell.¹³⁹

In the late 18th century, the stinted pasture of Waberthwaite Wood amounted to 262 a. ring-fenced for cattle,¹⁴⁰ and contained about 107 stints shared among 21 people.¹⁴¹ It was enclosed and taken into existing farms in 1808.¹⁴² Anyone with an interest in the enclosure had a right to collect or quarry stone for their own use, but had no right to sell it.¹⁴³

¹³⁵ CAS (C), DRC/8/192, Waberthwaite tithe award.

¹³⁶ *Westmorland Gazette*, 29 July 1865, p.4.; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 July 1865, p.8; *Whitehaven News*, 22 March 1866, p. 1; *Cumberland Paquet*, 5 February 1867, p.4.

¹³⁷ <https://common-land.com/lands/view/4953> (accessed 26 Mar. 2019)

¹³⁸ CAS (Whitehaven) YDX 568/10, Injunction against Sir John Pennington; CAS (W), DPEN/14/37/10 order in chancery; CAS (W), YDX 177/3; CAS (B), Z/103/1 transcript of an entry in the Book of Decrees and Orders (Chancery) 1755. A. fol. 103, d'.

¹³⁹ <https://common-land.com/lands/view/4953> (accessed 26 Mar 2019)

¹⁴⁰ CAS (W), DPEN/46/109 advice sought by Lord Muncaster re: his share of Waberthwaite Wood.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, DPEN/199/16 list of all the stands in Waberthwaite wood; DPEN/97/2/2 quantity and ownership of stints in Waberthwaite Wood.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, DPEN/14/39, enclosure award for Waberthwaite Wood.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, DPEN/151/1, extract from Waberthwaite Wood enclosure award.

Field names like ‘lamb close’, ‘hog close’, ‘calf close’, ‘cow close’ and ‘bull copy’ reflect the importance of animal husbandry from the earliest times, and the field names ‘parrock’ and ‘park’ probably indicate enclosures (paddocks)¹⁴⁴ associated with stock or horses.

The cultivated area in the west consisted of well-hedged enclosed fields in the late 18th century¹⁴⁵ and appears to have covered approximately 600 a.¹⁴⁶ By 1838 approximately 840 a. were enclosed and under cultivation.¹⁴⁷ Pasture constituted 3% of this land, meadow 8% and arable 25%. The majority of land (64%.) was under rotation between arable and pasture or arable and meadow. Orchards amounted to 10 a. in small lots associated with homesteads and gardens,¹⁴⁸ a scale that indicates non-commercial growing.

Farming: Medieval Period

There are no surviving records of any lord of the manor maintaining demesne land in Waberthwaite apart from a rabbit warren at Eskmeals, which may have provided some income. The lord of the manor had the right to timber¹⁴⁹ (but not that on his tenants’ land¹⁵⁰) and minerals (stone).¹⁵¹ The major source of income for the lord of the manor were his tenants, who paid a customary rent at Martinmas and Whitsuntide, a twenty-penny fine (i.e. twenty times the annual rent) on change of tenant, and a general arbitrary fine not exceeding 20 years rent on the death of their lord or his lady. They also paid a townterm every seven years. On the death of a tenant, the best of the goods he possessed was taken as a heriot for each parcel of land he possessed. Where there were no goods to be seized, a composition had to be paid. All

¹⁴⁴ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/parrock> (accessed 4 Mar. 2019).

¹⁴⁵ Hutchinson, Houseman’s notes, 564.

¹⁴⁶ Calculated from the of the total area of the township and the areas occupied by stinted pasture in Waberthwaite Wood and common on the fell.

¹⁴⁷ CAS (C), DRC/8/192, Waberthwaite tithe award.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid* – Analysis and computation of data.

¹⁴⁹ CAS (W), DPEN/320/206, correspondence of his steward to Sir John Pennington.

¹⁵⁰ CAS (B), Z 103/1.

¹⁵¹ CAS (W), DPEN/320/325, correspondence of his steward to Sir John Pennington.

customary tenants also paid ‘free rents’ each Christmas to ‘Millam’ and to ‘Seton’.¹⁵² The free rents were collected by the lord of Waberthwaite manor, but the reason for their payment was unclear. Possibly they were originally quit rents paid to free tenants from boons due to the Seigniorship of Millom and the Benedictine nunnery at Seaton in Bootle.

Farming: Post-Medieval Period

Probate inventories and wills of the 17th century indicate the mixed nature of farming in the post-medieval period: in 1646 John Johnson’s inventory included wool, wheat, crops of corn and hay, swine and a mare and foal. His ‘gear’ included a harrow, a plough and a plough share. In 1653 Richard Benson of Newbiggin died possessed of cattle and sheep. In 1687 William Benson left his plough, harrow and all his ‘husbandry gear’ to his son, and in 1691 Richard Benson died possessed of sheep, a horse, poultry, a plough, and barley.¹⁵³

Boons and services that the tenants had once paid were bought out by the tenants some time prior to 1755 by paying a ‘satisfaction to the lord of the manor for the time being’.¹⁵⁴ When Sir John Pennington, lord of the manor, was questioned about the boons owed by his tenants in the court of chancery in 1755, he admitted that they owed and paid no boons, and stated that he did not know whether the free rents he collected from them (see above) were a satisfaction for the boons or not.¹⁵⁵ In a brief of the customs of the manor of Waberthwaite in 1883 (after enfranchisement) the free rents no longer appear.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² CAS (W), DPEN/46/21, rents book and brief of customs, early 18th century.

¹⁵³ CAS (W), YDX 403/12/7, will of William Benson (d.1687); CAS (W) YDX 403/12/2, inventory of Richard Benson 1653; CAS (W), YDX 403/8 inventory of William Benson 1687; CAS (W), box MF COP 30, film HK851, frame 71 (inventory of John Johnson 1646); CAS (W), box MF COP 6, film HK 827, frame 5 (inventory of Richard Benson 1691).

¹⁵⁴ CAS (W), DPEN/196 and DPEN/263 manor court books; CAS (B), Z/103/1 transcript of an entry in book of decrees and orders for Waberthwaite.

¹⁵⁵ CAS (B), Z/103/1 transcript of an entry in book of decrees and orders for Waberthwaite.

¹⁵⁶ CAS (B), Z/111/1 table of customs prepared for case of Mills vs Lord Muncaster.

No early references to free tenants or other evidence of the existence, location or extent of freehold land held before enfranchisement, which took place in stages between 1771 and 1835,¹⁵⁷ has been found. By 1829 many of the tenements were occupied by enfranchised freeholders,¹⁵⁸ and after 1835 most tenancies were held freehold, but a homestead at Lonning End remained a customary tenancy until the death of its last tenant in 1916.¹⁵⁹

In 1838 there were twenty-nine farms, homesteads and smallholdings owned by twenty-six people, eighteen of whom were owner-occupiers. The farms were generally small, even after they took land in from the enclosure of Waberthwaite Wood. Seventeen farms holding between 22 a. and 83 a. farmed a total of 840 a. of land.¹⁶⁰ Eight of the farms were farmed by their owners and nine were farmed by tenants. The farms were generally run by families, only the very largest farms employed labourers and/or farm servants.¹⁶¹

In the 18th century, agricultural occupations dominated in the records of marriages and baptisms.¹⁶² In 1821, agriculture was the chief occupation for 21 of the 24 families living in Waberthwaite¹⁶³ and farmers, husbandmen and agricultural labourers remained dominant among the occupations for the next sixty years.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁷ CAS (W), DPEN/39/1 to DPEN/39/17, counterpart enfranchisements.

¹⁵⁸ W. Parsons and W. White, *History, Directory and Gazeteer of Cumberland and Westmorland*, 1829, 280.

¹⁵⁹ CAS (W), DPEN/263 manor Court book

¹⁶⁰ Analysis of CAS (C), DRC/8/192, Waberthwaite tithe award.

¹⁶¹ *Census*

¹⁶² Waberthwaite Parish Records.

¹⁶³ Abstract of Answers and returns for the 1821 census at <https://archive.org/details/abstractofanswer00grea/page/n89> (accessed 10 Apr. 2019).

¹⁶⁴ *Censuses* 1841 – 1881.

Seven hundred sheep were grazed on the common of Waberthwaite Fell in the late 18th Century.¹⁶⁵ Sheep remained a permanent feature of farming in Waberthwaite through the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries.

Grain was grown on the well-hedged fields on the lower, more fertile ground at the western end of the township.¹⁶⁶ A field called ‘haver folds’ indicates that oats were grown in the area when the Norse language was still in use locally,¹⁶⁷ and oats continued to be a crop into the 20th century. In 1801 there were 100 a. of oats, 20 a. of wheat, 18 a. of barley and 7 a. of potatoes, turnips or rape grown.¹⁶⁸ In 1897 wheat, barley, oats and turnips were still being grown,¹⁶⁹ but by 1910 wheat and barley were no longer significant, the chief crops being oats and turnips. This was still the case during the 1930s.¹⁷⁰ By the mid 20th century, yields obtainable from cereal crops grown in Waberthwaite were no longer economic; grain ceased to be grown in the township,¹⁷¹ and farming became focused on establishing and managing grassland and livestock.

An Inventory of the tenements in Waberthwaite in 1756, showed the mixed nature of farming at that time. Of the 21 tenements then in Waberthwaite, practically all had barns for crop storage, fourteen had cowhouses or byers, only one had a milkhouse and one a hoghouse.¹⁷²

The cattle that grazed in Waberthwaite Wood in the 19th century were unlikely to have been part of any large dairy herd since dairy workers featured hardly at all in Waberthwaite in the

¹⁶⁵ Hutchinson, Houseman’s notes, 564

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *PNC XXI*, 476; *PNC XXII*, 415.

¹⁶⁸ Vision of Britain through time at <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10178484/cube/CROP1801>

¹⁶⁹ Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.*, (1897), 258; *Ibid* (1906), 264.

¹⁷⁰ Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.*, (1910), 268 *Ibid* (1914), 271; *Ibid* (1921), 268; *Ibid* (1925), *Ibid* (1929), 256; *Ibid* (1934), 260.

¹⁷¹ Local inf.

¹⁷² CAS (W), DPEN/14/35, an account of the customary messuages taken by James Lancaster, October 1756.

nineteenth century (one dairy maid was employed in Waberthwaite in each of the years 1861 and 1881),¹⁷³ implying that dairy farming was not a major activity (though raising dairy cattle for onward sale may have been). The establishment of the Milk Marketing Board in 1933 resulted in a guaranteed market and guaranteed minimum price for milk, which encouraged the establishment of dairy herds in the township. By 1941, about 400 a. (50% of the farmed land) was down to grass, 266 a. (33% of the farmed land) was down to rough grazing, 102 a. (13% of farmed land) was down to cereals, predominantly oats, and 31 a. (4% of farmed land) were down to other crops. Every farm was described as a ‘milk farm’ and incorporated other aspects of mixed farming such as: ‘fell, sheep and milk farm’, or ‘fell, arable and milk farm’, or ‘milk and mixed farm’. Cattle amounted to 207 head, sheep amounted to 690 head and over 1200 poultry birds were farmed.¹⁷⁴ In 1944 the area was classified as ‘mixed farming with a substantial dairying side’.¹⁷⁵ After the Milk Marketing Board ceased to function, European Economic Community milk quotas, introduced in 1984, helped to maintain the price of milk at a profitable level, but after their abolishment in 2015, milk prices dropped severely and farmers in the township moved out of dairy production.¹⁷⁶ In 2020 there was only one dairy farm in Waberthwaite and farming was mainly focused on managing and exploiting grassland for sheep and non-dairy cattle.

Fishing and Forestry

Timber, Coal Wood and Bark

The extent of the woodland that once covered Waberthwaite can be seen from the existence of forty fields with names containing ‘wood’, thirty of them in a solid block of 150 a. in the area

¹⁷³ *Census*.

¹⁷⁴The National Archives, MAF 32/191/62, Ministry of Food, National Farm Survey,

¹⁷⁵ OS, Types of Farming England and Wales 1:625000, published 1944.

¹⁷⁶ Local Inf.

called Waberthwaite Wood.¹⁷⁷ By 1607 Waberthwaite Wood was sufficiently depleted of timber to allow it to be leased as pasture.¹⁷⁸ In 1752 the only wood of any significance in Waberthwaite was that on fourteen tenements of customary tenants of the manor, which amounted to timber, coal-wood and bark with an estimated value of £124 4s. 6d. compared to similar products with an estimated value of £2539 8s. 9d. in Lord Muncaster's holdings in Muncaster.¹⁷⁹ Sir John Pennington's (Lord Muncaster) sale of wood from the tenements of his tenants in 1752 was controversial and led to his tenants filing an action against him (see *Local Government*). Upon enfranchising his tenants, Sir Joseph Pennington, who inherited the manor from Sir John Pennington, reserved to himself all the wood "in parcels, coppice or hedgerows" as a condition of enfranchisement, but was prepared to give the tenant on whose land any such wood stood "the first offer on reasonable terms."¹⁸⁰ A few stands of timber survived into the 20th century, some of which was harvested in 2018.

Fishing and Warren

In 1208 William fitz Hugh (William I de Waberthwaite), and two others, were granted estovers by Richard de Lucy, Lord of Egremont, so that they could obtain wood to repair their fish traps.¹⁸¹ There is no evidence of lords of the manor selling fish caught in their traps, but they gained income from the traps by leasing them.¹⁸² They used the warren at Eskmeals in a similar way – taking rent for its use rather than selling its produce.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ Tithes Map and award 1842.

¹⁷⁸ CAS (W), DPEN/320/206, Joseph Pennington lease of pasture in Waberthwaite wood to Christopher Troughton and his son, William.

¹⁷⁹ CAS (W), DPEN/106/4, estimate of several parcels of wood at Muncaster and Waberthwaite 1752.

¹⁸⁰ CAS (W), DPEN/198/1, Sir Joseph Pennington's proposals for the enfranchisement of his customary tenants in Waberthwaite

¹⁸¹ W. Whellan, *History and Topography of Cumberland and Westmorland, Pontefract* (1819), 493.

¹⁸² CAS (W), DPEN/320/198; DPEN/214/9

¹⁸³ CAS (W), DPEN/320/125; DPEN/320/252

At some point , the right to net salmon on the Esk near Waberthwaite church became vested in the rectors of Waberthwaite, probably connected with the rectors' rights as lord of the manor of Brighthouse obtained some time before 1688 (see *Religious History*).

Industry

Minerals and Quarrying

The de Waberthwaites had a salt pit on the Esk.¹⁸⁴ It probably provided the de Waberthwaite family with some income prior to being granted away to Sir John Huddleston in 1384 by William de Waberthwaite, rector of Waberthwaite, who had it as a gift from his father, John, lord of the manor.¹⁸⁵

Lords of the manor retained the mineral rights in the manor into the 20th century, but after the enclosure of Waberthwaite Wood, everyone who had an interest in the enclosure was allowed to freely quarry stone for their own use. In the late 19th century, the quarrying and agricultural engineering company Ord and Maddison of Darlington obtained a concession to remove stone from Broad Oak quarry and started quarrying on a commercial basis in about 1883.¹⁸⁶ Difficulties in transporting the output up a hill with a gradient greater than 1 in 7 in order to load a road-going steam engine that took it to the railway at Monk Moors siding finally forced the company to abandon operations in 1893.¹⁸⁷ Eskmeals Granite Company took over operations in the quarry in 1905 and solved the transport problems by installing an aerial ropeway to carry the output to the railway.¹⁸⁸ In 1930, during the Great Depression, the Eskmeals Granite Company ceased trading and its equipment was put up for sale by the

¹⁸⁴ Above: "Landownership".

¹⁸⁵ CAS (W), DPEN/14/4.

¹⁸⁶ J. Postlethwaite, *Mines and Mining in the (English) Lake District*, 3rd edition (Whitehaven, 1913), 157.

¹⁸⁷ *West Cumberland Times*, 13 December 1893, p.2.; *Millom Gazette*, 19 Jan. 1895, p.5; *Millom Gazette*, 2 Feb. 1895, p.5.

¹⁸⁸ *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 20 Feb. 1907, p.3.

receiver.¹⁸⁹ In 1932 The Broad Oak Granite Company, set up by the rector of Waberthwaite, Revd. Percy W. Parminter, restarted operations in the quarry. The new company replaced the aerial ropeway with two Bedford tipping trucks and ran operations on a smaller scale till 1946.¹⁹⁰

Manufacturing

The quarry manufactured granite kerbs, channels and setts in buildings at the quarry site that were still in evidence (though very overgrown) in 2020. Macadam, and crushed granite were manufactured at a crushing plant, no longer extant, built near the rail sidings at Monk Moors. In 1913 the total output of products reached 25,000 tons p.a..¹⁹¹

Pottery was manufactured in Waberthwaite during the Middle ages: fragments of fritted clay kiln lining and a large quantity of sherds of green-glaze, brown-glaze and unglazed pottery, including wasters, near the site of a destroyed kiln at Muckleground has been tentatively dated to the 13th century.¹⁹²

Mills

No markets or fairs were held in the manor, and there is no evidence that the lord owned a mill there, though the church did.¹⁹³ In 1535, a mill belonging to the church was identified as being worth 6s. 8d.¹⁹⁴ The location of the mill and its fate after the Dissolution (1536–40) is unknown, but it may be the ‘old mill’, *alias* ‘parsonage mill’, that was served by a mill race through

¹⁸⁹ *Yorkshire Post*, 12 Sept. 1931, p. 3.

¹⁹⁰ Local inf.

¹⁹¹ Postlethwaite, *Mines and Mining*, 3rd edition, 157.

¹⁹² J. Cherry and P.J. Cherry, ‘Prehistoric Habitation Sites in West Cumbria: Part IV, The Eskmeals Area’, *CW2*, 86 (1986), 3.

¹⁹³ Below: ‘*Religious History*’.

¹⁹⁴ *Valor Ecclesiastes* of Henry VIII quoted in S. Jefferson, *The Histories and Antiquities of Allerdale Ward above Derwent*, Carlisle, 1842, 93-94;

Waberthwaite Wood for which the rector and two other persons were still paying annual prescriptions totalling 2s. 2d. to the parish in 1827–28.¹⁹⁵ From 1814–1819 a miller lived ‘at the mill’, location unspecified.¹⁹⁶ Millers living at and near Bridge End in Waberthwaite between 1841 and 1881¹⁹⁷ were probably employed at Stainton corn mill in the township of Birkby in Muncaster barely half a mile from their homes.¹⁹⁸ Stainton mill produced coarsely ground grain for animal feed.¹⁹⁹ A sawyer and wood turners living at Bridge End and Amity cottage between 1839 and 1851²⁰⁰ were probably working at Stainton bobbin mill (which became a sawmill sometime after 1860²⁰¹).

Malt was made by the Askews of Newbiggin from 1815–1831²⁰² in a malt house that was eventually converted to cottages.

Gun Range

In 1897 Vickers opened a Gun Range at Eskmeals in Bootle²⁰³ to provide a testing range for heavy artillery. The range passed to the Ministry of Supply in 1948²⁰⁴ then to the Ministry of Defence who eventually employed SERCO to manage the site. The gun range provided employment for one person in Waberthwaite in 1901 and three in 1911. It continued to provide employment for a small number of individuals into the 21st century.

¹⁹⁵ Waberthwaite vestry meeting minutes, 1807. Waberthwaite Churchwarden accounts, 22 Jun. 1827 – 17 September 1828.

¹⁹⁶ Waberthwaite parish registers, baptisms, record the baptism of his children

¹⁹⁷ *Census*

¹⁹⁸ OS 1:10,560 map, Cumberland. Sheet 82. Surveyed 1860, published 1867.

¹⁹⁹ Anon. ‘Employment’ in M. Blaymire (ed) *Waberthwaite 2000: A Peep into the Past*, Waberthwaite (2000).

²⁰⁰ Waberthwaite parish register Baptisms occupation of fathers; *Census* 1851

²⁰¹ OS 1:10,560 map, Cumberland. Sheet 82. Revised 1897, published 1899.

²⁰² Waberthwaite parish registers, baptisms record the occupation of Joseph Askew as maltmaker or maltster between 1815 and 1831.

²⁰³ *Millom Gazette*, 27 Aug. 1897, p.5.

²⁰⁴ *Yorkshire Post*, 21 Oct. 1948, p. 4.

In 1912, the Home Office opened a mines explosions experimental station and safety lamp testing station at the northern end of Eskmeals gun range.²⁰⁵ It employed a small number of people from Waberthwaite until 1925 when the Home Office, finding Eskmeals too remote and isolated, closed it and removed to Buxton.²⁰⁶

Services

Retail

During the 19th century service providers included dressmakers, tailors, sawyers, millers, cartwrights, boot and shoemakers, blacksmiths, a stone engraver, wood turners, joiners, a leather dealer, and a waller, all working from their living premises in the township.²⁰⁷ Over the years shops have appeared and disappeared in the township. In 1756 John Benson ran a shop on his tenement at Hall Waberthwaite,²⁰⁸ a draper's, tailor's, and grocery shop was recorded at Brow Foot between 1881 and 1891,²⁰⁹ and in 1929 Mary Townson ran a shop from her house in Newbiggin and narrowly avoided conviction for selling home-made beer without a licence.²¹⁰ A shop established at Lane End in the early nineteenth century by Hannah, the widow of Richard Woodall, had more staying power. After the death of her husband in 1811, Hannah Woodall set about making a living by butchering and curing the meat of household pigs of local villagers and farmers. In 1829 the shop she had set up was run by her son, Jackson Woodall, who was also the village school teacher.²¹¹ By 1847, in addition to curing meat and making sausages, the shop was supplying groceries, drapery and general provisions,²¹² and in

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 14 Sept. 1912, p.7; <http://www.fifepits.co.uk/starter/safe-2.htm> (accessed 18 May 2019); https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Mines_Research_Laboratories_Sheffield (accessed 18 May 2019).

²⁰⁶ *Yorkshire Post*, 30 Oct. 1925, p.10; <http://www.fifepits.co.uk/starter/safe-2.htm> (accessed 18 May 2019).

²⁰⁷ *Census*

²⁰⁸ CAS (W), DPEN/14/35, account of customary messuages 1756; *Millom Gazette*, 13 Dec. 1929 p3.

²⁰⁹ Bulmer, *Dir. West Cumb.* 1883, 443; *Census*.

²¹⁰ *Millom Gazette*, 13 Dec. 1929, p3.

²¹¹ Parson & White, *Dir. C. & W.*, 280.

²¹² Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.*, 417.

1849 a post office was opened in the shop.²¹³ After Jackson's death in 1872, the shop passed to his son, Richard, who continued ham and bacon curing and sausage making, and added insurance agent to the services offered.²¹⁴ The shop remained in the family into the 21st century. By the early 20th century, it was supplying the White Star Shipping Line with its cured ham (some Waberthwaite ham went down with the Titanic in 1912).²¹⁵ Production of sausages ceased during the Second World War because, rather than drop the quality of the sausage to meet government restrictions on the meat content of sausages, the family suspended production until the war was over.

After the Second World War, the shop at Lane End continued to sell groceries and cured hams and to operate the post office. After Government restrictions on the meat content of sausages were lifted in 1954, the Woodall family restarted making traditional Cumberland sausage. Later in the century Waberthwaite ham was bought by British Airways for meals on the supersonic passenger aircraft Concorde, which operated from 1976 to 2003. In the same period hams were supplied to the mountaineer Chris Bonington for two of his four Everest expeditions.²¹⁶ In 1990 the shop was awarded a royal warrant of approval for its sausage.²¹⁷ From 2002 the meat products were traded under the company name Richard Woodall, which was incorporated as a limited company in 2002.²¹⁸ The business ultimately employed 30-40 people from Waberthwaite and elsewhere in making Cumberland sausage and curing hams using an old family recipe. The brand was sold in 2010, but the family continued to make sausages under the new company name of R.B. Woodall,²¹⁹ which was incorporated in 2010 and started trading

²¹³

xtRPvhEsEsWxkxYpbhJN0UhW_SJwpusnjccjigba0FLm76zN6czuESzITTg8qQA8p86QR_UaHNTcc4G2JJIB1drh_Mz&attredirects=1 (accessed 28 Feb. 2019).

²¹⁴ Bulmer, *Dir. West Cumb.* (1883), 444; Bulmer, *Dir. Cumb.*, 628.

²¹⁵ Local inf.

²¹⁶ Local inf.

²¹⁷ *London Gazette*, 31 Dec. 1990, p.67.

²¹⁸ Companies House <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/04489315> (accessed 26 Jun.2019).

²¹⁹ <http://www.rbwoodall.com> (accessed 17 May 2019).

under the new name in 2011²²⁰ supplying hotels, guest houses and retailers in the Lake District and South Cumbria *via* its own delivery service. By 2020 the company was supplying establishments further afield by mail order.²²¹

In 2012, an agricultural and gardening supply and equipment sales, servicing and repair company was set up at Lane End. In 2019 it employed three people.

Visitor Economy

Little happened in the way of tourism in Waberthwaite until the early 20th century. In 1929, De Burgh House was advertised as a holiday let for 3 guineas a week²²² and in 1935, ‘Amity’ house was advertised as a weekend holiday let ‘on reasonable terms’.²²³ In 2019 there were four cottages in the township providing holiday lets, and a caravan site at Newbiggin farm with pitches for five caravans and some tents.²²⁴ These yielded some economic value to the township.

²²⁰ Companies House at <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/07464930> (accessed 26 June 2019); <http://www.rbwoodall.com> (accessed 26 June 2019).

²²¹ <http://www.rbwoodall.com> (accessed 26 June 2019).

²²² *Sheffield Daily Independent* 20 May 1929, p.3.

²²³ *Sheffield Daily Independent* 11 May 1935, p.4

²²⁴ <https://www.ukcampsite.co.uk/sites/details.asp?revid=4578> (accessed 11 April 2019)

4 SOCIAL HISTORY

Social Character

Character of the parish as a community.

The dispersed population of Waberthwaite, living in the isolated farms and scattered clusters of cottages and small hamlets that constituted the township, were served by a network of footpaths, tracks and bridleways that linked the dispersed settlements to each other and to the church in the hamlet of Hall Waberthwaite and provided threads that bound the settlements into a community. Prior to the 19th century the church was the only community building that could have provided a focal point for the scattered population. Waberthwaite held no fair or market of its own that could have presented opportunities for socialising, but annual fairs and weekly markets held in nearby towns of Ravenglass (fair in July and market on Saturdays from 1208), and Bootle (fair in September and market on Wednesdays from 1347)²²⁵ would have provided opportunities for social exchanges.

The basic nature of dispersed settlement remained unchanged into the 21st century, but the focal point of the township moved to the settlement of Lane End after a school was established there early in the 18th century followed by a shop prior to 1829. The school became a venue for public meetings and entertainment until the early 20th century when a village institute was built.²²⁶ Growth at the two hamlets of Hall Waberthwaite and Newbiggin had all but ceased by the 19th century and early 20th century respectively, while Lane End grew to be the main settlement in the township.

²²⁵ Samantha Letters, *Online Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516* : <https://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/gaz/gazweb2.html> [Cumberland] (last updated 16 December 2013. accessed 9 April 2019).

²²⁶ *Millom Gazette*, 20 Jan. 1894, p.5, meeting of the Benevolent Lodge of Mechanics; *Cumberland Paquet* 7 Nov. 1889 p.5, concert in schoolroom; *Millom Gazette*, 29 Jan. 1909, p.1, concert and ball in school; *Millom Gazette*, 31 Dec. 1909, p1, lantern slide show on the customs of the Eskimo.

Leadership

There is no evidence that any lords of the manor were ever resident in Waberthwaite, nevertheless they dominated affairs in manorial times through their stewards and the manor court, but excesses on their part did not go unchallenged. In 1752 tenants, led by William Benson, mounted a legal challenge to the excesses of Sir John Pennington, then lord of the manor, which successfully led to injunctions on Sir John, established the rights of the tenants and limited the power of the lord (see *Local Government* below). Enfranchisement in the late 18th century saw a further weakening of the lords' influence and power, and by the 19th century social leadership had fallen to successful families arising out of the land-owning, business and professional classes such as the Falcons, Myers, Pearsons, Postlethwaites, Pickthalls, Sharpes and Woodalls, all of whom provided officers for public roles such as churchwardens, vestry members, school managers, school teachers and magistrates, while lords of Muncaster became benefactors, exerting influence by contributing to the well-being of the community through donations in cash or real estate to communal institutions such as the church,²²⁷ school²²⁸ and village hall (see below).

Social Geography and Socio-economic groups

In manorial times all tenants had the same customary rights with nothing to distinguish them on the basis of class, and the uniform adherence to the protestant religion and the absence of different ethnicities provided no opportunities for testing the appetite for segregation or distinction on those bases. Enfranchisement gave rise to new a new class of landowner – the

²²⁷ Below: *Religious History*.

²²⁸ Below: *Social History: Education*

freeholder, but the distinctions between freeholders and customary tenants were small and both would have been considered as yeomen in Cumbrian usage.²²⁹

The appellation yeoman was used sparingly in Waberthwaite, but an example of those fitting the description distinguishing themselves from lower classes occurred in 1807 when the box pews in the newly refurbished church were allocated. While ten pews were allocated to 21 farming families whose heads would qualify as yeomen, only one pew was allocated to the ‘public and cottagers’, who were not allowed to sit in the pews allocated to the families ‘without the permission of the proprietors’.²³⁰

Ranks above yeoman were rare. Robert Copley, buried in 1675, was described as ‘gentleman’. Forty years later Thomas Kirbey was also a gentleman, but it was ninety years before another gentleman, Thomas Falcon, appeared.²³¹ John Stapleton’s burial record of 1677, in which he is described as ‘esquire’, is the only example of that rank until John Benn Postlethwaite esquire, a solicitor and Justice of the Peace, appears in Waberthwaite at the end of the 19th century.²³²

The uniformity of the social structure, based principally on working the land, was broken by the influx of quarry workers, who came from all parts of Britain to work in Broad Oak quarry in the 19th and 20th centuries, but they were integrated into the community without any recorded difficulty: lodgings for the influx of workers were provided by local families²³³ and the workers enriched the township’s social life by holding or taking part in concerts for the

²²⁹ J. V. Beckett, ‘Decline of the Small Landowner in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth Century England: Some Regional Considerations’, *The Agricultural History Review*, 1982, 100, at <https://www.bahs.org.uk/AGHR/ARTICLES/30n2a1.pdf> (accessed Sept. 2019).

²³⁰ Waberthwaite Vestry Book and Churchwardens’ Accounts 1807 – in possession of author

²³¹ *Ibid.*

²³² CAS (W) YDGO/OD/3/40-43.

²³³ *Censuses*

benefit of local causes, including the local school.²³⁴ In the mid 20th century, the establishment of the nuclear industry 15 miles away gave rise to an influx of technicians, managers and their families into West Cumbria which resulted in a leavening of middle to high income earners in the social mix of many places, including Waberthwaite. In the latter half of the 20th century some retirees from outside the area settled in Waberthwaite. By 2020 Waberthwaite was a mixed community that retained some of the elements of traditional rural community life.

The manorial pattern of small farms persisted into the 20th century, long after the demise of the manor. By the nineteenth century the farms were run as family farms supported from time to time by live-in servants and employed labourers, some of whom may have been cottagers, others landless. In the mid 20th century individuals started to buy land to add to the acreages they were already farming, which resulted in a few individuals with large holdings.

Communal Life

There are no records of communal activities in Waberthwaite until the late 19th century. In the absence of a village hall, the school was used for meetings and entertainment.²³⁵

Friendly Societies

The Corney Benevolent Lodge was part of the Coniston District of the Independent United Order of Mechanics Friendly Society, which was registered as a Friendly Society in 1878, and was open to residents of Waberthwaite.

Village Institute and Village Hall

²³⁴ *Millom Gazette* 29 Jan. 1929, p.1; *Cumberland Paquet*, 29 Jan. 1891 p.6.

²³⁵ *Cumberland Paquet*, 29 Aug. 1889, p.5; *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 14 Jan. 1892, p.7;

What came to be known as the village hall was built at Lane End in 1911 as the ‘village institute and reading room’. It was built as a successor to the clubhouse of a social club set up at the end of the 19th century for young men from the isolated farms. When the clubhouse became too small for the increasingly popular club, the members themselves built the hall with the aid of local craftsmen on land donated by Sir J. Ramsden for a small ground rent.²³⁶ From the outset it provided a venue for meetings and gatherings of parishioners for recreation and entertainment.²³⁷ By 1915 an annual concert was being held²³⁸ and through the 1920s and 1930s dances were supplemented by whist drives. The tradition persisted into the 1940s.

The hall has been used by a number of local organisations: The Women’s Institute held its inaugural meeting in the hall in 1972 and met there regularly till 2018 when it went into voluntary suspension.²³⁹ Waberthwaite Amateur Dramatic Society, founded in 1952, held rehearsals and performances at the hall until 1975.²⁴⁰ After the society’s demise, the thespian talents of Waberthwaite found an outlet in the production of an annual pantomime²⁴¹ until the mid 1980s. The hall also provided a venue for Waberthwaite and Corney Gardening Club. Founded in March 1980, the Gardening Club held its annual plant sale and gardening lectures at the village hall. The club had 140 members by 1990. Each year it arranged visits to stately homes and held an annual supper and three autumn/winter evening flower shows at the Brown Cow Inn in Corney. It established two trading huts in Corney and continued to meet and hold plant sales and flower shows in 2019.²⁴² In the 21st Century the hall regularly provided a venue for meetings and for performances by travelling performers.

²³⁶ D. and I. Southward in ‘Waberthwaite Reading Room’ in M. Blaymire (ed) *Waberthwaite 2000: A Peep into the Past*, Waberthwaite (2000).

²³⁷ *Millom Gazette*, 24 Oct. 1913, 5.

²³⁸ *Millom Gazette*, 5 Feb. 1915, 5.

²³⁹ Inf. Mrs C Winzor, 16 Mar. 2019.

²⁴⁰ CAS (B), BDSO 38, Waberthwaite amateur Dramatic Society Minute Book.

²⁴¹ Anon. ‘Waberthwaite Pantomime’, in M. Blaymire (ed.) *Waberthwaite 2000: A Peep into the Past*, (Waberthwaite, 2000).

²⁴² Inf. J. Varden, secretary of the club for 23 years, April 2019.

Inns and Alehouses

In 1841 Mary Boulton kept a beer house at Browfoot.²⁴³ This is the only reference to anything resembling a public house or inn in Waberthwaite, but there were inns within half a mile of the parish boundaries at Broad Oak (in Muncaster) and at Park Nook (in Corney) in the 19th century. The inn at Park Nook survived to become the Brown Cow Inn by the 21st century.

Amateur Sport

Wrestling has been popular in Waberthwaite since the 19th century and by the early 20th century a very successful wrestling academy was established in Waberthwaite.²⁴⁴ The academy still used the village hall for training sessions in 2020.

In 1959, the Black Combe Beagles hunting pack was formed in Waberthwaite. Originally kennelled at Cross, the pack moved to new kennels at Muckleground in 1981. It was still based there in 2020.²⁴⁵ The pack hunted hares from September to March each year and held an end of season hunt supper. The passing of the Hunting Act in 2004, made it illegal to hunt hares with hounds, and hunting became a matter of laying a scent trail for the hounds to 'hunt'. In the 1970s the Black Combe Beagles joined forces with the organisers of the failing Muncaster Country Fair and Sheep Dog Trials, with the result that the country fair revived and became a significant August bank holiday attraction. In 2008 the fair moved to Bootle at the foot of Black Combe and changed its name to Black Combe Fair.²⁴⁶

Education

²⁴³ *Census*

²⁴⁴ *Carlisle Journal*, 17 Aug. 1844, p.3; *Millom Gazette*, 6 Nov. 1925, p.1.

²⁴⁵ Local inf.

²⁴⁶ http://www.blackcombecountryfair.co.uk/page/11-1_2_1_1_1_1 (accessed 22 May 2019).

A school was reported in Waberthwaite in 1818. Thirty pupils, all ‘desirous of the means of education’, attended it.²⁴⁷ The school had been built by subscribers and was managed by a committee of seven selected from among the subscribers.²⁴⁸ Jackson Woodall, a grocer of Lane End, was the school master in 1829.²⁴⁹ He ceased as schoolmaster sometime before 1841,²⁵⁰ but maintained his interest in the school for many years thereafter serving on the management committee.²⁵¹ In his obituary in 1872 he was credited with watching over the interest of the school for more than forty years and with being chiefly instrumental in keeping it in a state of efficiency.²⁵²

By 1841 the school master role was being filled by another local man, Philip Myers [Jr.] of Row.²⁵³ In 1848 the school advertised for two teachers: a master to teach reading, writing, arithmetic and English language, and a mistress to teach reading, writing and needlework.²⁵⁴ Charles Verschoyle Garland got the job as schoolmaster, but in 1851 he resigned in order to become a teacher at the Liverpool Collegiate Institute. Described as industrious and talented, Mr Garland was presented with ‘a very handsome silver cream ewer’ by the parents of his pupils as a token of esteem for him as a gentleman and a teacher.²⁵⁵ He was succeeded by John Armstrong, born in Santon Bridge,²⁵⁶ who remained in post for the next 14 years. An obituary in 1903 referred to him as a good master who turned out some good scholars.²⁵⁷ John

²⁴⁷ Select Committee for Education of the Poor Abstract, 1818, p.129

²⁴⁸ *Cumberland Paquet*, 21 Jan. 1851, P.2.

²⁴⁹ *Parson & White Dir. C.&W.*, 280

²⁵⁰ *Census*

²⁵¹ *Cumberland Paquet*, 21 Jan. 1851, P.2.

²⁵² *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 1 Aug. 1872 p.6.

²⁵³ *Census*

²⁵⁴ *Cumberland Paquet*, 21 Mar. 1848, p.2.

²⁵⁵ *Carlisle Journal*, 17 Jan. 1851 p.2.

²⁵⁶ *Census*.

²⁵⁷ *Maryport Advertiser*, 6 June 1903 p.4.

Armstrong was succeeded by William Dobson who had previously been at Oulton.²⁵⁸ In 1925 Alfred Bark was schoolmaster.²⁵⁹

In 1859 the school accepted aid from the Carlisle Diocesan Education Society, founded four years previously.²⁶⁰ The Society provided new desks, books and apparatus, and reorganised the school interior.²⁶¹

In 1848 the curriculum included reading, writing, arithmetic, needlework and the English Language.²⁶² By 1868/69 geography, knitting and scripture had been added.²⁶³ It had been a policy of the Diocesan Education Society not to interfere with the running of the schools it aided,²⁶⁴ but the Elementary Education Act in 1870 left the curriculum for religious knowledge and its examination and inspection to the voluntary agencies, and as a result the Church of England took on a more active role in this area and the curriculum changed accordingly: a diocesan inspection and examination carried out in 1888 included an assessment of the children's knowledge of the Old Testament, The New Testament, the catechism, liturgy and repetition.²⁶⁵

The 1870 Elementary Education Act joined Waberthwaite and Corney together for educational purposes.²⁶⁶ By 1873 over fifty children attended the school – approximately twice the number recommended by the Act, given the accommodation available. To address this the school was

²⁵⁸ *Census* 1871 and 1861.

²⁵⁹ Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.*, 1925, 273.

²⁶⁰ R.S. Ferguson, *Diocesan History of Carlisle* London (1889) at: http://www.stevebulman.f9.co.uk/cumbria/diocese_ferguson11_f.html (accessed 20 April 2019)

²⁶¹ *Carlisle Journal* 21 October 1859 p.6.

²⁶² *Cumberland Paquet* 21 March 1848 p.2.

²⁶³ *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 9 July 1868 p.5; *Ibid* 27 May 1869 p.7

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 6 Aug. 1858 p.7.

²⁶⁵ *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 29 November 1888, p.8.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 16 Jan. 1873 p.7.

extended by the addition of a second classroom at a cost of £300. The Diocesan Education Society provided £45, the remainder was raised by inhabitants and landowners.²⁶⁷ In 1907 the school received further grants from the Diocesan Education Society.²⁶⁸

In 1904 Cumberland County Council Local Education Authority (LEA), ordered that a foundation member (i.e. a representative of the Church of England) be appointed to the school's board of managers, and in 1914 the LEA took the school over as Waberthwaite Church of England voluntary aided school, reiterating that the school was available to children from Corney as well as Waberthwaite.²⁶⁹

In the 1930s, Revd. Percy Parminter, Rector of Waberthwaite, Rector of Corney, and Chairman of the School Governors began campaigning for support and contributions for building a new school because of the high number of pupils then attending the school. Support from residents was not universal; many were concerned at the frailty of the financial backing, but Revd. Parminter pressed on. When the building was finished in 1938, the issue became divisive. Revd. Parminter convinced some parents that their children should attend the new school, but some parents refused to accept this, and the school managers refused to run the new school because of the debts with which it was saddled. There was now a schism with some parents sending their children to the old school, supporters of the new school not sending their children to school at all, and children of the two factions name-calling each other.²⁷⁰ The two factions remained divided until the diocese of Carlisle agreed to take over the new school's debts, after which the children returned to the old school pending the official takeover of the new school

²⁶⁷ *Whitehaven News*, 16 Jan. 1873, p.5.

²⁶⁸ *West Cumberland Times* 14 Dec. 1907 p. 7.

²⁶⁹ *Millom Gazette*, 13 Feb. 1914, p.4.

²⁷⁰ D. and I. Southward 'Waberthwaite School', in M. Blaymire (ed) *Waberthwaite 2000: A Peep into the Past*, (Waberthwaite, 2000).

by the school managers.²⁷¹ The school had no proper indoor space for physical education, so in 1951 the managers rented the village hall for physical education classes. Its use was discontinued some time later, but resumed in the 1970s. There were no on-site facilities for preparing and serving meals, which therefore had to be carried out in a ‘sub-standard kitchen and dining room in rented premises.’ In 1963, this deficiency was rectified when a kitchen was built and opened at the school. Thereafter meals were prepared in the kitchen and eaten in an adjoining classroom and the assembly hall.²⁷²

Proposals to close the school in the 1980s as part of a county rationalisation scheme were strongly resisted by the residents, and in 1983 the proposals were dropped.²⁷³ In 2019 the school had a capacity for 70 children and had 67 pupils including a nursery class.²⁷⁴ There were three teachers, one part time teacher, two higher level teaching assistants, one senior teaching assistant and two teaching assistants.²⁷⁵

Social Welfare

Charities

In 1812 Lord Muncaster left a bequest of £50 to the clergyman and overseer of the poor to distribute at their discretion to the poor of Waberthwaite not receiving alms.²⁷⁶ By 1829 there was also a poor stock of £100, £80 of which was given by Rev. Parke, rector of Barton in Norfolk, who was born in Waberthwaite.²⁷⁷ In 1897 Rev. Parke’s charity was worth £62. It

²⁷¹ *Hull Daily Mail*, 14 May 1938 p.7.

²⁷² John Leiper, principal school medical officer Cumberland county council, *The School Health Service*, 1963, 79

²⁷³ Local inf.

²⁷⁴ OFSTED at <https://get-informationschools.service.gov.uk/Establishments/Establishment/Details/112352> (accessed 21 April 2019).

²⁷⁵ <http://www.waberthwaite.cumbria.sch.uk/about-us/staff> (accessed 21 April 2019).

²⁷⁶ CAS (W), DBH 29/21, copy of the will of the late Lord Muncaster 1812; W. Whellan, *History and Topography of Cumberland and Westmorland*, (Pontefract, 1860) ,492-493

²⁷⁷ Parson & White *Dir. C.&W* 280; W. Whellan, *History and Topography of Cumberland and Westmorland*, (Pontefract, 1860), 495; Butler, *Cumbria Parishes*, 70.

yielded £1 17s. p.a. interest²⁷⁸ and was managed by the parochial church council²⁷⁹ (as successors to the churchwardens) until the charity was extinguished in the mid 20th century.

In the late 19th and early 20th century quarry workers supported each other by responding to hardship with *ad hoc* acts of charity. In 1889 they arranged and gave a concert for a quarry employee who had been off work for three months because of a broken arm. The concert was held in the school, and Mr Humphreys, the quarry foreman, took the chair and contributed largely to the proceedings.²⁸⁰ In 1911, the jury at the inquest into the death of Isaac Tyson while working at the quarry handed over their jury fees to Isaac's widow and three children.²⁸¹

Poor Relief

No accounts of overseers of the poor that could indicate the level of support received by the poor have survived. Churchwardens accounts record a payment of 6*d.* to a 'poore woman' in 1679,²⁸² but make no mention of the poor beyond that. Nine burial records between 1706 and 1788 refer to the interment of people described as 'maintained by the parish' or 'one of the poor of the parish,' and one refers to the burial of 'a poor labouring man.' These ten entries represent about 3% of the total burials in the period.²⁸³ In 1818, a Government report recorded that there were 'very few poor children' in Waberthwaite.²⁸⁴ The presence of people born in Waberthwaite in the workhouse in Bootle was rare, only one occurring in the period 1851 to 1901.²⁸⁵ There were no alms houses in the parish.

²⁷⁸ Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.* 1897, 258.

²⁷⁹ Parochial church council annual 'vestry meeting' minute book 1894 - 1996, courtesy of the churchwarden.

²⁸⁰ *Cumberland Paquet*, 2 Nov. 1889, p.5.

²⁸¹ *Millom Gazette*, 27 Jan. 1911 p.8

²⁸² J. Pratt, *Manuscript Transcription of the Register of Waberthwaite Church containing churchwardens accounts. Presented to the Society of Genealogists*(London, 1824), Vol 2, 93.

²⁸³ Waberthwaite parish registers.

²⁸⁴ Select Committee for Education of the Poor, Abstract, 1818, p.129

²⁸⁵ *Censuses*

Medical

In 1690 there was neither hospital, nor midwife, nor physician in the township.²⁸⁶ This remained the case into the 21st century. In the 19th century, and possibly before that, medical services were available at Bootle and Ravenglass.²⁸⁷ In the late 19th century, quarry workers combined to provide their own medical welfare by forming a ‘club’ to provide medical help to members. In 1892 they unanimously elected Dr Griffiths, a general practitioner of Ravenglass, as their doctor.²⁸⁸ In 2020 the township was served by the Seascale Health Centre with surgeries at Bootle and Seascale.

²⁸⁶ CAS (C), DRC/5/128, churchwardens’ answers to visitation articles.

²⁸⁷ *Censuses* 1841 – 1911 show the presence of surgeons and physicians.

²⁸⁸ *Cumberland Pacquet*, 14 April 1892 p.5.

5 RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Waberthwaite is an unusually small ancient ecclesiastical parish. The remains of Anglian and Viking-Age crosses in the churchyard (see *Parochial Origins* and *Church Architecture* below) indicate that its church has been a site of some religious significance since at the 9th century.²⁸⁹ The only place of worship is the parish church of St John (formerly St James's), a building which has medieval foundations and a fine example of a Georgian interior. A rectory since the middle ages, the advowson remained with the lords of the manor until the 20th century. For much of its history the rectory was combined with the curacy of Muncaster and it has been a united benefice with Muncaster since 1956. Since the 17th century, many of Waberthwaite's rectors have been graduates, although not in the case of the longest serving incumbent, Thomas Nicholson (b.1750 - d.1825). A local man who was appointed rector not long after his ordination, Nicholson oversaw a major refurbishment of the church in 1807. There is no evidence of any non-conformity within the parish at any point.

Origins of Parochial Organisation

The parish church of St. John is situated in the hamlet of Hall Waberthwaite, the earliest settlement in Waberthwaite. It stands beside the tidal reach of the Esk estuary at its confluence with Broadoak Beck, close to an ancient ford across the Esk to Ravenglass. In terms of its origins, Waberthwaite does not conform to the model of parochial development propounded under the 'minster hypothesis', having no apparent relationship with the nearest minster church at St Bees. However, the remains of two stone crosses in the church yard (one Anglian and one Viking-Age) do attest to an early Christian presence. There are several early church sites along

²⁸⁹ M. Fair, 'The West Cumberland Group of Pre-Norman Crosses', *CW2*, 50, (1950), 192; Historic England List Entry Number 1012711; R. N. Bailey and R. J. Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture 2: Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire North of the Sands* (Oxford, 1988), 151-152; http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol2.php?pageNum_urls=165 (accessed 4 Apr. 2019); http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol2.php?pageNum_urls=166 (accessed 4 Apr. 2019).

the Cumbrian coastal strip thought to reflect British survival/revival or Irish Christian influence.²⁹⁰ Waberthwaite may have therefore been some sort of parochial entity, albeit an atypical one, before the Conquest.²⁹¹

Waberthwaite church is not among the churches and chapels of Copeland confirmed to St Bees priory by Roger of Pont l'Evêque during his tenure as Archbishop of York from 1154 to 1181,²⁹² nor was it recorded in the Taxatio of 1291,²⁹³ but there is a reference to it in 1220 when its parson '*Benedicto persona de Wathebunthwait*', the first recorded incumbent, was witness to a charter of Richard de Punchunby (Ponsonby).²⁹⁴ The church receives mention again in 1281 in a mandate from the Archbishop of York to the archdeacon instructing him to collect certain information about the parishes in Copeland. The first reference to the living being a rectory occurs in 1316 when the incumbent, Adam de Waberthwaite was referred to as '*Dominus Adam rector ecclesie de Wayberthwayt*'.²⁹⁵

The current church building sits on foundations believed to have been laid during the 12th or 13th century,²⁹⁶ while the walls have been described as 12th century.²⁹⁷ There is evidence that the church was later extended probably in the 16th or 17th century. The church was formerly

²⁹⁰ J. Blair, *Minsters in a Changing World*, 311, n107. British survival in the vicinity of Waberthwaite is illustrated by the township of Birkby in Muncaster which abuts Waberthwaite and had the early name 'Bretby'.

²⁹¹ J. Blair, *Minsters in a Changing World*, 311, n107.

²⁹² 'Houses of Benedictine monks: The priory of St Bees', in *A History of the County of Cumberland: Volume 2*, ed. J Wilson (London, 1905), pp. 178-183. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/cumb/vol2/pp178-183> (accessed 7 Jun. 2019)

²⁹³ Pope Nicholas IV, *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae*.

²⁹⁴ Reg St Bees 291 and 291 note 4.

²⁹⁵ *The Register of John de Halton*, 136, 139, 141

²⁹⁶ National Heritage List for England Entry 1086644; Pastscape https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=37450&sort=4&search=all&criteria=waberthwaite&rational=q&recordsperpage=10 (accessed 6 Jun. 2019).

²⁹⁷ Pastscape

https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=37450&sort=4&search=all&criteria=waberthwaite&rational=q&recordsperpage=10 (accessed 30 Aug 2019);

W.G. Collingwood, 'An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments of Cumberland', *CW2*, 23 (1923), 268.

dedicated to St James, as evidenced in a charter of 20 Nov. 1391.²⁹⁸ It is not known when the dedication changed to St John, but the medieval church bells indicate that the church was still dedicated to St. James in the late 15th century (see *Church Architecture*, below). Surviving parish registers date from 1656 for burials and baptisms, and 1657 for marriages.

In the 18th century, the ecclesiastical parish was described as being 1.5 miles long east to west, and one mile long north to south,²⁹⁹ making it 960 a. in area - approximately half the size of the manor and the later civil parish. This discrepancy is surprising, but is unlikely to be due to any shrinkage of borders or transfer of land to another parish. It arises from the described east-west length of the ecclesiastical parish, which falls short of the eastern border of the manor and later civil parish by approximately 1.5 – 2 miles (2.5 – 3.3 km.), meaning it encompasses only the inhabited western half of the parish up to about the 400 ft. contour, beyond which was open fell with no habitations (which remains the case in 2020).³⁰⁰

The rector and ecclesiastical parish of Waberthwaite paid 2s. p.a. to the rector of Corney parish for 'great and small tithes for 62 a. of land on Waberthwaite Wood commonly called and known by the name of Whitrow'.³⁰¹ This prescription may have resulted from Alicia de Lascy's sale of Whitrow (then part of her holdings in Corney) to William de Waberthwaite in the 13th century:³⁰² the tithes due to Corney church from Whitrow each year may have been treated as transferable assets that were sold separately from the property for 2s. a year, either at or after

²⁹⁸ CAS (W), DPEN/14/7, Charter of Thomas de Berdesey granting Richard de Kirkeby the manor and advowson of Waberthwaite, 20 November 1391.

²⁹⁹ *The Cumbria Parishes 1714-1725 from Bishop Gastrell's Notitia, with additions by Bishop Porteous 1778-1779*, ed. L.A.S. Butler, CWAAS Record Series Vol. XII (Kendal, 1998), 171; CAS (C), DX 68/76 Investigation and Report on the Lordship of Brighouse.

³⁰⁰ Above, *Settlement*.

³⁰¹ Vestry meeting minutes, May 1817-18.

³⁰² Above, *Land Ownership*.

the sale of the property.³⁰³ A detached part of Corney parish, the farmstead of Grange and its 80 a. of land, that was taken into Waberthwaite civil parish in the late 19th century³⁰⁴ remained part of the ecclesiastical parish of Corney till an order in council took it into Waberthwaite ecclesiastical parish in 1956.³⁰⁵ In the same order in council the benefices of Muncaster and Waberthwaite were combined into a single benefice. In 1978 the benefice expanded to include Eskdale, Drigg and Irton³⁰⁶ in what became known as the Eskdale benefice. In 2019 plans were in place to combine the Eskdale benefice with the Black Combe benefice (the parishes of Corney, Bootle, Whicham and Whitbeck).

Since 1686 (and possibly before that from time to time), the rectorship of Waberthwaite was paired with the curacy of Muncaster church, but in 1844 Revd. Thomas Robinson became incumbent at Muncaster only³⁰⁷ and the parishes had separate clergymen from then until they were united into a single benefice in 1956.

Advowson

The church was never gifted to any monastery or other religious establishment, but remained in the hands of the lords of the manor (see *Landownership*) till the 20th century when it passed to the Church of England. While the manor was in the hands of the de Waberthwaites they occasionally took the opportunity to appoint rectors from within their own family.³⁰⁸ Sir Richard de Kirkebye, presented in 1421 and again in 1425, and Roger Kirkby in 1554;³⁰⁹ the

³⁰³ Such transactions have been known elsewhere: in 1387 there was a convention in which the monks of York, who had previously given up all claim to the church at Whitbeck to Conishead priory, but had retained certain tithes in the parish later granted them to the priory for 10s a year: W. N. Thomson 'South and South-west Cumberland in the chartulary of St. Bees' *CW2*, 3(1903), 78.

³⁰⁴ Above, *Introduction*.

³⁰⁵ *London Gazette*, 7 December 1956, p.6933

³⁰⁶ *London Gazette*, 2 June 1978, p.6713.

³⁰⁷ A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth* (Kendal, 1889), 88 and 91.

³⁰⁸ Below, *Religious Life*.

³⁰⁹ W. Whellan, *History and Topography of the Counties of Cumberland and Westmorland*, (Pontefract, 1860), 495.

latter must have been behind the appointment of the curate, Thomas Nichollson,³¹⁰ about whom little is known. William Walker was rector from at least 1535 until 1578.³¹¹ Henry Kirkby presented in 1580 (Nicholas Laurenson or Christopher Troughton). In 1608 the advowson was sold with the manor to Joseph Pennington (Lord Muncaster).³¹² On 1 Aug. 1630 Samuel Rutter was instituted on a presentation by Joseph Pennington.³¹³

Endowment

In 1535 the glebe, an associated house (*'mansione'*), tithes, mill, wool and sheep were valued at £3 11s. 8d. nett. The mill in question may be the 'old mill' or 'parsonage mill' (location unknown, but possibly the mill at Stainton in Birkby just across the Waberthwaite parish boundary) served by a mill race through Waberthwaite Wood for which the rector and two other persons paid annual prescriptions to the church totalling 2s. 2d.

Since before 1688, the rector of Waberthwaite was also lord of the manor of Brighouse, a small farm in Muncaster across the Esk estuary, about one mile south of Ravenglass (see MUNCASTER). Worth a rent of 30d. in 1688, the manor yielded an income of 5s. a year from copyhold tenants by the 19th century. Transfer of the property between tenants required the licence and endorsement of the rector of Waberthwaite.³¹⁴ In 1843 Brighouse was sold to Lady Muncaster as a customary copyhold estate³¹⁵ and the payment of 5s. a year continued until it was extinguished by legislation in the 20th century (prior to 1973).³¹⁶

³¹⁰ Clergy of the Church of England Database at <http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp> (accessed 3 Jul. 2019).

³¹¹ *Valor Ecclesiastes* of Henry VIII; Clergy of the Church of England Database <http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp?locKey=573> (accessed 22 June 2019).

³¹² CAS (W), DPEN/14/26, indenture between William Kirkby of Rawcliffe and Joseph Pennington; DPEN/14/27, grant of William Kirkby to Joseph Pennington.

³¹³ Nightingale, *Ejected of 1662*, 850.

³¹⁴ CAS (W), DPEN/5/3; DPEN5/5-10.

³¹⁵ CAS (W), DPEN/5/17, surrender by John Dixon and admission of Lady Muncaster.

³¹⁶ CAS (C), DX 68/76, Investigation and Report on the Lordship of Brighouse.

The Rector also had a right of netting salmon in the Esk adjacent to the church, which appears to have been associated with the lordship of Brighthouse manor.³¹⁷ The last rector to use the right was Revd. Percy Parminter who kept the nets in the vestry. Revd. Parminter retired in 1955 and the next incumbent, Revd. Murray Hodges, did not take advantage of the right. In 1976 a report to the Diocesan Dilapidation Board at Carlisle, in response to an enquiry from Waberthwaite PCC, concluded that it was doubtful if the right could be upheld owing to ‘non-user or exercising’ after more than 20 years of non-use.³¹⁸

Clergy House and Living

The early rectors, including William Brygham, to whom Richard de Kirkby granted a feoffment to use the manor in 1406,³¹⁹ presumably lived in their own dwellings in the parish as no rectory was provided by the church, but the house (*mansione*) and glebe recorded in 1535³²⁰ may have been the forerunner of the glebe house. Whether any of the three clergy (rector, curate and chaplain) who served the parish in 1524 -1525,³²¹ or any subsequent clergy, had the benefit of living in the house is not recorded. There is evidence that the house may have been rented to provide income: when the rector Revd. Nicholson, who lived in Muncaster, refurbished the Waberthwaite glebe house in the early 19th Century he claimed that he had made it ‘commodious and substantial and fit for a respectable family.’³²²

³¹⁷ *Ibid*

³¹⁸ *Ibid*

³¹⁹ CAS (W). DPEN/14/8, charter of Richard de Kirkeby

³²⁰ *Valor Ecclesiastes* of Henry VIII quoted in S. Jefferson, *The Histories and Antiquities of Allerdale Ward above Derwent*, Carlisle, 1842, 93-4.

³²¹ C. M. L. Bouch, *Prelates and People of the Lake Counties* (Kendal: Titus Wilson, 1948), 154-55

³²² CAS (W), D/BH/24/12/10, letter from Rev. Nicholson to Lord Geo. H Chester.

In 1705 the living was valued by the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty Fund at £18 16s. 6d., which included the 5s. rent from the tenant of Brighthouse farm. The fund gave grants of £200 in 1780 and 1809, income from which amounted to £13 in 1889.³²³ Great and small tithes produced £30 in 1794,³²⁴ and were commuted for an annual rent charge of £105 in 1842.³²⁵ A net income of £131 in 1840 was little changed in 1860, but it had fallen to £114 by 1897. By 1901 it had fallen to £92.³²⁶

The size of the glebe was 15 a. in 1889.³²⁷ In 1894 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners purchased a property called Oak Bank in Muncaster as a rectory. Three-quarters of the money required for the purchase, and a gift of 8 a. of land were donated by Lord Muncaster.³²⁸ As a result of the gift of land in Muncaster, glebe land amounted to 25 a. in 1897.³²⁹

Religious Life

Medieval Period

The earliest evidence of a Christian presence in Waberthwaite is yielded by the presence of the remains of an Anglian cross in the churchyard, which has been dated to the second half of the 9th or the 10th century.³³⁰ Approximately a century later, Scandinavian settlers erected their own cross in the same location. This was possibly done to mark a change in lordship,³³¹ as the

³²³ A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 92

³²⁴ Hutchinson, 564.

³²⁵ W. Whellan, *History and Topography of Cumberland and Westmorland*, (Pontefract, 1860), 495; CAS (C), DRC/8/192, Waberthwaite Tithe Award.

³²⁶ S. Jefferson, *History and Antiquities of Cumberland*, Carlisle (1840), 4; W. Whellan, *History and Topography of Cumberland and Westmorland*, Pontefract (1860), 495; *A Topographical Dictionary of England*, ed. Samuel Lewis (London, 1848), 429-432, *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/topographical-dict/england/pp429-432> (accessed 30 March 2019); Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.*, 1897, 250 at <https://forebears.io/england/cumberland/waberthwaite#sid15596> (accessed 3 Apr. 2019); Bulmer, *Dir. Cumb.* Preston (1901), 627.

³²⁷ A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 90.

³²⁸ CAS (W), DPEN/137/3/1/2 and DPEN/137/3/1/3, receipts from Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

³²⁹ Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.*, 1897, 250 at <https://forebears.io/england/cumberland/waberthwaite#sid15596> (accessed 3 Apr. 2019).

³³⁰ CASSS, II, 151 ; Cramp, 'Crosses of the Cumbrian Coast', 67.

³³¹ Cramp, 'Crosses of the Cumbrian Coast', 69.

design ‘represents an impressive fusion of Anglian and Scandinavian traditions’.³³² Two or three centuries after that the church was built there in stone. No evidence of any earlier church or chapel buildings has survived, possibly because any such buildings may have been built of wood.

The first known incumbent of the church, Benedict (1220), may have been a member of the de Waberthwaite family.³³³ At least two more de Waberthwaites, Adam II and William, brother of James the last de Waberthwaite lord of the manor, subsequently held the office.³³⁴ Adam II held the rectorship in the early 14th century. He was ordained sub deacon on a testimonial by the dean and chapter of York in a ceremony in Carlisle cathedral on 18 December 1316 . He was ordained deacon on 26 February 1317 and ordained priest a month later.³³⁵ William de Wayburthwayt is mentioned as rector in 1387 and 1391.³³⁶

Archiepiscopal visitations to the remote Copeland deanery were rare, and visitations to Waberthwaite rarer. The only evidence of the visitation by an archbishop of York to the deanery in the century between 1215 and 1315 was a visit to St Bees by Archbishop William Wickwane on 10 May 1281. This visitation had planned to visit Waberthwaite on 19 May, but the plan was changed and the itinerary does not show a visit to Waberthwaite.³³⁷ No evidence for a visitation to Waberthwaite subsequently occurs until Archbishop John Kemp planned a

³³² CASSS, II, 152.

³³³ Sykes, ‘Ulf and his Descendants’, 132.

³³⁴ Above: *Landownership*

³³⁵ *Register of John de Halton*, 136, 139, 141 at

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924065036554;view=1up;seq=146> (accessed 27 Jul. 2019).

³³⁶ CAS (W), DPEN/14/4-5; CAS (C), DSEN/2/1, three gifts of land by William de Waberthwaite ‘sometime rector of Waberthwaite’ to Nicholas de Senhouse, 18 June 1391.

³³⁷ *Register of William Wickane Lord Archbishop* at

<https://archive.org/details/registerofwillia00surtooft/page/120> (accessed 27 Jul. 2019); *Ibid*, Itinerary May 1381, 345;

visit to Copeland, including Waberthwaite, in 1441,³³⁸ but no evidence confirming that this visit occurred has survived.

Reformation(1529 - 1538) and interregnum (1649-1660)

The Reformation had little effect on Waberthwaite. There is no evidence of recusancy within the clergy or among the population at large, but one observer has postulated that the disappearance of a silver chalice from the church's collection of plate after 1552 may have been the result of an attempt to obliterate the memory of an anti-reformation mass,³³⁹ though it is possible that it was simply stolen. In a visitation of the diocese of Chester to the deanery of Copeland in 1578 no mention was made of any 'relics of popery' at Waberthwaite; it was, however, noted that the church had had 'but one sermon' in the previous year.³⁴⁰ In 1608, William Troughton B.A. became the first rector to hold a degree when he received a faculty office grant to hold Waberthwaite on the resignation of his father, Christopher Troughton, who had been rector for 28 years. William Troughton was in office for 22 years and was succeeded by Samuel Rutter presented by Joseph Pennington in 1630. Rutter appears to have undergone a second institution in 1641 on presentation of William Pennington.³⁴¹ He may also have been the Samuel Rutter who was appointed Bishop of Sodor and Man in 1661 and died in 1662 six months after taking up his post.³⁴²

During the interregnum the local clergy appear to have readily conformed. There were no ejections: the rectorship passed smoothly from Samuel Rutter, who had been rector for 16 years

³³⁸ C.M.L. Bouch, *Prelates and People of the Lake Counties*, (Kendal, 1948), 151.

³³⁹ A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, (Kendal, 1889), 90.

³⁴⁰ Bouch, *Prelates and People*, 211.

³⁴¹ Clergy of the church of England database at

<http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp?locKey=573> (accessed 8 Jun 2019); B. Nightingale, *The Ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland*, 850.

³⁴² J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses* at <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp1277-1295> (accessed 3 July 2019).

since his second institution, to Christopher Stockbridge in 1662. Stockbridge subscribed to the declaration on his institution to Waberthwaite and remained in office till his death in 1677.³⁴³

There were no dissenting groups within the population.

1660 -1840

Christopher Stockbridge MA, was ordained deacon in 1642 and priest in 1662. He was instituted as rector in Waberthwaite six days after his ordination as priest. On his death in 1677 he was succeeded by William Grainger of Westmorland, who went from Sedbergh School to St John's College, Oxford, in 1668, and obtained a BA in 1672. He was ordained deacon in 1673, priest in 1674 and appointed to Waberthwaite in 1677 on a presentation by William Pennington. He remained rector till his death in 1698.³⁴⁴ He was buried at Waberthwaite hard by the south wall of the church. During his incumbency the parish records contain a number of affidavits, sworn before William Pennington J.P., that the requirements of the Burial in Wool Acts had been complied with.

In 1690, William Grainger and the churchwardens, in answer to visitation articles,³⁴⁵ painted a picture of a well-run conforming church with a reverend congregation. They explained that the church received no augmentation, but was 'decently kept and set apart from common or profane uses'. The walls and roofs were kept in very good repair. The ten commandments and Lord's Prayer were legibly drawn, and the king's arms (presumably those of William III) were set up in a proper place. A 'well revered' font of stone stood according to the canon.³⁴⁶ There was a communion table, also well revered, a patten for the communion bread and a flagon (for the communion wine), a 'comely basin' and an alms box for the poor. A reading desk, pulpit,

³⁴³ *Ibid*, 850.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 852

³⁴⁵ CAS (C), DRC/5/128, Parish of Waberthwaite, churchwarden's answer to the Visitation Articles.

³⁴⁶ The font is described below in *Church Architecture*.

cushion and seats completed the picture. The parishioners behaved themselves reverently at divine service and during sermons. Everyone contributed to repairs of the church and none refused to pay their portion. There were ‘none in the parish any way unlawfully married’. For its services, the church had a common prayer book, a ‘bible of King James translation’, and a surplice for the minister who ‘performed everything extraordinarily well according to the liturgy of the Church of England’. The adherence to the Church of England persisted into the 18th century when various observers reported the absence of Catholics in the parish.³⁴⁷

William Grainger BA was succeeded by Henry Holmes, who obtained a BA at St John’s College Oxford in 1693 and an MA in 1697.³⁴⁸ Henry Holmes married his predecessor’s widow, Frances Grainger, in 1701. He died in 1719.

In 1776, Thomas Nicholson, a local man born at Nether Stainton in 1750 and ordained priest in 1774, was appointed rector.³⁴⁹ He resigned in 1825, shortly before his death at Nether Stainton on 25 Nov. that year, making him the longest serving rector at Waberthwaite. He was buried at Muncaster church.³⁵⁰ In 1779, during his early incumbency at Waberthwaite, a divine service, in which he read prayers and preached, was held every Sunday, the catechism was expounded in Lent, and Holy Sacrament was held three times a year. There were thirty communicants, which number rose to forty at Easter.³⁵¹ By 1812 things appear to have deteriorated. In Dec. of that year, Revd. Nicholson received a letter from the newly appointed Bishop of Chester informing him that the bishop had received ‘a disgraceful report on the church’. It listed a series of complaints: the fencing around the church was in a shameful state, swine could get in and were rooting up the bones of the dead, the bells were seldom rung and

³⁴⁷ Butler, *Cumbria Parishes*, 72; *Ibid*, 171; Hutchinson, 564.

³⁴⁸ B. Nightingale, *The Ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland*, 852.

³⁴⁹ Butler, *Cumbria Parishes*, 170; Clergy of the Church of England Database at <http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp?locUnitKey=715> (accessed 3 Jul. 2019).

³⁵⁰ Muncaster parish records

³⁵¹ Butler, *Cumbria Parishes*, 72.

one had no clapper, there was no fixed or certain hour for prayer time and there was no service on Christmas day, there was no cover or cushion for the pulpit, there had been no parish clerk for many a year, and the surplice was indecent.³⁵² If any of these things are true, wrote his lordship, it reflects disgrace on the churchwardens, the clergyman and the bishop, but mostly the blame must attach to the churchwardens and it is the clergyman's duty to prevent them from neglecting their duty.

In his reply of 24 Dec., Revd. Nicholson responded that some complaints were unreasonably overcharged and others were completely false, and he was well aware that they were 'suggested and dictated by unprovoked and undeserved malice and weak and foolish pride'. Swine got into the churchyard, he wrote, because someone had left the gate open, and the 'disgusting assertion that they rooted up the bones of the dead was merely 'wanton and vile exaggeration of the accident'. However, there were plans to rebuild the fence in a substantial manner. There was no parish clerk because the salary was too small to induce any proper person to undertake the duty, but it was 'voluntarily and respectably done' during divine service by one or other of the parishioners. The bells were for the most part, if not always, rung and each bell had its clapper. It was not true that there was no fixed or certain hour for prayer times, Revd. Nicholson claimed, he had tried to hold services as near as possible to 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., but since he resided in Muncaster, where he was also curate of Muncaster church, he had to cross the Esk to reach Waberthwaite after holding his services in Muncaster. When the tide was at midday he was sometimes late because he could not use the ford across the Esk, but had to walk to find a boat, or cross by a wooden bridge someway above the ford. There had been no Christmas day service for some time back, he admitted, but that was owing entirely to the want of a congregation, for many years he attended the church without doing his duty for want of a

³⁵² CAS (W), DBH/24/12/10.

congregation, till he finally ‘gave it up as a hopeless case’. However, the previous Sunday he had given notice of administering the sacrament at Waberthwaite on Christmas day in order to try what effect it would have. It was true that the pulpit was ‘in the naked state described’, but the churchwardens had already determined to supply the deficiencies before the coming Easter, and while the surplice was, ‘it must be confessed, not a good one, it was not by any means indecent’.

Revd. Nicholson might be forgiven if a sense of injustice crept into his reply, for though he resided in Muncaster, he had rebuilt the parsonage in Waberthwaite at his own considerable expense, so that it was now ‘commodious and substantial and fit for a respectable family’, and only five years earlier the church had undergone a major repair, cleaning and refurbishment under his leadership (see *Church Architecture* below) and was now (he claimed) ‘one of the most elegant little churches in this part of the county’.³⁵³

Revd. Joseph Stanley, appointed curate to Waberthwaite in 1821, took over the church on the resignation of Thomas Nicholson and was appointed rector in 1826.³⁵⁴ He appears to have had an interest in the maintenance of the fabric of churches: in 1825 he led repairs to Waberthwaite church (see *Church Architecture* below), and in 1828 he raised the sum of 14s. in aid of the funds for the building and enlarging of churches and chapels.³⁵⁵

1840s – 2020

In 1851 an average of 40 people attended the morning service and 90 attended services held in the afternoon. In addition, 10 to 20 scholars attended Sunday school.³⁵⁶ In the 1890s the church

³⁵³ CAS (W), DBH/24/12/10, letter from Revd. Nicholson to Lord Geo. H Chester.

³⁵⁴ Joseph Foster, *Index Ecclesiasticus*, Oxford and Cambridge (1890), 165; Clergy of the Church of England Database at <http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp> (accessed 2 Jul. 2019).

³⁵⁵ *Cumberland Paquet*, 25 November 1828, p3.

³⁵⁶ TNA, HO 129/572 (religious census 1851).

maintained a very active choir supported by the accompaniment of Miss Nina Postlethwaite, an accomplished organist.³⁵⁷ The church had no organ, but no doubt Miss Postlethwaite was equally competent on the harmonium with which the church was equipped.³⁵⁸ In 1890 the choir led the Sunday school procession from Seascale station to their chosen venue on their annual ‘treat’, singing ‘Onward Christian Soldiers’ as they went, and kept the pupils entertained with other hymns throughout the day.³⁵⁹ In 1893 the choir held a supper and ball in the schoolroom for an invited audience and in 1894 they sang at the funeral of Rev. John Falcon the rector of Thwaites church who was buried in his home village of Hall Waberthwaite.³⁶⁰ The choir remained active into the 1920s.

By the early 20th century, the church held morning and afternoon services every Sunday, and a Sunday evening service at the school at Lane End. The church was heavily involved in the life of the community with Sunday school treats, choir excursions and fund raising for the parish by holding annual parochial teas and jumble sales.³⁶¹

From 1915-1955 Corney and Waberthwaite, though not formally combined as a new benefice, shared a rector, Rev. Percy Parminter. As a result, a joint parish magazine was produced, and the weekly Sunday morning and afternoon services each alternated between Waberthwaite and Corney, so that each church held one service, morning or afternoon, a week. A weekly Sunday evening service was held at the school at Lane End. In 1916 Rev. Parminter, acquired from Sir J. Ramsden a disused corrugated iron laundry languishing in the grounds of Muncaster castle, and set it up at Lane End as ‘St Luke’s mission church’ at a cost of over £200³⁶² so that evening

³⁵⁷ *Soulby’s Ulverston Advertiser*, 26 Oct. 1893.

³⁵⁸ *Millom Gazette*, 24 Nov. 1894, p5.

³⁵⁹ *Soulby’s Ulverston Advertiser*, 28 Aug. 1890, p8

³⁶⁰ *Millom Gazette*, 24 Nov. 1894, p5.

³⁶¹ Parish magazines 1915 - 1933

³⁶² Corney and Waberthwaite parish magazine, Jan. 1917.

services could be held there instead of at the school.³⁶³ Regular evening services, led by the rector, were held at St Luke's for the parishioners of both Waberthwaite and Corney until 1966.³⁶⁴ By that time the mission church building was 'depreciating beyond repair and becoming unsightly and dangerous' causing the parochial church council to decide in April 1967 that it should be dismantled.³⁶⁵ After the church was dismantled, evening services stopped, the altar cross and vases were donated to Corney church, and the church bell was donated to Waberthwaite church.³⁶⁶

On his retirement in 1955, Revd. Parminter was succeeded at Waberthwaite by Revd. Murray Knowles Hodges, a graduate and MA of King's College Cambridge,³⁶⁷ and Corney reverted to having its own rector. Revd. Hodges was the first incumbent of the newly formed benefice of Muncaster and Waberthwaite. The absorption of Grange, a detached part of Corney ecclesiastical parish, into Waberthwaite ecclesiastical parish during the first year of Revd. Hodges incumbency, had no impact on the size of his congregation at Waberthwaite, since the family resident at Grange continued to attend Corney church as did their successors.³⁶⁸ All Incumbents subsequent to Revd. Hodges were graduates. The first female vicar, Revd. Ann Baker, ordained in 2002, was appointed in 2009.³⁶⁹ After the formation of the Eskdale benefice in 1978, services were held at Waberthwaite twice a month. Twice-monthly services continued into the 21st century. By 2015 the average congregation was 15.³⁷⁰

³⁶³ Anon., 'The Iron Church' in M. Blaymire (ed) *Waberthwaite 2000: A Peep into the Past*, Waberthwaite (2000).

³⁶⁴ CAS (W), YPR/46/1/2/1/2, Service Register of St Luke's Mission Church; Corney and Waberthwaite parish magazines; Waberthwaite Parochial Church Council Minute Book, 17 July 1967.

³⁶⁵ Waberthwaite Parochial Church Council Minute Book, 17 April 1967

³⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 31 July 1967.

³⁶⁷ Crockford's *Clerical Dictionary* at <https://www.crockford.org.uk/people/33217/the-revd-murray-knowles-hodges> (accessed 4 Jul. 2019).

³⁶⁸ Local Inf.

³⁶⁹ Crockfords *Clerical Dictionary* <https://www.crockford.org.uk/clergydetail?clergyid=4727> (accessed 22 Jun. 2019).

³⁷⁰ CAS (W), YPR/46/1/2/1/1 church services, 1913-1940; YPR/46/1/2/1/3, church services, 1940-2015.

Church Architecture

The church is a single-cell building built in the 12th or 13th century and subsequently extended.³⁷¹ One observer has stated that this extension probably happened in the 16th or 17th century and that the church was extended eastward.³⁷² This conclusion appears to be based on the fact that the windows in the east are later than those in the west, but the remains of window tracery found in the churchyard (see below) indicate that the windows in the east may be replacements for earlier windows. Inspection of roof timbers indicates that the eastern end of the roof is older than the western end and that that the extension resulted in the length of the church increasing by 60%.³⁷³ The church has no transept, and the chancel at the western end of the church is divided from the nave by a low screen and two steps. The nave contains box pews installed on both sides of a central aisle and is divided from the altar by a polished wooden rail supported on ornate ironwork. The west window dates back to the 15th Century, the other windows date from the 16th or 17th century.³⁷⁴ The inside of the church has remained fundamentally unchanged since a major refurbishment in 1807 (see below) and it stands as a good example of a Georgian church interior; the coat of arms of George III were still in place, displayed on the north wall opposite the church entrance, in 2020. A large collection of broken carved stones found in the churchyard indicate that the church was once quite ornate.³⁷⁵ Most of the broken pieces were too small to be useful and were discarded, but a stone cross and a trefoil (probably a piece of window tracery, since it was grooved in a manner that could accommodate glass) were kept. The cross was mounted on the peak of the porch and the trefoil was mounted on the peak of the eastern gable.

³⁷¹ National Heritage List for England Entry 1086644; Pastscape https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=37450&sort=4&search=all&criteria=wabberthwaite&rational=q&recordsperpage=10 (accessed 6 June 2019); W.G. Collingwood, 'An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments of Cumberland' CW2, 23, (1923), 268; M. Salter, *The Old Parish Churches of Cumbria* (Malvern, 1998), 94.

³⁷² M. Salter, *The Old Parish Churches of Cumbria* (Malvern, 1998), 94.

³⁷³ Local inf. Aug. 2019 regarding a roof timbers inspection in 2015

³⁷⁴ Salter, *Old Parish Churches*.

³⁷⁵ A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth* (Kendal, 1889), 90.

The font sits near the church entrance. It comprises a lead-lined monolithic block of red sandstone with a drain and chamfered corners. The font has no stem, but sits directly on the floor. Two opposing sides of the font have openings that may once have held lifting lugs. The plainness of style has led observers to consider the font to be of considerable age, probably Norman,³⁷⁶ and there has been non-authoritative speculation that it may have been made from the base of a Roman pillar.

In 1707, at the cost of 5s. 6d., a canopy was fitted to the pulpit³⁷⁷ that had been bought with a bequest of 40s. from Abraham Chambers, steward to Lord Muncaster, in his will proved in 1622.³⁷⁸ The bellcote on the peak of the western gable was rebuilt at a cost of £4 10s. in 1796.³⁷⁹ It contains two medieval bells, each bearing a Latin inscription in Lombardic lettering. The south bell's inscription, 'STS. JACOB . DNS. TOM. WALKER.' (Saint James. Sir Thomas Walker) indicates that the dedication to St. James survived into the incumbency of Thomas Walker (1429 - post 1473). The north bell is inscribed to King Henry VI, which dates it between 1422 and 1461 or possibly between 1470 and 1471.

In 1806 the rector, Thomas Nicholson, and the churchwardens decided to give the church a major refurbishment. The work, commissioned and completed in 1807, was extensive, and cost £68 14s. 9d., which was met by subscriptions from 21 parishioners. The floor was flagged, a ceiling was put in, the walls were cleaned and whitewashed, the windows were lowered, box pews were installed, the porch was repaired, given a ceiling and plastered, and the pulpit was

³⁷⁶ Revd. J. Wilson, 'Baptismal fonts of the Rural Deaneries of Gosforth and Whitehaven', *CWI*, 11 (1891), 350- 51; Loftie, *Rural Deanery*, 91; C.A. Parker, *The Gosforth District, its Antiquities and Places of Interest*, Kendal (1926), 184.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 92

³⁷⁸ CAS (W), DPEN/1/22, will of Abraham Chambers.

³⁷⁹ Loftie, *Rural Deanery*, 89.

painted a mahogany colour.³⁸⁰ Eighteen years later, the church had fallen into very bad repair. Repairs were carried out and trees were planted by Rev. Joseph Stanley, curate (later rector) of Waberthwaite, and a parishioner at their own expense. During this work they found the shaft of the Viking-Age cross, which they used as a lintel over the porch entrance, and a part of a shaft of an Anglian cross which was used as a threshold. The pieces of cross were later removed from their positions in the porch and the Viking-Age cross was placed in its socket, which was found unbroken in the churchyard.³⁸¹ The piece of Anglian cross ended up lying in the churchyard near the later cross. A small vestry was built onto the east end of the north wall sometime between 1860 and 1897³⁸².

In 1931, the window at the east end of the church, which had a simple design of a leaded lattice and two arches formed by narrow strips of stained glass, was replaced with a window depicting Christ the shepherd in stained glass. The new window was installed in memory of Anne Margaret Parminter, the wife of the incumbent, Rev. Percy Parminter, and Annie Elizabeth and Muriel his daughters.³⁸³ This is the only memorial in the church.

³⁸⁰ Vestry meeting minutes, 10 August 1806 (copy held by author).

³⁸¹ W.G. Collingwood, 'The Waberthwaite Crosses', *CW2*, 24 (1924), 81.

³⁸² Comparison of Ordnance Surveys (Cumberland sheet 82), in 1860 and 1897.

³⁸³ Inscription on window sill.

6 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Manorial Government

Manor court baron records surviving from 1641 indicate that the courts were held at least once a year, but often more frequently.³⁸⁴ Held in the name of the lord of the manor, Lord Muncaster, the court was usually constituted and chaired by his steward and held ‘in and of the manor’, so presumably they were held in Waberthwaite. The exact location was never specified, but until the 19th century the only settlement in Waberthwaite likely to hold a building of sufficient size and status was probably Hall Waberthwaite. Much of the court’s business concerned transfer of tenancies and the licensing of tenants’ wills to ensure that nothing in the will adversely affected the lord or the manor, but it also issued ‘orders’ that were effectively local byelaws. A jury of 12 men dealt with local disputes and issued penalties for offenses or if court orders were not complied with. Such offenses and disputes often concerned allowing animals to stray, failure to maintain hedges and non-attendance at court.

The jury appointed affearers who were assessors who had the power to moderate penalties. In 1765 John Jackson and William Brocklebank affeared a penalty imposed on Joseph Atkinson for allowing a gap in his ring fence in Waberthwaite Wood from 1*s.* to 6*d.* ‘Hedge lookers’ were appointed by the court each year to check on the condition of hedges and report to the court any person who was not maintaining them properly. In 1761 hedge lookers Robert Pickthall, Nathaniel Sharp, Leonard Robinson and Henry Jackson ordered that the road between Newbiggin and Hall Waberthwaite, ‘being a church road’, should be repaired by those responsible for it on pain of a penalty of 13*s.* 4*d.* for each defaulter.³⁸⁵ Their authority for issuing this edict regarding a highway is obscure since the manor court books contain no

³⁸⁴ CAS (W), DPEN, manor court books from 1678–1761

³⁸⁵ CAS (W), DPEN/263, Oct. 1761.

evidence that the court baron appointed overseers of highways or delegated their powers to hedge lookers. ‘Wood lookers’, whose responsibility it was to ensure that ring fences in the stunted pasture were maintained and that stock did not stray, were also appointed. In 1793, in order to enable the wood lookers to better do their jobs, inhabitants of Waberthwaite with rights in Waberthwaite Wood were ordered to give notice when changing any cattle on their stints, and were further ordered to mark their cattle with tar so that wood lookers could more easily identify the owners.

Courts baron became very infrequent in the 19th century, courts being held only in 1802, 1814, 1821, 1844 and 1863. The session in 1814 was the last one to be held in front of a jury. The sessions held in 1821 dealt with the surrender of Bridge End by Joseph Atkinson and the admittance of Joseph Thompson. The next sessions, in 1844 and 1863, dealt with matters concerning the last customary tenancy, Lonning End, and the last customary tenants, Miles and Mary Wilson. The final session, held in 1916, was described as ‘out of court’ and licenced the will of Miles Wilson (deceased).³⁸⁶

More serious cases were tried in the national courts. In 1752 a tenant, William Benson, and his son John cut down a tree on William’s tenement. Claiming that the Bensons had no right to the tree, Sir John Pennington, Bart., M.P. and his steward, Joseph Herbert, commenced an action for theft against them. In response, the Bensons, William Troughton and five other tenants filed a bill of complaints against Sir John and his steward in the Court of Chancery on behalf of all the tenants. They claimed that Sir John pretended that his tenants were ‘tenants at will’ and that they have no rights to the wood without his leave, for he considered the wood to be the sole

³⁸⁶ CAS (W), DPEN/196 and DPEN/263, manor court books from 1678–1761, and 1761–1916 resp.; CAS (B), BDKF/231/7, manor court book, 1641–1676.

and proper right of the lord to dispose of as he wishes, whereas the tenants believed that they were customary tenants with an ancient customary right to take wood from their own tenements for building and repairing their houses, and for taking peat for fuel, and bracken, fern and heather for thatching without needing the leave or licence of the lord of the manor.

They complained that Sir John had contracted with the ship builders, Clarke and Singleton of Whitehaven, for the sale of all the wood in Waberthwaite, including that on their tenements, and had given Clarke and Singleton a bond indemnifying them against claims from the tenants. Clark and Singleton appeared to take the bond as giving them free licence to take any wood they wanted and had declared their intention to cutdown all the wood in Waberthwaite, including trees planted in gardens for ornament and trees planted to shelter farmsteads. By the time the complaint was filed they had already cut down most of the wood on William Troughton's estate at Woodgate.

The tenants further complained that Sir John demanded excessive fines, that he claimed that his tenants owed him boons, when in fact they had bought them out some time ago, and that the steward held courts baron when there was no business to be done, for no other reason than to extract a fee for holding the court, and that if tenants required him to hold a court they had to pay the lord a satisfaction of up to 10s. and pay 2s. 6d. for each admission.

Sir John's response was that the tenants had wood other than [valuable] oak and ash that they could use, such as elder and thorn, and that it was only within the past two years that tenants had pretended to have a right to the wood on their tenements, and that the custom was to seek leave of the lord to take oak and ash and there had been many instances of them buying such wood for house repairs etc. (it later transpired that only tenants without wood on their

tenements did this), but lately some tenants had taken wood surreptitiously without his leave. He claimed to have sold the oak and ash to Clarke and Singleton to support his title and right to it.

An injunction was issued preventing any more tree felling and restraining Sir John from taking further legal action against his tenants, and an order was made that the parties should proceed to a trial at law on the issues of the customs of the manor with respect to the right to take wood, peat, furze bracken, fern and heather. In June 1754 it was confirmed that case was to be tried by special jury at Carlisle assizes. The trial took place in 1755 and the jury found in favour of the plaintiffs. Sir John was ordered to pay the plaintiffs' costs, and Clarke and Singleton were ordered to pay damages to William Troughton for the actions they had taken on his estate at Woodgate. In 1756 the injunction restraining Sir John from taking legal action against his tenants was made permanent on pain of a penalty of £1,000.³⁸⁷

Township Government

In the early 18th century, Waberthwaite was part of the constablewick of Birkby, Corney and Waberthwaite.³⁸⁸ There are no surviving records that detail the appointment of constables, or highway surveyors for these townships at any time, nor any surviving overseers' accounts. Records of six vestry meetings at Waberthwaite church have survived. The meetings of 1806, 1807, 1812 and 1821 are mostly concerned with the fabric of the church and setting a church rate. In the 1792 meeting, the vestry agreed to support the overseer and the churchwardens in a law suit against 'Amalside' (Ambleside?) in Westmorland without giving details of the nature

³⁸⁷ CAS (W), DPEN/14/37/1–3; DPEN/14/37/7; DPEN/14/37/9; DPEN/14/37/10; DPEN/320/264; DPEN/14/37/4; CAS (B), Z/103.

³⁸⁸ CAS (W), D/CU/comp.1.1, purvey for Allerdale above Derwent 1739

of the case.³⁸⁹ The 1820 vestry meeting decided to join Muncaster, Drigg and Irton in providing a doctor, rent and housekeeping at the poorhouse in Ravenglass.³⁹⁰

In 1702, the inhabitants of the constablewick of Birkby, Corney and Waberthwaite, together with a number of other constablewicks in west Cumberland, successfully petitioned that they were being overcharged. The five JPs appointed to determine the case found in favour of the petitioners and their purvey was reduced by 15*d.*³⁹¹ Later purvey rolls show that Corney and Waberthwaite paid a combined purvey of £1 8*s.* 3*d.* in the mid 18th century.³⁹²

A surviving list in Waberthwaite's vestry book showing church rates, county rates and poor rates paid by Waberthwaite between 1801 and 1821 indicates that Waberthwaite paid an annual poor rate of £20 13*s.* 7½*d.* nett in 1801, and that this rose year by year thereafter. By 1821 it had risen to £48 15*s.* 11*d.*³⁹³

On the 12 June 1837, Waberthwaite became part of the newly-formed Bootle Poor Law Union. In order to meet its portion of the £1,792 required annually to run the workhouses in Bootle and Millom and provide poor relief throughout the union, a rate of £32, which was the average annual expense incurred for relief of the poor in the preceding three years, was set for Waberthwaite. This compared with an average of £236 paid by Bootle, £13 paid by Birker and Austhwaite, £78 paid by Corney and £158 paid by Muncaster. A guardian of the poor was elected annually from among the ratepayers to serve on the board of guardians.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁹ CAS (W), YPR 46/2/1/1, microfilm JAC 949.

³⁹⁰ Waberthwaite Vestry meeting minute, 13 May 1820 and churchwarden accounts 1806-1828 (copies held by author); Parson & White, *Dir. C. & W.*, 231.

³⁹¹ CAS (C), Q/11/1/62/6 Order of 5 JPs re: West coast purvey disputes.

³⁹² CAS (W), D/CU/Comp.1.1, Curwen of Workington family papers, purvey roll of Allerdale above Derwent, mid 18th century; CAS (C), Q/ F/22/14, Purvey rates for Allerdale above Derwent Cumberland Eskdale and Leath wards, Quarter Sessions rates assessment 1739.

³⁹³ CAS (W), YPR/46/2/1/1, Waberthwaite church vestry book, 1806-1821.

³⁹⁴ Kelly *Dir. Cumb.* 1906, 39; *Cumberland Paquet*, 23 May 1837, p.3.

Post 1894 Arrangements (Rural and Urban Districts)

As a result of the Local Government Act of 1894, Waberthwaite became part of Bootle Rural District Council which became responsible for roads, health and sanitation, housing, and planning³⁹⁵ until 1951 when the Lake District National Park Authority (LDPNA) became the planning authority for Waberthwaite.³⁹⁶ Bootle Poor Law Union remained responsible for the workhouse and poor relief until 1930 when the union was abolished and its powers and responsibilities were transferred to Cumberland County Council,³⁹⁷ which discharged them through the Public Assistance Committee.³⁹⁸ The workhouse in Bootle was closed two years later.³⁹⁹

The 1894 Local Government Act gave Waberthwaite the opportunity to form an elected civil parish council, or combine with another parish;⁴⁰⁰ it did neither. Vestry meetings, now more correctly called Parochial Church Council (PCC) meetings, continued to discuss and manage church matters and administer the Parke charity (see *Social and Religious History*),⁴⁰¹ while civil local government was left to the Bootle Rural District Council and Bootle petty sessions held fortnightly under the jurisdiction of local magistrates.⁴⁰²

In 1934, Millom Urban District Council absorbed Bootle Rural District Council to form Millom Rural District Council (MRDC).⁴⁰³ At the same time the civil parish of Waberthwaite was

³⁹⁵ *Millom Gazette*, 17 Mar. 1894, p.8.

³⁹⁶ https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/aboutus/nat_parks_history (accessed 17 Mar. 2019);
<https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/planning> (accessed 17 Mar. 2019).

³⁹⁷ *Millom Gazette*, 10 Jan. 1930, p.2.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 19 Feb. 1932, p.3

³⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 22 Apr. 1932, p.1.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 17 Mar. 1894, p.8.

⁴⁰¹ Waberthwaite Church Minute Book 1893 – 2000, (courtesy of Waberthwaite churchwardens); see *Social History* for the Parke charity.

⁴⁰² Kelly *Dir. Cumb.* (1901), 529; *Ibid* 1906, 6.

⁴⁰³ <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/Content/Internet/542/795/42318123741.pdf> (accessed 1 Apr. 2019).

combined with that of Corney to form a new civil parish of 'Waberthwaite and Corney' within MRDC and a parish council was formed. The new parish council held its first council meeting in Waberthwaite schoolroom on 18 April 1934 to elect members and officials of the council.⁴⁰⁴ The second meeting was held three weeks later. Business included a resolution to write to the receiver of the now defunct Eskmeals Granite Company asking him to arrange for the removal of the rope and laden buckets of the company's aerial ropeway which were hanging over public roads and footpaths in the parish and putting public safety at risk. It was also resolved to write to Millom Urban District Council and seek action on specified repairs to roads and a bridge. Later meetings were held monthly at Waberthwaite village hall, and the proper maintenance of roads, drains and services remained a concern of the combined parish into the 21st century.

As a result of the Local Government Act of 1972, MRDC merged with Whitehaven Borough and Ennerdale Rural District on 1 April 1974 to form the Copeland Borough District of Cumbria.

⁴⁰⁴ Waberthwaite and Corney Parish Council Minute Book, 18 Apr. 1934 (courtesy of Waberthwaite and Corney parish clerk).