

## Victoria County History of Cumbria Project

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Parish: **CORNEY**

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### CORNEY

Corney was a rural township and ancient parish situated within the south-western part of the former county of Cumberland, 11 miles (14 km) north of Millom and 23 miles (37 km) south of Whitehaven in an area that became part of the Lake District National Park. The parish covered an area of 4440 a. in 1860,<sup>1</sup> with the land rising from just nine m. above sea level in the west, to nearly 550 m. on the fells in the east. In 1897, after a detached part of Corney civil parish containing Grange farm was subsumed into Waberthwaite, the area became 4354 a.<sup>2</sup> Since 1934 Corney has formed part of the civil parish of Waberthwaite and Corney. The name ‘Corney’ came from Old English and may mean ‘heron island’.<sup>3</sup> Settlement comprised scattered farmsteads and very small hamlets, the largest settlement being Middleton Place in the west of the township. At Corney hamlet, in the centre of the parish, a handful of tenements were widely dispersed around the church and mill. At Park Nook near the main road through the township, there was a pub, smithy and shop. Other hamlets lay at High Corney in the east,

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<sup>1</sup> OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb., sheet LXXXV (1867).

<sup>2</sup> OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb., sheet LXXXV.NE (1900).

<sup>3</sup> *PNC*, xxi, 364, 467 and 470.

and at Kinmont Low Houses, the location of which is unclear, but it may have been between Low Kinmont and Middle Kinmont farms.

## **LANDSCAPE, SETTLEMENT AND BUILDINGS**

### **Boundaries**

The township was surrounded by Waberthwaite in the north, Ulpha and Thwaites in the East, and Bootle in the south and west. It had the approximate shape of two abutting rectangles arranged as an inverted 'L'. The western rectangle measured approximately 1.5 miles (2.4 km.) from north to south and 1 mile (1.6 km.) east to west and the eastern one measured 2 miles (3.2 km.) north to south and 3 miles (4.8 km.) east to west.

The boundary with Waberthwaite ran north-west from Burn Moor, traversing topographically featureless open fell, where it was marked with piles of stones, before turning west to follow field boundaries to a boundary marker-stone near Lane End, and thence to Eskmeals Pool at Stockbridge. The eastern boundary ran south from Burn Moor following the water shedding line, where it was marked by piles of stones, to Guide Crag then to Buckbarrow where Corney, Thwaites and Ulpha boundaries met. From there it briefly followed the Thwaites boundary to Great Paddy Crag where Corney, Thwaites and Bootle boundaries met, then turned briefly north-west following the Bootle boundary to meet a field wall which it followed south to meet Kinmont Beck, which formed the township's southern boundary as far as Kinmont Wood. At Kinmont Wood the boundary left the beck and turned north passing over fields east of Near Swallowhurst and Swallowhurst and north of Swallowhurst Hall, all of which are in Bootle, before it turned west then south and followed the Whitehaven – Millom road. After 500 yds (460 m.) the boundary left the road and turned west to follow field boundaries before turning

south to take in Langley farm, then west to meet Eskmeals Pool 330yds (300 metres) south west of Langley farm. From there the western boundary followed Eskmeals Pool north to Stockbridge.<sup>4</sup>

## **Landscape**

The land rises from the shallow valley cut by Eskmeals Pool 9 m. above sea level in the west to the township's highest points of 540 m. at Burn Moor and 549 m. at Buckbarrow in the east. Above 120 m. the land is steep open fell that covers almost half the township.

The overburden across the western part of the parish below 90 m. is principally Devensian-diamicton till, but a band of alluvium clay runs through the parish from north to south along the 90m. contour, and patches of glaciofluvial deposits of Devensian sand and gravel occur in places. In the east above 120 m. the overburden is peat.<sup>5</sup> The underlying rock in the extreme west of the township is sandstone. In the east of the township it is granodiorite and microgranodiorite of the Eskdale intrusion.<sup>6</sup> The soil on the high ground above 440 m. is naturally wet blanket bog peat of low fertility useful only for seasonal extensive grazing. Between 440 m. and 250 m. the soil is shallow, very low fertility, very acid peaty soil over rock suitable for rough grazing only. Between 250 m. and 97 m. the soil is slowly permeable, wet, very acid upland soil of low fertility with a peaty surface that supports rough grazing of low or moderate grazing value. Between 97 m. and 76 m. soils are freely draining, slightly acid and loamy with low fertility suitable for spring and autumn sown crops. Under grass the soils

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<sup>4</sup> OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb., Sheet LXXXV NE (1900); OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb. Sheet LXXXVI (1867); OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb., Sheet LXXXV.7 (1899); OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb., LXXXV (1867).

<sup>5</sup> <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed Dec. 2019).

have a long grazing season. Between the 76 m. contour and Eskmeals Pool the soils are slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage and moderate fertility that are mostly suited to grass production for dairying or beef and some cereal production.<sup>7</sup>

## **Communications**

### *Roads*

Farmsteads, tenements, hamlets and the church were interconnected by a network of footpaths, bridleways and tracks, and a local road ran south through the centre of the township connecting it to Bootle. By 2021, much of the network remained as public rights of way, and some routes had been made into metalled roads after the Second World War.<sup>8</sup>

A route from Whitehaven to Millom (and on to Lancaster and London) went through the western part of the parish having first passed over Muncaster Fell and through Waberthwaite. A road from Duddon Bridge on the Lancashire-Cumberland border passed over Stonehead Fell (now Stoneside) and Corney Fell, to join the Whitehaven - Millom route at Mill Place (now Millgate) in Waberthwaite.<sup>9</sup> This road was tarmacked after the Second World War and was still in use in 2021. An early/mid 19th century guidestone indicates that a branch of this road turned west one and a half miles (2.5km.) before Mill Place and went to Whitehaven via Barrow's End (now Barras Meadow), Park Nook, Langley Park, Monk Moors and Ravenglass,

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/#> (accessed 5 Dec. 2019)

<sup>8</sup> Local Inf.

<sup>9</sup> J. Ottley, *The District of the Lakes*, Keswick (1818); D. Lysons and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia*, London (1816), Vol. 4, cx.; J. Hodkinson and J Donald Map of Cumberland 1774; Greenwood., Map of the county of Cumberland, surveyed 1821-2, published 1823.

crossing the Esk at a ford at Eskmeals.<sup>10</sup> This branch road does not appear on maps till 1823.<sup>11</sup> Parts of it remain as public bridleways, but the section from Park Nook to Monk Moors lost its public right of way status in the 1970s. 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) that was passed in 1750 would have served the township well, but it was not implemented.<sup>12</sup> Renewed attempts to establish turnpikes in the area in 1805 and 1842 were either not followed through, or never received approval.<sup>13</sup>

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 and underwent major improvement in 1927 (see WABERTHWAITE). In 2006 the A595 was detrunked.<sup>14</sup>

### *Railways*

The Whitehaven and Furness junction railway, completed in 1850,<sup>15</sup> did not pass through Corney, but there were stations at Eskmeals and Hycemoor (Bootle Station) each about one

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<sup>10</sup> NHLE 1 List No., 1086643, Guidestone at the junction of Corney Fell road and the track to Barras Meadow and Normoss (accessed 20 December 2019).

<sup>11</sup> Greenwood, Map of the County of Cumberland, surveyed 1821-2, published 1823.

<sup>12</sup> Act of Parliament, 23 George II c.40.

<sup>13</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 17 Aug.1805, 1; *Cumberland Paquet*, 22 Nov. 1842, 1.

<sup>14</sup> A595 Trunk Road (Calder Bridge to A5092 at Grizebeck) (Detrunking) Order 2006, Statutory Instrument 296.

<sup>15</sup> HERR, Monument No. 1372719 (accessed 1 Dec. 2019).

mile (1.6 km) outside the township boundaries. The station at Eskmeals closed in 1959.<sup>16</sup> Bootle Station at Hycemoor was still in operation as a request stop in 2019.<sup>17</sup>

*Post, carriers, buses, and telecommunications* Daily postal deliveries to Corney started in 1897.<sup>18</sup> Prior to that, in 1781, Joseph Crosby of Corney Hall advertised his services as a public carrier of goods between Whitehaven and Broughton.<sup>19</sup> His services including forwarding goods from Kendal and Lancaster, and a passenger service between Ulverston and Whitehaven with pick-ups at Ravenglass and Broughton. A Cumberland Motor Services route ran through the parish on the A595 from the early 20th century<sup>20</sup> till about 1970.<sup>21</sup> The Muncaster Microbus, set up by volunteers in 1996, continued to run regular bus services from Corney and the surrounding parishes.<sup>22</sup> In 2019 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.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> G Daniels and LA Dench, *Passengers no More 1952-1962: Closure of Stations and Branch Line*, 2nd edition, Brighton (1963), 13.

<sup>17</sup> Local inf. (Author 2019).

<sup>18</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 16 Jul. 1897, p.3

<sup>19</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 20 Mar. 1781, p.3

<sup>20</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 3 May 1929, p.2, the 'good bus service' referred to ran between Millom and Whitehaven along the A595.

<sup>21</sup> Local inf.

<sup>22</sup> Inf. from Mrs E. A. Clegg (founding member) Mar. 2019.

<sup>23</sup> [http://muncastermicrobus.org.uk/html/about\\_us.html](http://muncastermicrobus.org.uk/html/about_us.html) (accessed 3 Mar. 2019).

Part of the parish was served by the Ravenglass telephone exchange and part by the Bootle exchange. By 2019 both exchanges were optic fibre enabled<sup>24</sup> and superfast broadband was being rolled out across the parish.

## Population

In 1563 there were 72 households in the ecclesiastical parish of Corney, indicating a population of 342.<sup>25</sup> In 1687-8 the number of households was recorded as 96 indicating a population of 456.<sup>26</sup> Another estimate for 1688 gives a population of 480.<sup>27</sup> By 1801 the population had dropped to 222.<sup>28</sup> A possible contributing cause of this drop was the fever epidemic that caused many deaths in the parish around the end of the 18th century.<sup>29</sup> In 1811 the population was 231, by 1831 it had risen to 292, but it fell steadily over the next century reaching 185 in 1931 (the last year for which separate figures are available for Corney).<sup>30</sup>

## Settlement

### *Early Settlement*

Archaeological evidence, together with evidence of cultivation and exploitation of the land at various sites (see Economic History), indicate occupation and exploitation of the land for at

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<sup>24</sup> <https://telephone-exchange.co.uk/Ravenglass-LCRAV.html> (accessed 3 Mar. 2019); <https://www.telephone-exchange.co.uk/Bootle-Cumberland-LCBOO.html> (accessed 19 Dec.2019).

<sup>25</sup> 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.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid* (using the same multiplier).

<sup>27</sup> D Lysons and S Lysons, *Magna Britannia*, xxxviii.

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10011218/cube/TOT\\_POP](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10011218/cube/TOT_POP) (accessed 19 December 2019)

<sup>29</sup> Hutchinson, Vol. 1, Houseman's notes, 563.

<sup>30</sup> [http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10011218/cube/TOT\\_POP](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10011218/cube/TOT_POP) (accessed 19 December 2019)

least six thousand years. Finds and sites include a polished stone axe head of the Cumbrian type found when ploughing Low Borrowdale Ground;<sup>31</sup> the remains of a prehistoric farmstead and hut circles near Whit Crag;<sup>32</sup> prehistoric hut circles near Buckbarrow bridge;<sup>33</sup> Bronze Age hut remains<sup>34</sup> and a funerary cairn<sup>35</sup> on other parts of Corney Fell.

Much of the surviving evidence for early (neolithic to medieval) occupation and use of land in Corney lies on open fell above 500 ft (152 m.). Post medieval cultivation and settlement were mostly confined to land below that height where a pattern of scattered settlements confined to the lower lying western half of the parish developed with only one settlement (High Corney) east of the 500 ft (152 m.) contour – a pattern that was still in evidence in 2021.

#### *Settlement from the 18th to 21st century*

The large numbers of houses implied by the numbers of households in the 16th and 17th centuries (see *Population* above) were not in evidence in later centuries. In 1771, Corney parish appears to have contained about 30 houses or tenements<sup>36</sup> and in 1777 it was reported as consisting of 36 tenements.<sup>37</sup> The number of houses increased to 40 by 1829<sup>38</sup> and 49 by 1831. The number of houses peaked at 53 in 1851 and fell to 33 between 1851 and 1921. The loss of

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<sup>31</sup> HERR, Monument No. 37557 and No. 37547 (accessed 6 Mar. 2020)

<sup>32</sup> HERR, Monument No. 37520 (accessed 6 Mar 2020).

<sup>33</sup> HERR, Monument No. 1304579 (accessed 6 Mar. 2020).

<sup>34</sup> HERR, Monument No. 1304480 (accessed 6 Mar. 2020).

<sup>35</sup> NHLE, List No. 1017175, Prehistoric cairnfields, field systems, hut circles and a farmstead on Corney Fell (accessed 6 Mar, 2020).

<sup>36</sup> J. Hodkinson and T. Donald Map of Cumberland, surveyed 1770-71, published 1774.

<sup>37</sup> N&B, II, 18.

<sup>38</sup> Parson & White, *Dir. C. & W.* (1829), 199-200.



the few houses of the small hamlet of Kinmont Low Houses which became uninhabited by 1871 and thereafter disappeared from the record,<sup>39</sup> contributed to this fall, as did the loss of two isolated cottages, dwellings at Barras End and Moor Yeat (Moor Gate), and the farms of Hall End, Lambground, Middle Kinmont and High Kinmont, which all fell into disuse<sup>40</sup> during the period and became ruins which could still be seen in 2021, or disappeared from the landscape (stone from derelict buildings could be re-used and had a commercial value). After 1921 the number of houses increased slightly, reaching 36 in 1931. No separate figures are available for Corney parish after it was merged with Waberthwaite in 1934.<sup>41</sup>

The largest hamlet, Middleton Place, lying in the west of the township near the main road, was a compact collection of farmhouses and dwellings that never exceeded ten in number. By 1829 its growth had peaked at four farms and six dwellings.<sup>42</sup> In 1841 there were four farms and two dwellings.<sup>43</sup> The hamlet remained at that level into the 21st century, though all but one of the farms had by then become private dwellings.

In the dispersed hamlet of Corney, in the centre of the parish, little changed apart from changes to the names of some dwellings and the abandonment and subsequent disappearance of the mill sometime after 1898. The hamlet remained as a handful of tenements loosely scattered around the church into the 21st century.

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<sup>39</sup> *Census*, 1841 - 1891.

<sup>40</sup> *Census*, 1841 - 1911.

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10011218/cube/HOUSES> (accessed 13 January) 2020.

<sup>42</sup> J. Hodkinson and T. Donald Map of Cumberland, surveyed 1770-71, published 1774; Greenwood., Map of the county of Cumberland, surveyed 1821-2, published 1823; Parson & White, *Dir. C. & W.* (1829), 200.

<sup>43</sup> *Census* 1841.

The Hamlet of High Corney, situated at 540 ft (165m.) in the east of the township, never expanded beyond three dwellings. By 1891 the number of families in High Corney had fallen to two,<sup>44</sup> one dwelling having apparently fallen into disuse by then (the ruins of a dwelling were still evident at High Corney in 1971<sup>45</sup>). The surviving dwellings comprised the farmhouse and an older house with a barn range attached. The barn range was converted to a dwelling shortly after 1971,<sup>46</sup> so that in the 20th century there were again three dwellings in High Corney.

Park Nook, lying alongside the Whitehaven to Millom road as it entered the township, contained five buildings in 1771.<sup>47</sup> In 1841 there was a public house (which took the name “the Brown Cow Inn” sometime between 1841 and 1851), a shop and one other residence at Park Nook.<sup>48</sup> Despite the advantages of its position on the Whitehaven to Millom road, the presence of the public house, smithy and shop,<sup>49</sup> Park Nook did not undergo any significant growth until the 20th century. In 1980 an agricultural worker’s bungalow was built there and in the 1990s the smithy, then long defunct as a working unit, was converted to a dwelling. Further expansion occurred in 2002 when an existing building was converted to two semi-detached cottages, and in 2012 when a two-storey house was built.

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<sup>44</sup> Census 1891.

<sup>45</sup> Inf. from Mr K. Hitchen, Holmrook, (previously of High Corney), 2020

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> J. Hodkinson and T. Donald Map of Cumberland, surveyed 1770-71, published 1774.

<sup>48</sup> Census 1841.

<sup>49</sup> See Economic History.

Elsewhere in the township the early pattern of scattered isolated farmsteads and dwellings remained unchanged. After the building of Spring House, reported as newly built in 1839,<sup>50</sup> and Gillfoot, built in 1861,<sup>51</sup> development was limited to rebuilding, refurbishing and enlarging existing dwellings, or building within their curtilages, to provide additional and improved accommodation.

### **The Built Character**

There are no surviving complete buildings older than the 18th Century. There are, however, examples of surviving parts of earlier buildings being incorporated within later rebuilding, extension or improvements. At High Corney, when the farmhouse was extended in 1772 by building a new wing on the front of the existing old house, the external stone staircase that had once given access to the upper floor of the old house was retained so that it served the same purpose internally.<sup>52</sup> In the early to mid 19th century the manor house at Middleton Place was saved from total dereliction by a refurbishment that retained a number of the internal walls of the original building. In 1934 it was divided into two dwellings.<sup>53</sup>

The oldest surviving buildings<sup>54</sup> are typically 18th and 19th century farmhouses and dwellings of vernacular styles including detached farmhouses, farmhouses with barns attached, semi-detached and detached cottages and double-pile detached houses. Most were roofed with slate, probably obtained from nearby slate quarries, e.g. Burlington slate 13 miles (21km.) away, or Coniston 17 miles (29km) away. Walls were typically built of rubble, using stone sourced

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<sup>50</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 22 Jan. 1839, p.1.

<sup>51</sup> Datestone.

<sup>52</sup> The extension bears a datestone; inf. from Mr K. Hitchen, Holmrook, (previously of High Corney), 2020

<sup>53</sup> Inf. from Mrs Maddel, the manor house, Middleton Place, 2020.

<sup>54</sup> Identified by their datestones.

locally, and roughcast, though some were left bare and a few were decorated with plain stucco. Gillfoot, built in 1851,<sup>55</sup> is the only example of a house with incised stucco.

There is no social housing or council housing in the township.

Farm buildings were built in close proximity to the farmhouses using materials available or fashionable for utilitarian buildings at the time of their construction, thus farmsteads' curtilages often contain a mixture of roof types (asbestos, slate, and corrugated tin) and wall types (rubble, brick, asbestos and corrugated metal). Rubble and brick-built farm buildings were typically left naked of any dressing.

At Middleton Place the remains of a high-walled compound, possibly the surviving ruins of a cattle pound, are evident within the hamlet –.

Low Kinmont farmhouse, a Grade II listed building, provides an example of the development of an isolated farmstead. The farmhouse is a two-storey house constructed of rubble walls, which have been roughcast. It has a graduated slate roof and a barn range adjoining it. The house originally had three bays. A bay was added to the left hand side of the house in 1765. A further two-bay single storey extension set back on the left of the house was added later and the rear of the roof extended to produce an outshut which covers the extension.<sup>56</sup>

By 2021 farmhouses or farm buildings converted into private residences or holiday homes were becoming an increasingly significant social type of housing.

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<sup>55</sup> Datestone

<sup>56</sup> NHLE list no. 1075157, Low Kinmont Farmhouse (accessed 19 Dec. 2020); Local inf. Jan. 2020.

## LANDOWNERSHIP

### Pattern of Land Ownership

Corney belonged to 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*.<sup>57</sup> In the 12th century Copsi, Henry fitz Ketel (son of Ketel de Cornay), Alan fitz Ketel (son of Ketel de Copeland) and the Benedictine nunnery of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lekeley in Seaton were all major landowners in the parish of Corney.

Copsi's manor of Corney, which passed to the Huddlestons by the early 15th century has not been traced beyond the 17th century. By that time, the lord of a second manor, the manor of Corney and Middleton Place, was the predominant landowner. This manor formed from the possessions of Henry fitz Ketel, including Langley Park and Middleton Place. These were acquired by the Penningtons in the 14th and 15th centuries, and remained with the family until the 20th century.

After the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the holdings of Seaton and Conishead Priors at Buckbarrow and Kinmont came into the hands of Hugh Askew, and became part of his manor of Seaton (see BOOTLE), which later passed to a cadet member of the Pennington family. In the 19th century, Seaton manor, including the areas in Corney, was sold to John Wakefield junior of Kendal. The Wakefield family held Seaton as a reputed manor and held no manor courts. Their holdings evolved into the Lake District Estates Company Limited in the 20th century.

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<sup>57</sup> <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.

## **The Manors**

### *Manor of Corney*

Copsi is the first identifiable 'lord of Corney.'<sup>58</sup> His name suggests he was of Norse heritage. He was recorded as the 'lord and founder of the church of Corney' when he gave his church there to Saint Bee's Priory sometime between 1147 and 1151.<sup>59</sup> The extent of Copsi's possessions in Corney is uncertain, but they have been thought to have included Corney Hall, Corney church and 'the two Corneys'.<sup>60</sup> The location of the two Corneys is problematical, but based on the following reasoning they may be High Corney and the hamlet of Corney: a reference to two Corneys in c.1190-1200 states that Micklegil lies between them,<sup>61</sup> and of the three watercourses that might qualify as "large gills", two, Buckbarrow beck and Kinmont beck, do not in any sense lie between two settlements, but the River Annas and its tributary Charlesground gill flow past High Corney and through the hamlet of Corney.

Copsi was succeeded by his son, Roger, who confirmed the gift of the church in 1185. Roger's son, Orm, Copsi's daughter, Christine de Coupland, and her husband, Waldeve de Pennington, quitclaimed the property the same year.<sup>62</sup> The descent from Copsi's grandson Orm, and thus the succession to the manor, is obscure, but it has been suggested that his descendants took the

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<sup>58</sup> VCH *Cumb.*, Vol II (1905) 16n.

<sup>59</sup> *Reg. St Bees*, 86.

<sup>60</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants', *CW2*, xli (1941), 150.

<sup>61</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'On the Identification of some Ancient Places in Cumberland,' *CW2*, xxvi (1926), 114.

<sup>62</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants', *CW2*, xli (1941), 150; W. N. Thompson, 'South and (part of) South-West Cumberland in the Chartulary of St Bees', *CW2* iii (1903), 78-9; F. Warriner, 'Some South Cumberland Place Names', *CW2*, xxvi (1926), 83; Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'On the Identification of some Ancient Places in Cumberland', *CW2*, xxvi (1926), 114-5; *Reg. St Bees*, charters 82-87 and p. 113-4n.

surname de Corney in the early 13th century when it starts to occur frequently.<sup>63</sup> Edward de Corney, steward at Millom Castle, was in possession of Corney Hall and surrounding land during the time when Adam fitz Henry was lord of Millom (from 1229- c.1260).<sup>64</sup> Michael de Corney occurs in a document of 1251<sup>65</sup> and John de Corney appears as a witness to a feoffment of 1316.<sup>66</sup>

In 1355 the ‘manor of Cornay’ was held in dower by Olive, widow of Richard de Cornay.<sup>67</sup> The precise extent of her manor is unknown, but it did not include all the township. The hamlet of Corney or “Little Corney” was in the gift of William FitzRichard and his wife Alice in 1354,<sup>68</sup> and other land and tenements in the hamlet of Corney were in the gift of William de Berdesey in 1364.<sup>69</sup>

In 1392 the manor and mill passed to the widow Joan de Cornay when Sir John de Huddleston, lord of Millom, granted them to her for life, for a rent of 100s. 40d. by an indenture of demise.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *Reg. St Bees*, p. 114n.

<sup>64</sup> Revd W. S. Sykes, ‘Notes on Corney’, *CW2*, xxviii (1928), 154; *Reg. St Bees*, p. 114n; Revd. W. S. Sykes, ‘The de Boyvils of Millom and Kirksanton’, *CW2*, xli (1941), 27; *Reg. St Bee’s*, p.87n.

<sup>65</sup> F. H. M. Parker, ‘A Calendar of Feet of Fines for Cumberland, from their commencement to the accession of Henry VII’, *CW2*, vii (1907), 224.

<sup>66</sup> *Cat. Ancient. Deeds*, IV, A9407(<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/ancient-deeds/vol4/pp420-430> ;accessed 31 Oct. 2021).

<sup>67</sup> F. H. M. Parker, ‘A Calendar of Feet of Fines for Cumberland, from their commencement to the accession of Henry VII’, *CW2*, vii (1907), 239.

<sup>68</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/10/1A.

<sup>69</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/10/2.

<sup>70</sup> CAS (W) YDX 403/1/1.

The manor subsequently reverted to the Huddlestons as lords of the fee. In 1421 the Huddlestons held the ‘manor of Cornay and land in Botill and Cornay’<sup>71</sup> implying that some of their holdings in Corney parish lay outside the manor. They retained the manor into the 17th century: a deed for the lease of Corney Hall was drawn up in 1674 between Joseph Huddleston, the only brother of Ferdinand, 15th Lord of Millom, and the Senhouse family.<sup>72</sup> Ferdinand’s estates passed to Joseph after Ferdinand died in 1686 without issue<sup>73</sup> (see MILLOM). In 1688 Joseph, now the new lord, held customary messuages, cottages and tenements with fifteen tenants in addition to land amounting to 369 a. in Corney manor. After 1688, the manor of Corney disappeared from the record.

#### *The Manor of Corney and Middleton Place*

What was known as the Manor of Corney and Middleton Place grew out of several estates in Corney, including Middleton Place and Langley Park, which were acquired by the Penningtons in the 14th and 15th centuries and which they held in socage of the lord of Millom.<sup>74</sup> The earliest surviving records for courts baron of this manor date from 1641.<sup>75</sup> In its final form, the manor included land in Bootle at Skelda, Eskmeals, Stub Place and Stockbridge, and encompassed the whole of Middleton Place, Langley Park, Langley (a different place from Langley Park), Park Nook, and other parts of, but not all of, Corney.

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<sup>71</sup> F. H. M. Parker, ‘A Calendar of Feet of Fines for Cumberland, from their commencement to the accession of Henry VII’, CW2, vii (1907), 246.

<sup>72</sup> CAS (C), DSEN/14/1/4/3/1.

<sup>73</sup> H. S. Cowper, Millom Castle and the Huddlestons, CW2, xxiv (1924), 202 and 230.

<sup>74</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/134/6; CAS (W), DPEN/156/18.

<sup>75</sup> CAS (B), BDKF/231/7.



In the late 12th century, both Middleton Place and Langley Park were held by Henry fitz Ketel.<sup>76</sup> He also held an area named Brackenthwaite, the boundaries of which were described by ancient place and feature names that have not survived in an immediately recognisable form.<sup>77</sup> It has been suggested that Brackenthwaite was an area of approximately 120 a. centred on what is now Myreground, and that it included some of the land later associated with the early 20th century farms of Borrowdale Ground, Moor House (previously Hungry Moor, now Little Ground), Lamb Ground (derelict in 2021), the mill (no longer extant) and Fold Gate (previously Foulyeat or Foul Gate).<sup>78</sup>

In the early 14th century, John de Medilton (aka John de Midleton) and his son, also John, owned Middleton Place as well as other property in Corney, and elsewhere.<sup>79</sup> It may have been from these Midletons that Middleton Place got its name, or vice versa. One observer records that Middleton Place was once the demesne of the Middletons, but was later broken into tenancies.<sup>80</sup> It thus appears that a manor of Middleton Place may have existed independently of the manor of Corney in the 14th century though no records of a manor court have survived. In the 15th century, part of Middleton Place was in the hands of Nicholas de Weteley and his wife. In 1429 they granted it to Sir John Pennington by charter along with other lands.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants', *CW2*, xli (1941), 150-1.

<sup>77</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'Addenda Antiquaria', *CW2*, xvi (1916), 293-4.

<sup>78</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'Notes on Corney', *CW2*, xxviii (1928), 152-3.

<sup>79</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/28/1; CAS (W) DPEN/29/1; CAS (W) DPEN/29/2; CAS (W) DPEN/29/3; CAS (W) DPEN/29/5; CAS (W) DPEN/29/7; CAS (W) DPEN/29/8.

<sup>80</sup> Denton, *Perambulations*, 75.

<sup>81</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/28/7.

Sometime between 1422 and 1509 Nicholas Baron, another landowner in Middleton Place, also sold his interest there to Sir John Pennington.<sup>82</sup>

Surviving references to a manor of Middleton Place all occur after the Penningtons gained possession, beginning with a court roll of 1523–24.<sup>83</sup> It is also named as such in a fine of 1588,<sup>84</sup> and in an exemplification of final concord of 1615.<sup>85</sup>

By the 13th century, Henry fitz Ketel's interests in Langley Park had passed to Sir John de Langlivergh, who also held lands in Hensingham and was possibly Henry's son, John fitz Henry.<sup>86</sup> In 1315 Roger de Whiteton passed a quarter of Langley Park along with one eighth of the manor of Hensingham to William de Cyngleton by fine.<sup>87</sup> In 1397 Langley Park ("Langler") was included in a life grant by Sir Thomas de Berdesey to Elizabeth Standish, the widow of Sir William Pennington, her first husband, who had enfeoffed those lands to Thomas de Berdesey in 1368.<sup>88</sup> In 1409 Elizabeth granted Langley Park (now called Langley Wergh)

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<sup>82</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/28/6.

<sup>83</sup> CAS (B), Z/89, manor of Pennington court roll (1523 -24). 16 May 1588;

<sup>84</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/1/17, fine between various plaintiffs and Bridget Pennington and other deforciantes regarding several manors, 16 May 1588.

<sup>85</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/156/16, exemplification of final concord 1615.

<sup>86</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants', *CW2*, xli (1941), 150.

<sup>87</sup> F. H. M. Parker, 'A Calendar of the Feet of Fines from their commencement to the accession of Henry VII', *CW2*, vii (1907), 232.

<sup>88</sup> *Penningtonia* (1878), vi, and article 41.

to her son, Sir Alan Pennington (d. 1415).<sup>89</sup> The grant was confirmed and ratified by Alan in a deed in which he referred to the property as Langlewebery.<sup>90</sup>

In 1412, Sir Alan increased his holding when Richard Lame and his wife Joan transferred land and tenements they held in Corney to him by charter<sup>91</sup>

Sir Alan was succeeded by his son, Sir John Pennington (1393-1470), who received from the widow Alicia Couke her tenements at Hehouse (modern name unknown) in Corney in 1429.<sup>92</sup>

In 1437, after Richard Lame's death, Joan Lame and her son, John, quitclaimed any right in their property in Corney to Sir John.<sup>93</sup> Thereafter Sir John went on to acquire land and tenements in Corney at Langley, Middleton Place (not yet a manor), Highhouse (later called Stopriggs, now Windy Brow) and Grange.<sup>94</sup>

The Pennington possessions passed down six generations from Sir John to Sir William Pennington of Muncaster (see MUNCASTER). Sir William died in 1532 seised of various manors and other lands, including land he held of John Huddleston esq. of his manor of Millom, namely: Eskmeals and Stockbridge in Bootle parish; Middleton Place (not referred to as a manor in his inquisition post mortem) and Langley Park, both in Corney parish; and Birkby in

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<sup>89</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/1/1..

<sup>90</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/30/2; J. Foster ed., *Penningtonia*, (London, 1878), 26.

<sup>91</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/10/6.

<sup>92</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/10/16.

<sup>93</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/10/12; CAS (W) DPEN/10/13.

<sup>94</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/29/7; CAS (W), DPEN/28/6; CAS (W), DPEN 28/7; CAS (W), DPEN/28/9; CAS (W), DPEN/28/10; CAS (W), DPEN/28/11; CAS (W), DPEN/28/13; CAS (W) DPEN/28/14; CAS (W), DPEN 28/22; CAS (W), DPEN/10/16; CAS (W), DPEN/10/18.

Muncaster parish.<sup>95</sup> Sir William's holding passed to his son William Pennington of Muncaster (1518-1573). William married Bridget, daughter of Sir John Huddleston of Millom and widow of Hugh Askew, who had left Bridget his manor of Seaton, which included lands in Corney (see *Corney Lands of Seaton Manor* below).

Bridget also held the lands and manors of William Pennington after his death. In 1605 she leased these, which included Middleton Place, Langley and Langley Park, all in Corney, along with her manors in Muncaster, Drigg, Preston Richard, Little Langdale and Pennington, to her son Joseph Pennington (c.1565 – 1640) for sixty years, in exchange for a pension of £200.<sup>96</sup> Bridget's will has not survived, but since the lease carried the proviso that in the event of Joseph's death without male heir, the Estate should pass to her third son William, not to her second son John (who was to inherit Seaton manor, see *Corney Lands of Seaton Manor below*), it is apparent that Joseph was the heir to the lands he leased.

In 1598, Joseph bought property at Park Nook from Thomas Gryndall, the late servant of Sir William Cecil Lord Burghley, chief adviser to Elizabeth I.<sup>97</sup> Joseph died in 1641 leaving his son William (c1590–1652) as his heir. The first surviving record of a court baron for Middleton Place dates to that year,<sup>98</sup> and in Joseph's inquisition post mortem of 1641, the manor of Middleton Place is so-called for the first time, but is not yet referred to as the manor of Corney and Middleton Place. As well as holding the manor of Middleton Place, Joseph held "divers

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<sup>95</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/156/1 inquisition post mortem of Sir William Pennington in 1532.

<sup>96</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/156/14.

<sup>97</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/10/20.

<sup>98</sup> CAS (B), BDKF/231/7 Middleton Place manorial court book 1641 - 1676

other lands tenements and hereditaments” including Langley, Langley Park, Eskmeals, Corney and Birkby, which, along with Middleton Place, he held in socage of the lord of Millom.<sup>99</sup>

By 1676 the manor had become known as the manor of Corney and Middleton Place.<sup>100</sup> In 1677 Sir William Pennington of Muncaster expanded the manor by purchasing more property at Park Nook, this time from Josiah Heard of Muncaster.<sup>101</sup> The manor descended with the rest of the Pennington inheritance (see MUNCASTER). By the 19th century it included High House (later to be called Stopriggs, then Windy Brow), Park Nook, Woodhead (previously Woodhouse, later Welcome Nook) and How End (previously Strands, then Hall End).<sup>102</sup> It also included High Corney, which had been part of Bootle Manor in the 17th century,<sup>103</sup> (see BOOTLE) but was paying rent to the manor of Corney and Middleton Place by 1862,<sup>104</sup> and Far Bank, which had been part of the manor of Bootle in the 18th century<sup>105</sup> (see BOOTLE). In 1874 Lord Muncaster bought Whitestones from the Grindall family.<sup>106</sup>

After 1925, the landholdings of the Penningtons were held as part of an entity called Muncaster Estates. The Corney landholdings of Muncaster Estates comprised over 350 a. and included

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<sup>99</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/134/6; CAS (W), DPEN/156/18.

<sup>100</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/177, Court book, manor of Corney and Middleton Place.

<sup>101</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/10/31.

<sup>102</sup> CAS (B), BDKF/231/7 1860s manorial rent books for Corney and Middleton Place.

<sup>103</sup> CAS (W), YDX 403/1/18, manor of Bootle, Admission of Wm Troughton to a customary tenancy at High Corney; CAS (W), YDX 403/1/21, manor of Bootle, manorial court verdict.

<sup>104</sup> CAS (B), BDKF/231/7 1860s manorial rent books for Corney and Middleton Place.

<sup>105</sup> CAS (W), YDSO 134/3 manor of Bootle admittance of John Pirt to Far Bank 30 May 1753.

<sup>106</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/55.

Whitstones farm, Langley Park, and land, an inn, a smithy and cottages at Park Nook.<sup>107</sup> In 1951 Muncaster Estates sold all their property in Corney to sitting tenants. Langley Park was purchased by Robert and Richard William Preston. It then comprised 405 a. and was earning a rent of £220 10s per annum.<sup>108</sup> In 1970, the Prestons sold Langley Park to the brothers Edward, Joseph and Richard Barnes Woodall. By 2003, after a partition of land on the estate, Edward Woodall had become the sole proprietor, and by 2017 the estate, now comprising approximately 235 a. had been sold to Allen and Brian Cornthwaite.<sup>109</sup>

### *Manor House*

The Manor house for Corney and Middleton Place was situated in Middleton Place.<sup>110</sup> It was reported as falling into decay in 1794,<sup>111</sup> but the manor court continued to be held there for some time.<sup>112</sup> By 1847 the manor house was unfit for use and the court had moved to Park Nook.<sup>113</sup> It was saved from total dereliction by a refurbishment in the 19th century.<sup>114</sup>

## **Religious Houses**

### *Cockersand Abbey and Hospital of St John of Jerusalem*

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<sup>107</sup> TNA , MAF 32/191/62.

<sup>108</sup> CAS (C), DX 68/66.

<sup>109</sup> Land Registry, Register of Title, CU192521, Editions dated 21 Nov. 2003 and 15 Feb. 2017

<sup>110</sup> N&B, II, 18.

<sup>111</sup> Hutchinson, Vol. I, 562.

<sup>112</sup> Hutchinson, Vol. I, 562; D. Lysons and . Lysons *Magna Britannia*, Volume 4, London (1816), 82; Parson & White, *Dir. C. & W.*, 199 -200.

<sup>113</sup> Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.* (1847), 322; Bulmer, *Dir. Cumb* (1883), 436.

<sup>114</sup> See ‘Landscape, Settlement and Buildings, the Built Character’ above.

Between 1190 and 1200, Henry fitz Ketell gave two-thirds of his demesne in Corney to Cockersand Abbey.<sup>115</sup> The gift included land between Eskmeals pool (the Malpas) on the west, the Corney parish boundary on the south between Eskmeals pool and Near Bank, then along the road between Skellerah and Gillfoot, then past Barras Meadow and Normoss to Eskmeals pool. This land included Middleton Place, but it is not clear whether the northern boundary of the gift took in Langley Park or not.<sup>116</sup> Sometime between 1200 and 1210 Henry followed this gift with a grant of a farm in Corney, probably Myreground, to the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem.<sup>117</sup>

### *Seaton Priory and Conishead Priory*

The Benedictine nunnery of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lekeley (Seaton Priory)<sup>118</sup> held lands in Corney. This included Kinmont, (later transferred to Conishead Priory<sup>119</sup>) and Buckberry [Buckbarrow], which were granted by the founder, Henry fitz Arthur de Boyvill, 4th Lord of Millom in the late 12 century.<sup>120</sup> Part of Seaton Priory's demesne lay immediately opposite the Priory across the Black Dub Beck which separated Corney and Bootle parishes.

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<sup>115</sup> *Chartulary of Cockersand Abbey*, III, pt. 2 (1905), 1055

(<https://archive.org/details/chartularyofcock5732manc/page/1054/mode/2up?q=corney>; accessed 19 Jun 2020)

<sup>116</sup> Revd W. S. Sykes, 'Notes on Corney', *CW2*, xxviii (1928), 154.

<sup>117</sup> *Addenda Antiquaria*, 'Henry F. Ketel's Grant to the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem', *CW2*, xvi (1916), 293-4; Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'Ulf and his Descendants', *CW2*, xli (1941), 150-1.

<sup>118</sup> 'Houses of Benedictine nuns: The nunnery of Seaton or Lekeley', in *A History of the County of Cumberland: Volume 2*, ed. J Wilson (London, 1905), pp. 192-194. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/cumb/vol2/pp192-194> (accessed 5 December 2019).

<sup>119</sup> C. Moor, 'The Askews and Penningtons of Seaton', *CW2*, xi (1911), 170

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*; *Addenda Antiquaria*, 'Henry F. Ketel's Grant to the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem', *CW2*, xvi (1916), 293-4.

Alan fitz Ketell gifted half of Kinmont to Conishead Priory.<sup>121</sup> Conishead has no surviving chartulary,<sup>122</sup> so no description of their holdings exists, but Alan's gift was possibly the area now called Prior Park, which comprises an area of approximately 470 a. of uninhabited land above 275 m., bounded in the west and north by Kinmont Beck, in the south by Buckbarrow Beck and in the east by a stone wall running between the two becks.

### **Corney Lands of Seaton Manor**

In 1537, Hugh Askew (d.1562) acquired the lands of both the nunnery of Seaton and Conishead Priory in Corney, including Buckbarrow and Kinmont. These formed part of his manor of Seaton (see BOOTLE).<sup>123</sup> He left the manor to his wife Bridget Askew. Bridget held Buckbarrow and appurtenances of Queen Elizabeth I by service of a 20th part of a knight's fee, and held Kinmont of the queen by military service.<sup>124</sup>

In about 1563, Bridget married William Pennington (see above).<sup>125</sup> On her death, her lands passed to her second son, John Pennington (d.1613). Kinmont and Buckbarrow remained with the Penningtons of Seaton until they were sold with the rest of Seaton manor to the Wakefield

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<sup>121</sup> Revd. W. S. Sykes, 'On the Identification of some Ancient Places in South Cumberland', *CW2*, xxvi (1926), 127.

<sup>122</sup> 'Houses of Austin canons: The priory of Conishead', in *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 2*, ed. William Farrer and J Brownbill (London, 1908), pp. 140-143 (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol2/pp140-143>); (accessed 19 Jun. 2020)

<sup>123</sup> C. Moor, 'The Askews of Pennington and Seaton', *CW2*, xi (1911), 170.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, 172

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, 174.



family in 1802.<sup>126</sup> By 1842 William Wakefield's Corney holdings in the reputed Manor of Seaton amounted to 15 a. of land in the vicinity of Seaton Hall, and approximately 215 a. at Buckbarrow, giving him a total holding in Corney of 220 a.. This was let to William Whinerah of Lamb Ground, who also owned 40 a. of land at Lamb Ground in his own right.<sup>127</sup>

After the breaking of the entail on the Wakefield family estates in 1938,<sup>128</sup> the holdings of the Wakefield family in South Cumberland, including Buckbarrow and Kinmont, became part of the Lake District Estates Company Ltd., which incorporated all the family's property interests in South Lakeland.<sup>129</sup> By 2019 the company no longer held land or property in Corney.

### **Other Estates**

By 1842 there were three substantial freehold estates in Corney. That belonging to Revd Thomas Singleton included Low Kinmont, Skelerah and Bank (now Middle Bank) and amounted 500 a.<sup>130</sup> In 1843, while living at Bank (Middlebank), he put Low Kinmont up for sale<sup>131</sup> having previously let it.<sup>132</sup> Thomas died in 1846 aged 71,<sup>133</sup> and Myles Singleton

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<sup>126</sup> CAS (W), WDW 1/2/2/5/1-21.

<sup>127</sup> Corney Tithe Apportionment at <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/advanced/landowner/tithe-records>

<sup>128</sup> CAS (K). WDW/1/2/1/47/3.

<sup>129</sup> CAS (K). WDW/1/2/1/47/4.

<sup>130</sup> Corney Tithe Apportionment at <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/advanced/landowner/tithe-records>

<sup>131</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 10 Oct. 1843, p.1,

<sup>132</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 16 Aug. 1842, p. 1; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 26 Sep. 1843, p. 1

<sup>133</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 18 Jun. 1846, p.3.

(possibly Thomas's elder brother) moved into Bank (Middlebank) where he was living in 1849,<sup>134</sup> having put Skellerah and his own home of Normoss up for sale in 1848.<sup>135</sup>

A second large estate, Corney Hall, comprised 188 a. and was owned by Richard Hobson MD in 1842.<sup>136</sup> By 2007, Corney Hall, now extending to 200 a., was in the possession of Wilson, Doreen and Steven Boow.<sup>137</sup> A third estate, Charles Ground, was a large farm that was in the Jackson family between 1795 and 1851.<sup>138</sup> In 1842 it comprised 132 a. and remained as a holding of more than 100 a. into the 20th Century.<sup>139</sup> In 2021 the farm was owned by Messers A&F Jenkinson and Son and comprised 245 a. with 133 a. of fell rights.<sup>140</sup>

At the end of the 19th century, Thomas Grice of Bootle, proprietor of Grice and Co. Merchants, agents for patent veterinary supplies,<sup>141</sup> started to acquire property in Corney. In 1889, he bought Foul Gate (now Foldgate), Hole House also called Lowground (neither of these names has survived, but it may be an old name for Borrowdale Ground, (see ECONOMIC HISTORY: Mills), How End (now derelict) and associated land amounting to approximately 113 a. from

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<sup>134</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 22 Dec. 1849, p.3.

<sup>135</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 4 Sep. 1848, p.2.

<sup>136</sup> Corney Tithe Apportionment at <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/advanced/landowner/tithe-records>

<sup>137</sup> <https://www.lleysheep.com/info/features/northern-england/wilson-boow/>

<sup>138</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/112/12; *Census* 1841 and 1851; The National Archives, MAF 32/191/62, Ministry of Food, National Farm Survey.

<sup>139</sup> Corney Tithe Apportionment at <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/advanced/landowner/tithe-records>

<sup>140</sup> LDNPA planning application 7/2012/4012, 19 Jun 2020, at

<https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/swifftlg/MediaTemp/74192-349615.pdf> (accessed 2 Nov. 2020).

<sup>141</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 25 Jul. 1852, p.2.

Mr Dickinson who had bought them from the trustees of the will of John Pritt in 1848.<sup>142</sup> In 1890, Thomas bought Myreground, a farm comprising approximately 100 a. and formerly held by the Hardy family.<sup>143</sup>

On 12 Mar. 1892 Thomas Grice died in possession of an estate that exceeded 200 a., which he bequeathed to his brother, Richard.<sup>144</sup> Richard died on 25 Dec. 1937 leaving his estate to his wife and his three sons, Thomas Muriel Grice, Richard Gerald Grice and Henry Ritson Grice.<sup>145</sup> By 1941, Thomas Muriel Grice, the eldest brother, owned Foul Gate (Foldgate) a farm of 115 a. His brother, Richard Gerald Grice, owned the 119 a. farm Corney Hall, and the youngest brother, Henry Ritson Grice, owned Myreground, Middle Kinmont and Low Kinmont an estate that totalled 254 a.<sup>146</sup> By 2007, Middle Kinmont was derelict and Low Kinmont, now extending to over 200 a., belonged to W&P Walton.

On his death in 1958, Thomas Muriel left his estate of Foldgate to his brother Henry Ritson. It was eventually sold to David Hogg. On David Hogg's retirement the farm was broken up and the house sold to Ian Wright, who converted it to a residential training centre in 2004 then changed it into holiday accommodation seven years.

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<sup>142</sup> CAS (W), YDSO 134/3, photocopy of conveyance of Foul Gate etc and schedule.

<sup>143</sup> CAS (B), BDTB/29/1/1-5, 9.

<sup>144</sup> England and Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1892.

<sup>145</sup> England and Wales National Probate Calendar, 1938.

<sup>146</sup> TNA, MAF 32/191/62.1

## **ECONOMIC HISTORY**

The economy of Corney has for centuries been based on, and dominated by, agriculture. The landscape within which the parish lies contains well-preserved evidence of cultivation and pastoralism that shows the mixed nature of farming from prehistoric to post medieval times. Mixed farming, with sheep ever-present, persisted into the early 20th century, after which it increasingly gave way to management of grassland for sheep and cattle. By the mid 19th century Corney was noted for its superior breeds of cattle.<sup>147</sup>

Industrial activity in the township was extremely limited. Attempts to exploit minerals in the parish failed to achieve any great economic impact, and a smokery established in the 1980s was short-lived, but a small engineering manufacturing company set up in 1976 was still in operation in 2020. Service industry was confined to local tradesmen and tradeswomen resident locally providing services from their homes, and a single retail shop that operated from the mid to late 19th century.

Between the late 19th century and the mid 20th century opportunities arose for employment outside the township. The quarry at Waberthwaite, facilities set up by Vickers Armstrong and the Home Office at Eskmeals in the late 18th and early 19th centuries respectively, all provided new opportunities for employment close to the parish. The arrival of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (which later became British Nuclear Fuels Limited, then Sellafield Limited) in West Cumberland in the mid 20th century established a major employer within daily travelling distance of the parish. No separate figures are available for employment in

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<sup>147</sup> Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.* (1847), 321.

Corney after its union with Waberthwaite in 1934, but details of occupations and employment statistics for the combined parish are discussed under WABERTHWAITE

## **Farming**

### *The Agricultural Landscape*

The fellside in and around the township holds an extensive range of prehistoric remains that testify to the occupation and exploitation of the land for at least 4000 years. The persistence of mixed farming over time has left its imprint on field names that have survived into the 19th century. Those such as Bull Copy, Sheep Land, Calf Fold, Cow Close, attest to the practice of animal husbandry, while Wheat Close, Little Corn Field, Great Corn Field and Haverdale (“Oats Dale”) indicate land used for cereals at a time when Norse was spoken in the area.<sup>148</sup> Many of these names are repeated on different farms in the parish. Hog and Hoghouse occur in field names throughout the parish and may be associated with yearling sheep, or possibly pig keeping.

Land at Corney fell into two main areas: the unimproved common of Corney Fell above the 110 m. contour in the east of the township and an area of cultivated and improved fields west of the fell below 110m.. The commons on Corney Fell extended eastward to a height of 540 m. on the township’s eastern boundary. In 2021 an area of 1,342 a. remained as common land on which commoners still had rights to graze sheep, cattle and horses, and rights of turberry, estovers and bracken collection.<sup>149</sup> The cultivated area in the west comprised enclosed fields of improved grassland, cereals and other crops.

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<sup>148</sup> *PNC*, XXI, 365; *PNC*, XXII, 476.

<sup>149</sup> <https://common-land.com/lands/view/4952> (accessed 4 Mar. 2020).

A small area of land (80 a.) called Corney Moor was enclosed in 1818<sup>150</sup> and taken into nine, existing farms.<sup>151</sup>

### *Prehistoric Farming*

The area south of Charlesground Gill bounded by Kinmont Beck in the south, Buckbarrow Beck in the west, and the 250 m. contour in the east is rich with evidence of prehistoric exploitation of the land above 110 m. including earthworks (lynchets), cairnfields, hut circles, the remains of field systems and a Bronze Age funerary cairn.<sup>152</sup>

North of Charlesground Beck, evidence of Bronze Age field clearance to facilitate unhindered use of the plough, and the remains of Bronze Age field systems occur at sites near High Corney,<sup>153</sup> Lambground<sup>154</sup> and Charlesground.<sup>155</sup> Further evidence of Bronze Age field clearance and evidence of an extended episode of prehistoric exploitation of the land for pasture and cultivation occurs a short distance southeast of High Corney.<sup>156</sup>

### *Medieval Farming*

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<sup>150</sup> CAS (C), Q/RE/1/161, enclosure award for Corney Moor.

<sup>151</sup> CAS (B), BDL/P4/5/11.

<sup>152</sup> NHLE, list no. 1017175, Prehistoric cairnfields, field systems, hut circles and a farmstead on Corney Fell; and HERR, Monument Nos.1304592, 1304583 and 1304579 (all accessed 8 Mar. 2020).

<sup>153</sup> HERR, Monument No. 37562 (accessed 6 Mar 2020).

<sup>154</sup> HERR, Monument No. 37564 (accessed 6 Mar 2020).

<sup>155</sup> HERR, Monument No. 37561 (accessed 6 Mar 2020).

<sup>156</sup> HERR, Monument No. 37550; NHLE, List No. 1019140, Three prehistoric cairnfields and an associated field system on Corney Fell, 1.2km south east of High Corney (accessed 6 Mar. 2020).

Narrow ridge and furrow remains identified at two locations at High Corney from aerial photographs have been interpreted as possible medieval cultivation ridges.<sup>157</sup> They may be the remains of medieval open field systems of early, pre-manorial, farmers, but no indications of the nature of crops grown or animals kept have survived. Evidence for late medieval enclosure of land exists in a quitclaim of 1437 which refers to ‘any common of pasture in all the lands, meadows etc. newly inclosed’ by John Pennington in Langley.<sup>158</sup> There are no surviving medieval rentals for the manor.

### *Post-Medieval Farming*

There is evidence of post-medieval use of prehistoric clearance cairns to provide bields for animal shelter southeast of High Corney.<sup>159</sup> Beyond that, there is a lack of surviving documentary or archaeological evidence that might provide evidence concerning the nature of farming prior to the 17th century by which time Langley Park had become the demesne of the manor of Corney and Middleton Place,<sup>160</sup> and Joseph Pennington kept sufficient numbers of sheep at Langley Park and Eskmeals in 1635 for him to employ a ‘keeper of his sheep’.<sup>161</sup> In 1684 the Langley Park estate extended to over 200a.<sup>162</sup> By the 18th century, the Penningtons no longer farmed Langley Park, but leased it to tenants. In 1688, Corney manor, of which

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<sup>157</sup> HERR, Monument Nos. 37576, 37578 and 37577 (accessed 8 Mar. 2020).

<sup>158</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/28/14, quitclaim referring to ‘all the lands meadows etc newly inclosed by the aforesaid John de Pennington, knight’.

<sup>159</sup> Heritage Gateway (Pastscape) at [https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\\_Single.aspx?uid=37550&resourceID=2](https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=37550&resourceID=2) (accessed 6 Mar. 2020); <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1019140> (accessed 6 Mar. 2020).

<sup>160</sup> Denton, *Perambulation*, 75.

<sup>161</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/12/2.

<sup>162</sup> CAS (W) DPEN/209/2.

Joseph Huddleston esquire was lord, held land amounting to 369 a. with fifteen tenants in customary messuages, cottages, tenements. The total value of the estate was £96 8s.6d.<sup>163</sup>

Tenants were a major source of income for the lord of the manor of Corney and Middleton Place. In the 18th and 19th centuries each tenant paid a customary rent at Martinmas and Whitsuntide, a 20d. fine on change of tenant, a general arbitrary fine not exceeding 20 years rent on the death of their lord or his lady and a 'townterm' of £12 4s. 4d. every seven years. Every tenant who died leaving a widow paid a heriot of his best quick good to the lord. Tenants also paid harrowing boons, shearing boons, bracken boons and peat boons to Langley Park annually and Muncaster Hall biannually. The tenant at Meals (in Bootle parish), in addition, paid two bushels of wheat and a payment to the rector of Bootle in midsummer in lieu of tithes for wool and lamb from Eskmeals.<sup>164</sup>

No manorial documentary references to free tenants or other evidence of the existence, location or extent of freehold land or property held within the manors before enfranchisement, has been found. However, the total absence of any surviving manorial documents referring to Charlesground, or any property or tenements in that part of Corney that lies near the church, or any of the properties of Borrowdale Ground, Myreground and Skellerah, may indicate that these properties were held free of the influence of any lord other than the occupants themselves. Observers in the 19th century have commented that a number of landowners in the township

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<sup>163</sup> CAS (C), DLONS/W/8/1/6

<sup>164</sup> CAS (B), Z111/1, breviat, 1833; CAS (W), DPEN/46/21, rent book, early 18th century; CAS (W), DPEN/11/14, breviat, about 1740.



were lords of their own lands.<sup>165</sup> However, there were customary tenants in the manor of Seaton's two tenements at Kinmont in Corney, which were enfranchised in 1759,<sup>166</sup> and in some tenements in manor of Corney and Middleton Place, which were enfranchised in the early 19th century.<sup>167</sup>

In 1842 there were forty-seven farms, homesteads, cottages and smallholdings owned by 27 people, 14 of whom were owner-occupiers. The farms ranged in size from 22 to 220 a. and had over 2,700 a. under cultivation<sup>168</sup>

In the 19th century, agriculture was still dominant among the occupations of residents in Corney accounting for over 60 per cent. of economically active people between 1841 and 1891, and farms were generally run by families, with only the very largest farms employing labourers and/or farm servants.<sup>169</sup>

Mixed farming persisted into the 18th and 19th centuries, with individual farms containing both arable land and pasture, and many retaining a flock of sheep. In 1794, considerable quantities of oats and barley, but little wheat, were produced and 2,000 sheep were grazed in

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<sup>165</sup> Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.* (1847), 321; W. Whellan, *The history and topography of the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland*, (Pontefract, 1860), 487.

<sup>166</sup> CAS (W), WDW/1/2/2/3/2.

<sup>167</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/41/1 (How End, previously Strands, then Hall End, 1887); CAS (W), DPEN 41/2 (Whitestones, 1829); CAS (W), DPEN/41/3 (Woodhead, previously Woodhouse, later Welcome Nook, 1833); CAS (W), DPEN/41/4 (High Corney, 1837); CAS (W), YDX 403/1/77 (Middleton Place, 1770).

<sup>168</sup> Analysis of CAS (C), DRC/8/50(b), Corney Tithe Apportionment.

<sup>169</sup> *Census* 1841 – 1891.

Corney.<sup>170</sup> In 1801, 660 a. of farmland in Corney were used for growing grain, predominantly barley (450 a.), with lesser amounts of wheat and oats (55 a. each). A further 35 a. were used for potatoes (15 a.), peas and beans (5 a.) and turnips (15 a.).<sup>171</sup> Turnips remained a crop into the early 20th century.<sup>172</sup> In 1818, Langley Park was advertised to let with 400a. of corn, pasture and meadow, and Normoss was advertised to let with 57a. of arable land, pasture and meadow, together with a flock of heath-going sheep.<sup>173</sup>

By 1842/43, the amount of arable land (excluding the land at Langley Park, but including land rotated between pasture or meadow and arable) amounted to 700 a. while approximately 1,700 a. was down to pasture or meadow, with woods and orchards comprising less than a hundred acres.<sup>174</sup>

Sheep were still being grazed and fattened throughout the township in 1847,<sup>175</sup> and mixed farming continued. When the tenancy of Corney Hall came to term in 1847, the tenant had for sale three shorthorn bull calves, a two year old heifer, ten head of grazing heifers, a portion of 8 a. of swedes and a large quantity of hay, oats and straw.<sup>176</sup> Between 1818 and 1886, How End, Middle Bank, Low Kinmont, High Kinmont, High Corney, Skellerah, Corney Hall, Far Bank, Charlesground and Middleton Place farms were advertised for sale or let, all with arable

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<sup>170</sup> Hutchinson, Vol. I, 563.

<sup>171</sup> <https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10011218/theme/LAND> (accessed 13 Nov. 2020).

<sup>172</sup> Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.* (1894, 1897, 1906 and 1910).

<sup>173</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 28 Jul. 1818, p.1.

<sup>174</sup> Analysis of CAS (C), DRC/8/50(b) Corney Tithe Apportionment. Note: Land use at Langley Park is not recorded in the tithe apportionment.

<sup>175</sup> Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.* (1847), 321.

<sup>176</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 19 Oct. 1847, p.1.

land, meadow, pasture and fell grazing and some with flocks of up to 545 sheep.<sup>177</sup> By the mid 19th century, the longhorn cattle, for which Corney had once been noted, were nearly extinct, but the shorthorns and puddings continued to obtain premiums at various agricultural societies' exhibitions.<sup>178</sup>

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, six of the 20 farms and two small holdings in Corney were producing milk,<sup>179</sup> but mixed farming was still the major agricultural activity. Of the 2,384 a. of land in agricultural use, 1,227 a. (51%) were under grass, 758 a. (31%) were rough grazing, 241 a. (10%) were under oats and 92 a. were down to barley, wheat, vegetables or oilseed. There were 452 cattle, 2,404 sheep, 1,666 poultry and 46 pigs. In 1944, the area in which Corney lay was classified as 'mixed farming with a substantial dairying side'.<sup>180</sup>

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 some farmers in the township moved out of dairy production.<sup>181</sup> By 2021, only two of the eleven farms still working in

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<sup>177</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 4 Aug. 1841, p.2; 29 Aug. 1854, p.1; 26 Sep. 1854, p.4; *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 8 Aug. 1857, p.4; 8 Aug. 1872, p.4; 22 July 1875, p.4; 20 Nov. 1879, p.4; 8 Aug. 1878, p.4; *Whitehaven News*, 25 Oct. 1866, p.1; *Ulverston Advertiser*, 9 Sep. 1886, p.4.

<sup>178</sup> Whellan, *History and Topography*, 487; Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.* (1847), 321.

<sup>179</sup> TNA, MAF 32 191/62.

<sup>180</sup> OS, Types of Farming England and Wales, 1:625000, sheets 1 and 2 (1944).

<sup>181</sup> Local Inf.

Corney were dairy farms and no arable crops were grown anywhere in the township. Of the remaining nine farms, one farmed sheep only, and the remainder kept suckler herds producing dairy or beef cattle for onward sale. Five of the farms with suckler herds retained flocks of sheep or over-wintered hogs.

## **Fishing and Forestry**

### *Fishing*

Corney has no coastline and thus no access to marine fish, and while there are small freshwater streams in the township containing brown trout and there are annual runs of salmon and sea trout up the township's only river, the Annas, neither are in quantities large enough to sustain commercial fishing.

### *Timber*

The Great Wood in Langley Park covered 35 a.,<sup>182</sup> which provided income from timber to the lord of the manor. In 1756, 64 oak trees felled at Langley Park for sale to the Royal Navy were valued at £155 16s. 6d..<sup>183</sup>

## **Industry**

### *Minerals and Quarrying*

There is evidence of small-scale quarrying, probably producing stone and gravel for local use, at High Corney in the medieval and post medieval periods.<sup>184</sup> A small quarry at Corney mill,

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<sup>182</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/209/2.

<sup>183</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/106/23.

<sup>184</sup> HERR, Monument No. 37576 (accessed 12 Nov. 2021)

which gave rise to the name Stone Quarry Brow for an adjacent field,<sup>185</sup> is possibly post medieval and was used on a very small scale.<sup>186</sup> There is no evidence of any attempts at quarrying on a large (industrial) scale in the township. The opening of the quarry in Waberthwaite in 1883 (See WABERTHWAITE) saw the arrival of skilled workers in Corney (there were two sett makers from outside the county living there in 1891 and 1911), but employment opportunities at the quarry also arose for local people. In 1891 and 1911 two Corney residents were employed as labourers at the quarry, and in 1911 the quarry also employed a Corney youth as an errand boy.<sup>187</sup>

Iron ore occurs within the parish. Between 1835 and 1860 iron ore mining took place at two locations near the now derelict buildings of Middle Kinmont Farm.<sup>188</sup> There were iron miners living at Middle Kinmont and nearby Spring House in Corney in 1841, and one living in Grange in 1861. In September 1836 an advertisement was placed by the Corney Iron Company for an experienced manager for their company's mines.<sup>189</sup> In Dec. that year it was reported that Mr Hardy, presumably the successful applicant for the post at Corney Iron Company's mines, had mined to a depth of 14 m. at Corney and produced 10 t. of valuable ore.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> CAS (C), DRC/8/50(b), Corney Tithe Apportionment, John Pool plot 151.

<sup>186</sup> Local Inf. Site inspection by the author. 2019.

<sup>187</sup> *Censuses* 1891 and 1911.

<sup>188</sup> John Adams, *Mines of the Lake District Fells*, Dalesman Books, Lancaster, (1988), 127; Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.* (1847), 321.

<sup>189</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 27 Sep. 1836.

<sup>190</sup> *Kendal Mercury*, 10 Dec. 1836, p.2.

In May 1839, Edward William Wakefield, then lord of the reputed manor of Seaton, licensed Joseph Banks of Kendal to 'trial for minerals' in that part of Seaton Manor that lay in Corney.<sup>191</sup> The exact locations of Josephs Banks's prospecting, and the results ensuing, are unknown.

In Nov. 1839 'a fine specimen' of iron ore, 'without alloy' and 'of the very best quality' from 'the mines of Corney', was presented by an unnamed person to the offices of the Westmorland Gazette. It may have come from either Mr Banks's prospecting, or operations at Middle Kinmont.<sup>192</sup> Despite the quality of the ore sample, neither Joseph Banks's prospecting, the mining at Middle Kinmont nor subsequent searches for ore in 1866<sup>193</sup> and 1871<sup>194</sup> lead to large scale or sustained mining operations in the township.

There is evidence of attempts to win copper in Prior Park in Kinmont 120 m. east of Buckbarrow Beck a kilometre from its confluence with Kinmont Beck where there are remains of a surface trial and a 120 m. long level. The quality of the spoil dumped while making the level is poor and there are no stopes in the level, indicating that little or no good ore was found and excavated.<sup>195</sup>

### ***Nuclear Power***

From 1947, the building and establishment of nuclear facilities at Windscale (later called Sellafield) 15 miles north of Corney, and the later building and, in 1956, opening of the world's

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<sup>191</sup> CAS (W), WDW/1/2/2/1/23 copy of memorandum of agreement.

<sup>192</sup> *Westmorland Gazette*, 16 Nov. 1839, p.3.

<sup>193</sup> *Westmorland Gazette*, 17 Nov. 1866, p.4.

<sup>194</sup> CAS (W), WDW/1/2/2/7, draft licence to trial for minerals in Kinmont.

<sup>195</sup> John Adams, *Mines of the Lake District Fells* (Lancaster, 1988), 124.

first commercial nuclear power station at nearby Calder Hall, followed by the construction of new reprocessing plants opened in 1964 and 1994 provided huge construction projects which gave a major boost to the parishes of West Cumbria and created opportunities for employment both during construction and subsequent operation of the plants into the 21st century.

### *Manufacturing*

Weavers (websters) lived in Corney in 1652 and 1719<sup>196</sup> indicating that some weaving may have been carried out on a cottage industry level, but there is no evidence that weaving was ever a widespread occupation within the parish. A food smokery, Ashdown Smokery, set up at Skellerah in the 1980s, had ceased operating by the start of the 21st century.<sup>197</sup> An engineering company, set up in 1976, was still operating in 2020 carrying out agricultural repairs and manufacturing iron and steel components for agricultural buildings.

### *Mills*

There was a corn mill at Corney associated with the tenement of Borrowdale Ground where a succession of millers lived from before 1841 until after 1881.<sup>198</sup> The earliest recorded miller in Corney was John Pritt of Ulpha who bought 'Hole House' from John Coupland of Corney in 1652.<sup>199</sup> The name Hole House has not survived into modern times, but it may have been an early name for Borrowdale Ground. By 1891 the miller at Borrowdale Ground, Edward Lamb,

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<sup>196</sup> CAS (W), YDSO 134/3, Bargain and Sale of Hole House from John Coupland of Corney, webster, to John Pritt of Ulpha; YDX 403/1/63, 'James Borrowdale of Corney, a weaver'.

<sup>197</sup> Lake District National Park Planning Authority, references 7/1989/4030, 7/1989/4026, 7/1989/4073 at <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/WPHAPPCRITERIA> (accessed 17 Nov 2020).

<sup>198</sup> *Census* 1901.

<sup>199</sup> CAS (W), YDSO 134, Bargain and Sale in tenantright, 8 Nov. 1652.

had retired (he died at Borrowdale Ground in 1892<sup>200</sup>), and a new man, Joseph Braithwaite of Hall End (How End), Corney was milling at Corney mill. By 1901 How End was unoccupied and there was no miller living in Corney.<sup>201</sup>

The mill is no longer extant. It was demolished in the second quarter of the 20th century and the stone used to fill in the millrace downstream of the mill to prevent sheep getting themselves stuck in it. The retained part of the race was used to provide electricity to charge the batteries that provided electricity for Borrowdale Ground.<sup>202</sup> A general purpose building was built on the site of the mill in 1997.<sup>203</sup> Part of the millrace was still evident in 2021, though overgrown. No references to the mill or the tenement of Borrowdale Ground (or Hole House) have been found in any surviving manorial records, making it unlikely that either were ever assets of, or in the gift of, a lord of the manor.

### *Gun Range*

By 1911 Vickers gun range at Eskmeals in Bootle parish was operational and employing four Corney residents, two as gunners and two as labourers.<sup>204</sup>

## **Services**

### *Retail*

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<sup>200</sup> Probate: <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/Calendar#calendar> (accessed 15 Nov 2020).

<sup>201</sup> *Census* 1901.

<sup>202</sup> Local inf., Mike Steele Nov. 2020.

<sup>203</sup> Lake District National Park Planning Authority, reference 7/1997/4028.

<sup>204</sup> *Census*, 1911.



In 1829, William Borrowdale had a smithy at Park Nook.<sup>205</sup> After he died in 1831, his son, John, established a shop there.<sup>206</sup> John was an energetic and inventive character who won rewards for his improved stitch-harrow and improved drain plough in the West Cumberland Agricultural Cattle Show in 1840.<sup>207</sup> Between 1841 and his death in 1884, John continually introduced new services to his shop. By 1851 he had established himself as a grocer, reopened the smithy, was employing two blacksmiths and was offering the services of a shoemaker. By 1881 he had opened a drapery in the shop and his niece was making dresses. After John's death the business ceased.<sup>208</sup> There has been no shop in the township since John Borrowdale died.

### *Inns and Public Houses*

In 1829, an ale licence and, later, a wines and spirits licence were taken out by John Jackson for his dwelling house on the 60 a. Park Nook farm at Corney.<sup>209</sup> By 1832 the dwelling house had been named the Brown Cow Inn.<sup>210</sup> By 1837 Thomas Pritt had become the tenant.<sup>211</sup> Conveniently situated on the eastern side of the A595 at Park Nook, the Brown Cow inn was still operating in 202, having survived the pandemic by offering a takeaway service.

### *Markets and Fairs*

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<sup>205</sup> Parson and White, *Dir. C. &W.* (1829), 200.

<sup>206</sup> *Census*, 1841.

<sup>207</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 13 Oct. 1840, p.3.

<sup>208</sup> *Census* 1851-81.

<sup>209</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 22 Sept. 1829, p.1.

<sup>210</sup> *Cumberland Paquet*, 6 Nov. 1832, p.1.

<sup>211</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 29 Aug. 1837 p.1.

From 1347, Bootle's annual September fair, and weekly Wednesday market served the people of Corney,<sup>212</sup> who held no fairs or markets of their own until 1851 when an annual fair for the sale of cattle and sheep was inaugurated. This fair, usually held in a field near the Brown Cow inn, developed to incorporate sports competitions and survived into the early 20th century.<sup>213</sup>

### **Visitor Economy**

In 1937, Three Nooks cottage was advertised in Eastbourne as a small country guest house, its advantages being sea, mountains and a bus service.<sup>214</sup> Photographs of the period show that the cottage also had tea rooms.

Attempts in the mid to late 20th century to establish holiday accommodation in Corney often met resistance from the Lake District National Park Planning Authority. In Jun. 1974 an application to establish a caravan site at Borrowdale Ground was refused.<sup>215</sup> In Sept. 1976 an application to convert a barn at Skellerah to a holiday flat was refused. An application made a month later to place two holiday caravans at Skellerah was also refused.<sup>216</sup> In 1998 a decision to refuse planning permission for converting a barn at Grange into a holiday cottage for the disabled was overturned on appeal.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> 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).

<sup>213</sup> *West Cumberland Times*, 14 Sept. 1901, p.1.

<sup>214</sup> *Eastbourne Gazette*, 18 Aug. 1937, p.15.

<sup>215</sup> Lake District National Park Planning Authority, planning application ref. 7/1974/4046

<sup>216</sup> Planning application ref. 7/1976/4050; planning application 7/1976/4086.

<sup>217</sup> Planning application 7/1997/4104.

By the 21st century, planning policy had changed and constraints had been eased. In 2021 there were six camping pods at Moorside farm and four holiday cottages for letting elsewhere in Corney, which provided an input into the local economy. In 2016, 7.5% of housing in Corney and Waberthwaite (nine houses) were second homes<sup>218</sup> with low occupancy rates that provided little economic benefit to the community.

## **SOCIAL HISTORY**

### **Social Character of the parish as a community.**

The population of Corney parish lived in isolated farms, cottages and small hamlets dispersed throughout the township, a pattern that persisted into the 21st century . The church in the hamlet of Corney was the only community building that could have provided a focal point for the scattered population, but in the 19th century some organisations made use of a room in the school at Waberthwaite. A network of footpaths, tracks and bridleways linked the dispersed settlements to each other and to the church. Much of the network remained as public rights of way into the 21st century and some routes were made into metalled roads after the Second World War.<sup>219</sup>

Corney held no fair or market of its own to provide opportunities for socialising, but from 1347 an annual fair and a weekly market held in the nearby town of Bootle (fair in Sept. and market

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<sup>218</sup> [https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0024/133953/Copeland-properties-not-used-for-permanent-residential-2016.pdf](https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/133953/Copeland-properties-not-used-for-permanent-residential-2016.pdf) (accessed 18 Nov 2020).

<sup>219</sup> Local Inf.

on Wednesdays)<sup>220</sup> would have provided opportunities for social exchanges. By the 19th century, public events based on stock shows, sports and country pursuits had become part of community life.

Amalgamation of farmland in the 20th century made a number of farmhouses available as homes, some of which were taken up by non-farming families, some of whom worked outside the township, but Corney remained a predominantly agricultural parish into the 21st century.

### *Leadership*

There is no evidence that any lords of any manor in Corney were ever resident in Corney, and no single manor appears to have ever covered the whole of Corney township. For those parts of Corney that belonged to a manor, affairs were controlled by the lords through their stewards and the manor courts. Though aimed principally at maintaining the order of things in the interest of the lords of the manors, the courts also provided the benefit to the community of maintaining the peace. From the 16th century onwards, the growth of the yeoman class, enhanced by enfranchisements in the 18th and 19th centuries, saw a weakening of the lords' influence and power. As the lords' position waned, the leadership of the church rector in his role as chairman of the vestry committee, and of families of the yeomanry (see below) who provided officers for public roles such as churchwardens, constable, overseers, and highway surveyors became increasingly important.

### *Social Geography and Socio-economic Groups*

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<sup>220</sup> 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).

There is no surviving evidence of early freeholders in Corney, but from the 16th century there was a growing class of yeomanry which peaked in the late 19th century. The earliest known reference to a yeomen was in 1553 when John Singleton of Corney, yeoman, was involved in a bargain and sale of property in Bootle.<sup>221</sup> The title was still in use in 1933 when William Pennington of Corney was so described in his will.<sup>222</sup> In the intervening years, members of the following families have counted yeomen amongst their number: Bateman, Benn, Benson, Borrowdale, Brockbank, Caddy, Dickinson, Frears, Jackson, Lace, Parker, Pennington, Pritt, Southward and Whinnerah.

The earliest reference to a gentleman was in 1759, when Clement Ponsonby of Corney was so described when he mortgaged Cragg House in Irton for £260.<sup>223</sup>

Richard Jackson of St Bees, was one of a number of gentlemen<sup>224</sup> who came to live in Corney. He married Agnes Jackson and came to live with her family at Charlesground. Subsequently he moved to Normoss with his wife and family before moving on to Gilfoot sometime between 1861 and 1871<sup>225</sup> William Pritt of Shoemyre Cottage in Corney<sup>226</sup> came originally from Dunnerdale and farmed at Row in Waberthwaite until he retired to Shoemyre Cottage in Corney sometime between 1851 and 1861.<sup>227</sup> Richard Grice of Middleton Place was from Old

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<sup>221</sup> CAS (W), YDX 403/1/7.

<sup>222</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1933/W132.

<sup>223</sup> CAS (W), YDGO/BROCKLEBANK/BOX 2/C25-26.

<sup>224</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1888/A41.

<sup>225</sup> Censuses 1861 – 1891.

<sup>226</sup> CAS (B), BDTB/Wills Box 1/77.

<sup>227</sup> Census 1881.

Hyton Farm in Bootle where he lived with his parents and brother who farmed there.<sup>228</sup> His father died in 1869<sup>229</sup> and his mother died sometime between 1891 and 1901.<sup>230</sup> By 1901 Richard was living on his own means, having apparently become a gentleman<sup>231</sup> as the result of an inheritance after his mother's death. He moved to Middleton Place in Corney sometime between 1911 and 1924.

By the 19th century the farms were run as family farms with family members working as servants and labourers.<sup>232</sup> An exception was Corney Hall, a large farm of about 280 a., which in the mid 19th century was run by a bailiff.<sup>233</sup> In other large farms the families were sometimes supported by live-in servants and employed labourers.<sup>234</sup>

The pattern of farms varying in size from 20 a. to over 200 a. persisted into the early 20th century. In the mid 20th century, individuals started to buy land to add to the acreages they were already farming, which resulted in fewer, but larger, holdings. The farm houses detached from their farmland by this process became available as second homes, or homes for personnel and their families moving into the newly established nuclear industry 15 miles away. This resulted in a scattering of non-agricultural middle-income earners in the social mix, so that

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<sup>228</sup> Censuses 1871 and 1881.

<sup>229</sup> Censuses 1861 and 1871; Death registration: Bootle (Cumberland) Q1 1869, vol. 10B, p.420.

<sup>230</sup> Censuses 1891 and 1901.

<sup>231</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1924/W886(b).

<sup>232</sup> Censuses 1851 – 1871.

<sup>233</sup> Census 1851.

<sup>234</sup> Censuses 1851 – 1891.

Corney became a more heterogeneous community while retaining elements of traditional rural community life.

### **Communal Life**

There are no records of communal activities in Corney until the mid 19th century when an annual sports and rabbit coursing event was held there. The event became popular throughout West Cumberland and attracted 400 people in 1853.<sup>235</sup> In 1861 an annual stock fair, in which cattle, horses and sheep were shown and prizes given, was inaugurated. It was held at the Brown Cow Inn and usually ended with sports in the afternoon.<sup>236</sup> It continued into the 1930s as the annual field day and dance.<sup>237</sup> In 1992 outdoor events were revived in the form of annual plough days which were held until 2004.<sup>238</sup>

### **Friendly Societies**

Corney had a thriving and prosperous lodge of the Independent United Order of Mechanics with over 100 members.<sup>239</sup> Founded in 1844,<sup>240</sup> it held its meetings in the school room at Waberthwaite and its anniversaries at the Brown Cow Inn.<sup>241</sup> Membership of the lodge was

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<sup>235</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 11 Jan. 1853, p.2.

<sup>236</sup> *West Cumberland Times*, 14 Sep. 1904, p.1.

<sup>237</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 1 Sep. 1917, p.3; *Ibid*, 13 Sept 1918, p.3. 7 Aug. 1931, p.4. *Ibid*, 10 June 1932, p.2. *Ibid*, 13 Jun. 1930, p.2; *Ibid*, 3 Jun. 1932, p.3.

<sup>238</sup> CAS (W), YDSO 134/1/3.

<sup>239</sup> Bulmer, *Dir. West Cumb.* (1883), 436.

<sup>240</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 1 Jun. 1858, p. 5; *Ibid*, 5 Jun. 1855, p. 5.

<sup>241</sup> *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 20 Jun. 1889, p.8; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 24 May 1853, p.3.

also open to residents of Waberthwaite. The order was wound up when its usefulness became supplanted by the National Health Service.<sup>242</sup>

### **Parish Hall**

In 1924 Corney lodged plans for its own parish hall with Bootle Rural District Council. It was built by 1928, though additions to the plans made in 1929.<sup>243</sup> The hall has been in regular use for community social activities<sup>244</sup> and educational activities such as a dressmaking class.<sup>245</sup>

### **Inns and Alehouses**

An inn was established in Corney in 1829 (see ECONOMIC HISTORY, Services, *Inns and Public Houses*). It became a communal asset as a venue for meetings, community events and sporting events.

### **Amateur Sport**

Hound trailing was a popular spectator sport in Corney. Events were held regularly and were often followed by a ball in the evening.<sup>246</sup> Owners of trail hounds in Corney often travelled significant distances to compete in hound trails held elsewhere.

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<sup>242</sup> Bulmer, *Dir. West Cumb.* (1883), 436; *Millom Gazette*, 20 Jan. 1895, p.5; CAS (K) WDB 125/4.

<sup>243</sup> CAS (W) SRDMA/3/4/276, 355.

<sup>244</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 20 April 1928, p.3; *Ibid*, 15 Mar. 1929, p.3.; *Ibid*, 14 Mar. 1930, p.2; *Ibid*, 10 Oct. 1930, p.2; *Ibid*, 3 Oct. 1930 p.2.; *Ibid*, 16 Oct 1931, p.2; *Ibid*, 30 Oct 1932, p.2.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Mar. 1929, p.3.

<sup>246</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 19 Sep. 1930, p.3; *ibid*, 3 Nov. 1922, p.3; *ibid.*, 24 Nov. 1922, p.3 .



Cumberland wrestling has been popular since the 19th century,<sup>247</sup> and possibly earlier than that. Its popularity has continued into the 21st century. Members of the wrestling academy established in Waberthwaite in the early 20th Century (see WABERTHWAITE) included residents of Corney.

## **Education**

No school was ever built at Corney, but, as a result of a number of endowments (see below Social Welfare: Charities) children from Middleton Place, Whitestones and Low Kinmont in Corney were able to attend the school at Hycemoor in Bootle (see BOOTLE) *gratis*. The endowments contributed to the salary of the school master who, in exchange, taught the qualifying children for free while making his own terms of payment with pupils not covered by the endowments. The Hycemoor school closed in 1991 (see BOOTLE), but by that time the preferred school for Corney was at Waberthwaite.

In 1830 Captain Shaw founded a second school in Bootle.<sup>248</sup> It was intended for children from Corney as well as Bootle, and in 1850 the Corney vestry meeting appointed Corney's rector, Revd. Christopher Abbot, and John Southward, a yeoman of Moorside, Corney, as trustees for the governance of the school "at the desire and bequest of Captain Shaw".<sup>249</sup> The school took both boys and girls. Children from Bootle, Corney and Whitbeck were given preferential rates for school fees (see BOOTLE). In 2021 Captain Shaw's school was still functioning as a primary school, but since 1870 when the Elementary Education Act joined Waberthwaite and

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<sup>247</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 22 Aug. 1930, p.4; *ibid*, 28Aug. 1896, p.4; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 8 Aug. 1895, p.7.

<sup>248</sup> CAS (B), BDTB/54/11; Date plaque on north wall of school.

<sup>249</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1 vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

Corney together for educational purposes<sup>250</sup> Waberthwaite has become the preferred school for children from Corney. The history of Waberthwaite school after 1870 is discussed in WABERTHWAITE.

## **Social Welfare**

### *Charities*

There was an ancient poor stock of £5 dating from before 1714 and a further £5 given by the “minister”. Both were put in the care of the church jury who distributed the interest to the poor annually.<sup>251</sup> An additional £3 was given by Revd. Crompton, rector from 1666 -77.<sup>252</sup> In 1713 Henry Singleton, who held land in Bootle, Middleton Place in Corney and Annaside gave £200 to trustees with which they were to generate interest to be used for contributing to the salary of a school master at Hycemoor school in exchange for teaching the children living in his landownings for free. Anne Hodgson, in her will of 9 May 1779, left £50 to the rector and churchwardens of Bootle to provide interest for paying the school master of Hycemoor school and directed that attendance at the school by pupils from Whitestones and Low Kinmont in Corney should be free by virtue of her legacy.<sup>253</sup> In the 19th century, interest from a sum of £30 was distributed annually on Christmas day to the poor of the parish who did not receive poor relief.<sup>254</sup> By the 21st century all these charities had been extinguished.

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<sup>250</sup> *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser*, 16 Jan. 1873 p.7.

<sup>251</sup> *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), 59.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>253</sup> Whellan, *History and Topography*, 486 at

<https://archive.org/details/historytopogra00whel/page/486?q=w+whellan> accessed 20 Oct. 2021.

<sup>254</sup> Parson and White, *Dir. C&W.* (1829), 199; Bulmer, *Dir. West Cumb.* (1883), 436.

### *Poor Relief*

Between 1724 and 1793, five paupers were buried at Corney.<sup>255</sup> Beyond that there is no evidence in the burial records of other people dying in poverty between 1607 and 1829. Nevertheless, accounts of overseers of the poor show that there were people needing support: in 1779, the overseers made four disbursements totalling £1 10s. 9d. to the poor, and in 1780 they distributed £6 13s. 11d.<sup>256</sup> By 1800 the amount had more than doubled to £13 13s. 2.5d<sup>257</sup> In 1828 the parish expended £64 10s. 5.5d. in supporting its poor.<sup>258</sup>

The presence of people born in Corney in Bootle workhouse in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was rare. Only three people, two brothers of 10 and 12 years old and a 70 year-old cordwainer, were present in the period 1851 to 1901.<sup>259</sup> There were no alms houses in the parish.

### **Medical**

There is no surviving evidence of any medical services based in Corney. When the fever epidemic broke out in Corney towards the end of the 18th century (see LANDSCAPE SETTLEMENT AND BUILDINGS: Population, above) it was dealt with by Dr. Joshua Dixon from Whitehaven.<sup>260</sup> There were surgeons and physicians at Ravenglass and Bootle in the 19th

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<sup>255</sup> CAS (W), YDX 51.

<sup>256</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1, vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>258</sup> Parson and White, *Dir. C&W* (1829), 199.

<sup>259</sup> *Censuses* 1851 - 1901.

<sup>260</sup> Hutchinson, Vol. 1, Houseman's notes, 563.

century,<sup>261</sup> and it is likely that Corney residents requiring medical help would have attended medical services at nearby Bootle. Sometime after its formation in 1837, Bootle Poor Law Union, of which Corney was a part, started to employ a medical officer,<sup>262</sup> and the new workhouse built in 1856 had a small infirmary (see BOOTLE).

Corney residents who worked at Waberthwaite quarry in the late 19th century had the possibility of joining the medical welfare club formed by the quarry workers to provide medical welfare for themselves and their families (See WABERTHWAITE). In 2021 the township was served by the Seascale Health Centre with surgeries at Bootle and Seascale.

## **RELIGIOUS HISTORY.**

Corney is an ancient ecclesiastical parish. Its parish church, the only place of worship in the parish, is one of the few ancient churches in Cumbria where the name of the founder is known (see *Origins of Parochial Organisation* below). Of medieval origin, the church has undergone a number of major refurbishments and modifications, one of which revealed two doorways of pre-Reformation design. A rectory since the Middle Ages, the church was appropriated to St Bees Priory in the 12th century, with the abbey of St Mary at York holding the advowson. After the Dissolution it came to Sir Hugh Askew, before passing to the Penningtons of Seaton, then the Penningtons of Muncaster who sold it to the earl of Lonsdale in 1803.

The appointment of graduates to the position of rector in Corney was not common, there being only four graduates appointed from the 17th to the 19th century. The longest serving rector,

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<sup>261</sup> Census 1841 – 1911.

<sup>262</sup> CAS (B), BDB 21/6/7/10; CAS (B) BDKF/134/1, 3 – 7.

William Benson, served for 69 years from 1677 to 1738.<sup>263</sup> Surviving parish registers date from 1797 and bishops' transcripts date from 1670. In 2017 Corney, now part of the ecclesiastical parish of Black Combe Churches,<sup>264</sup> became part of the newly formed Benefice of Western Lake District Churches.<sup>265</sup>

Dame Bridget Askew, lady of the manor of Seton, who held lands in Corney, retained her catholic faith after the Reformation; there is no other evidence of any non-conformity within the parish at any point.

### **Origins of Parochial Organisation**

Founded by Copsi, lord of Corney,<sup>266</sup> Corney parish church of St John the Baptist stands on a prominence in the centre of the parish at an elevation of 110 m. where it faces the Irish Sea and is open to the full force of the prevailing south westerly winds. The dedication to John the Baptist reportedly dates from after the Reformation.<sup>267</sup> Copsi gave the church to St Bees Priory during the archbishopric of Henry Murdac (1147 -1153),<sup>268</sup> and it is among the churches and chapels of Copeland confirmed to St Bees Priory by Murdac's successor, Archbishop Roger of

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<sup>263</sup> Nightingale, *Ejected of 1662*, 856.

<sup>264</sup> Crockford's Clerical Directory at: <https://www.crockford.org.uk/people/13585/the-revd-ian-forbes-black>

<sup>265</sup> [http://www.blackcombechurches.co.uk/Benefice\\_Links.php](http://www.blackcombechurches.co.uk/Benefice_Links.php), accessed 24 Oct. 2021.

<sup>266</sup> *Reg. St Bees*, charter 82.

<sup>267</sup> T. H. B. Graham and W.G Collingwood, 'Patron Saints of the Diocese of Carlisle', *CW2*, 25 (1925), 5.

<sup>268</sup> *Reg. St Bees*, Introduction, xxii; *Ibid*, notes to charter 82 (page 111); *ibid*, charters 86 and 87.

Pont l'Evêque (1154 to 1181).<sup>269</sup> Copsi's son, Roger, later confirmed the gift,<sup>270</sup> as did two inquisitions in 1185.<sup>271</sup> Benedict de Pennington, Roger's son, Orm, Roger's sister, Christine de Coupland, and her husband, Waldeve, quitclaimed any interest in the church or its associated land.<sup>272</sup> With no surviving deed of endowment, Roger of Pont l'Evêque's confirmation is the earliest mention of the church. It is mentioned again in 1291, when it is recorded as having been appropriated between 1154 and 1181.<sup>273</sup> This is consistent with Roger of Pont l'Evêque's confirmation.

The first surviving reference to the living being a rectory occurs in 1391 when John de Kent 'rector of Cornay' was party to a feoffment of land in Hale.<sup>274</sup> John de Kent is also the earliest recorded incumbent.

In the 18th century, the ecclesiastical parish was described as being approximately two miles long east to west by four miles long north to south,<sup>275</sup> making it 5,120 a. in area (assuming the distances are in statute miles) compared with 4,440 a. for the civil parish in 1860. The discrepancy probably arises from the approximations inherent in the east-west and north-south dimensions.

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<sup>269</sup> '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* at: <http://www.britishhistory.ac.uk/vch/cumb/vol2/pp178-183> (accessed 7 Jun. 2019).

<sup>270</sup> *Reg. St Bees*, charter 82.

<sup>271</sup> *Reg. St Bees*, Introduction, xxxi, and charters 86 and 87,

<sup>272</sup> *Reg. St Bees*, charters 83-85.

<sup>273</sup> *Taxatio Angliae et Walliae* at: <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/taxatio/benkey?benkey=YK.RC.CP.04>.

<sup>274</sup> CAS (K), WDRY/1/3/8/2.

<sup>275</sup> *The Cumbria Parishes*, 162.

There were two detached parts of Corney parish in Waberthwaite (see WABERTHWAITE). One was an area of 62 a. in Waberthwaite Wood, ‘commonly called and known by the name of Whitrow’, for which the rector and ecclesiastical parish of Waberthwaite paid 2s. p.a. to the rector of Corney parish for ‘great and small tithes.’<sup>276</sup> The payment ceased in the 19th century. The second was the farmstead of Grange and its 80 a. of land. Grange became part of the civil parish of Waberthwaite sometime between 1860 and 1897,<sup>277</sup> but remained part of the ecclesiastical parish of Corney till an order in council took it into Waberthwaite ecclesiastical parish in 1956.<sup>278</sup>

In 1975, Corney parish combined with the parishes of Bootle, Whicham and Whitbeck to form the parish of Black Combe Churches.<sup>279</sup> In 2017, the new parish was combined with the Eskdale benefice (the parishes of Muncaster, Waberthwaite Eskdale, Drigg, and Irton) to form the Benefice of the Western Lake District Churches.<sup>280</sup>

### **Advowson**

The transfer of Copsi’s church to St Bees put the advowson in the hands of St Mary’s abbey, York,<sup>281</sup> the motherhouse of St Bees. When Sir Hugh Askew bought the nunnery of Seton, he also acquired the advowson of Corney (and those of Whicham and Bootle). On his death in

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<sup>276</sup> Waberthwaite Vestry meeting minutes, May 1817-18.

<sup>277</sup> OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb., Sheet LXXXII (1867); OS 1:10,560 map, Cumb., Sheet LXXXII (1900).

<sup>278</sup> *London Gazette*, 7 Dec. 1956, p.6933

<sup>279</sup> Local inf.

<sup>280</sup> [http://www.blackcombechurches.co.uk/Benefice\\_Links.php](http://www.blackcombechurches.co.uk/Benefice_Links.php) , accessed 8 Nov. 2021

<sup>281</sup> W. N. Thompson, South and South-West Cumberland in the Chartulary of St. Bees, *CW2 iii (1903)*, 79.

1562 it passed to his wife, Bridget,<sup>282</sup> (b. c.1532)<sup>283</sup>who subsequently married William Pennington of Muncaster. As she clung to the catholic religion she was unable to make a presentation.<sup>284</sup> The advowson stayed with the Penningtons of Seaton until the manor was sold to Lord Muncaster in 1779.<sup>285</sup> After selling the manor to William Wakefield in 1802, Lord Muncaster sold the advowson of Corney to the earl of Lonsdale in 1803.<sup>286</sup> The Lonsdales still held the advowson in 1914.<sup>287</sup>

### **Endowment**

In 1291 the living was valued at £8.<sup>288</sup> In 1535 the glebe and associated house were valued at 10s. No mill is shown in the valuation. Tithes of grain and sheep totalled £6 16s. 8d. and small tithes were £2 13s. 4d. After deductions for synodals and procusations the net value was £9 17s. 1d.<sup>289</sup> in 1558 it was twice that.<sup>290</sup> In 1704 the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty valued the living at £22 11s. 10d.<sup>291</sup> It had risen to £175 by 1860, but by 1883 it had fallen to £170,<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Revd. C. Moor, 'The Askews of Pennington and Seaton', CW2' xi (1911), 172.

<sup>283</sup> C. R. Huddleston, 'Millom Families Part II', CW2' xciii (1993), 91.

<sup>284</sup> Moor, 'The Askews', 169, 174.

<sup>285</sup> CAS (W), WDW/1/2/2/1/16-17, conveyances.

<sup>286</sup> Lysons and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia: a concise topographical account of the several counties of Great Britain*, London (1816), Vol. 4, 82.

<sup>287</sup> Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.* (1914), 137.

<sup>288</sup> Bouch, *Prelates and People*, 473.

<sup>289</sup> *Valor Ecclesiastes* of Henry VIII quoted in S. Jefferson, *The Histories and Antiquities of Allerdale Ward above Derwent*, Carlisle, 1842, 96.

<sup>290</sup> *The Cumbria Parishes*, Introduction, Appendix B, 33.

<sup>291</sup> N&B, II, 18.

<sup>292</sup> Bulmer, *Dir. West Cumb.* (1883), 435.



and was £130 in 1910.<sup>293</sup> In 1842/3 the tithes were commuted for a rent of £147 1s. 4d., (this included £2 9s. rent for the Glebe land) of which £147 was payable to the rector and 1s. 4d was payable to the Earl of Lonsdale as impropiator of the tithes for 17 a. of land called “Pinning” at High Corney owned by William Jackson.<sup>294</sup>

### **Clergy House and Living**

In an attestation of 1698, the rector William Benson described the rectory house as a “fine house consisting of one bay of buildings [with] one buttery thereto adjoining”. There was also one barn with four bays, a stable with five bays and a room attached, and one byer. The glebe land consisted of 14 a. of arable land and pasture.<sup>295</sup> In 1779, it was reported that the parsonage house was in good repair and that the outbuildings had been repaired by the rector, John Fisher.<sup>296</sup> In 1806, Allison Steble, who was the rector from 1797 to 1814 and the last known rector to live in the parsonage, petitioned the diocese to allow him to live in Bootle parish because the parsonage at Corney was too small.<sup>297</sup> The appeal seems to have failed, because in another petition Allison asks to be allowed to lodge with a family in the parish, again complaining that the parsonage was too small, and adding that part of it had been derelict since 1788 when the previous incumbent had died insolvent.<sup>298</sup> The state of dereliction in 1788 may have been exaggerated, because in 1789 the house and glebe were occupied (by a farmer, Job

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<sup>293</sup> Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.* (1910), 130.

<sup>294</sup> CAS (C), DRC/8/50(b), Corney Tithe Apportionment.

<sup>295</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/209/34.

<sup>296</sup> *Cumbria Parishes*, 162.

<sup>297</sup> CAS (W), YDRC/10/11/8.

<sup>298</sup> CAS (W), YDRC/10/11/9.

Borrowdale), and in Dec. that year, the new rector, Peter How, leased them to John Whinnerah for two years at a rent of £60 p.a.<sup>299</sup> – an unlikely amount for a property with a derelict house.

In the 1840s and the parsonage and glebe land, now amounting to 34 a.,<sup>300</sup> was occupied by a farmer, Moses Tyson.<sup>301</sup> In 1847 they were advertised for letting by the rector, Revd Clement Fox,<sup>302</sup> and in 1851 the house was occupied by an agricultural labourer, William Satterthwaite.<sup>303</sup> By 1860 it had become uninhabitable<sup>304</sup> and by 1889 was a ruin.<sup>305</sup> Some rough work of the 15th and 16th centuries was still visible on the ruins.<sup>306</sup> The barn at the parsonage was subsequently converted to a house and called Glebe House.

## **Religious Life**

### ***Medieval Period.***

In West Cumberland the century between 1215 and 1315 was characterised by planned archiepiscopal visitations to the remote deanery of Copeland that never materialised.<sup>307</sup> Though one of the plans mentioned Waberthwaite and Muncaster,<sup>308</sup> Corney was not mentioned in any.

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<sup>299</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/91/5.

<sup>300</sup> CAS (C), DRC/8/50(b), Corney Tithe Apportionment.

<sup>301</sup> *Census* 1841.

<sup>302</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 21 Dec. 1847, p.2.

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>304</sup> Whellan, *History and Topography*, 488.

<sup>305</sup> A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 111.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, 140-2.

<sup>308</sup> *Register of William Wickane Lord Archbishop of York*, Surtees Soc., Vol cxiv, Andrews & Co., Durham at:

<https://archive.org/details/registerofwillia00surtuoft/page/118/mode/2up?q=wasberthwaite> accessed 6 Dec 2021

One event of significance to the Church took place in Corney during this period when Richard, Bishop of Sodor and Man, died at Langley Park while on his way home to his see in the Isle of Man after attending the Second Council of Lyons in 1274.<sup>309</sup>

It was 1428 before a proposed visitation included Corney, but that plan of Archbishop Kemp's was abandoned on account of bad weather and a poor harvest which restricted the travelling of clergy.<sup>310</sup>

The earliest surviving record of a named incumbent of the church occurs in 1391 when John de Kent, 'rector of Cornay', and others were party to a feoffment.<sup>311</sup> He occurs again in a charter of 1399.<sup>312</sup> In 1524/25 Corney had a rector and a chaplain.<sup>313</sup>

### ***Reformation (1529 - 1538) and interregnum (1649-1660).***

The rector of Corney in 1535, Robert Hutton,<sup>314</sup> was replaced by John Mannyng who died in office on 5 Nov. 1541.<sup>315</sup> There is no evidence as to whether Hutton's replacement was a consequence of the Reformation or not.

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<sup>309</sup> Harrison, *An Account of the Diocese of Sodor and Man*, Douglas (1879) at: <http://isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/manxsoc/msvol29/p053.htm> accessed 26 Oct 2021.

<sup>310</sup> Bouch, *Prelates and People*, 151.

<sup>311</sup> CAS (K), WDRY/1/3/8/2.

<sup>312</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/20/14.

<sup>313</sup> Bouch, *Prelates and People*, 155.

<sup>314</sup> S. Jefferson, *The Histories and Antiquities of Allerdale Ward above Derwent* (Carlisle, 1842), 96.

<sup>315</sup> CCEd at: <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp>.

There is no evidence of recusancy within the population at large. The report on a visitation of the diocese of Chester to the deanery of Copeland in 1578 made no mention of any ‘relics of popery’ at Corney, though it did remark that “the Bible was not of the largest volume”.<sup>316</sup>

There were still two clergy, a rector and a curate, serving the parish in 1548.<sup>317</sup> The rector was Henry Maliverey who succeeded John Mannyng and served as rector from 1541 until his resignation in 1572.<sup>318</sup> Henry Maliverey was presented by Willimus Maleverey, Willimus Myddylton and three other people who were patrons “for only one occasion” having been temporarily granted the advowson by the abbot of St Mary’s York,<sup>319</sup> presumably because Dame Bridget Pennington, being a catholic, could not exercise her right to it. Henry’s curate in 1548 may have been Thomas Singleton who was in place in 1554.<sup>320</sup> Records of Corney curates are rare; only six, all named, have been found in the 270 years between 1548 -1818. All had stipends. The 16th century the stipend was £30, in the nineteenth century it was £80.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> Bouch, *Prelates and People*, 211.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid*, 220.

<sup>318</sup> CCEd <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp>.

<sup>319</sup> CCEd record ID 193388 retrieved 6 Dec 2021

<sup>320</sup> CCEd at: <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/locations/index.jsp?locKey=539> .

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid* at: <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayLibCiDetail.jsp?CDBLibCiDeID=56454>, and <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayAppointment.jsp?CDBAppRedID=59850> and <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayAppointment.jsp?CDBAppRedID=71103> and <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayAppointment.jsp?CDBAppRedID=271020> and <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayAppointment.jsp?CDBAppRedID=70236> and <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayAppointment.jsp?CDBAppRedID=206802>

Between 1572 and 1630 the rectorship passed through three people to Thomas Antrobus who was instituted on 1 Aug. 1630.<sup>322</sup> Thirty years earlier, at the age of 16, Thomas had joined Queens College Oxford as a student, but did not obtain a degree.<sup>323</sup> During his incumbency, in 1633, a commissioners' report on their visit to Corney noted that the church "is not beautified with sentences of scripture."<sup>324</sup>

James Thompson succeeded Thomas Antrobus as rector.<sup>325</sup> In 1658 a *mittimus* was issued against Richard Robinson of Bootle for the "disturbing of Mr James Thompson in his parish church of Corney." The nature of the disturbance is not recorded, but Robinson appears to have been a serial offender, since the *mittimus* also refers to his causing disturbances at Drigg church and Muncaster church.<sup>326</sup> No reason for James Thompson's departure in or before 1661 has been found, but his successor was appointed "*per mortem* Thomas Antrobus",<sup>327</sup> effectively removing James Thompson's incumbency from the record.

### **1660 -1840.**

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<sup>322</sup> CCEd at <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayAppointment.jsp?CDBAppRedID=74575>.

<sup>323</sup> Nightingale, *Ejected of 1662*, 854; Oxford University Alumni at: *Alumni Oxonienses 1500-1714*, ed. Joseph Foster (Oxford, 1891), pp. 1-28. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp1-28> (accessed 25 October 2021).

<sup>324</sup> Bouch, *Prelates and People*, 328.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid*, 854; Oxford University Alumni at: *Alumni Oxonienses 1500-1714*, ed. Joseph Foster (Oxford, 1891), 854.

<sup>326</sup> P.H. Fox, *CW2*, The Notebook of William Thompson of Thornflatt, Justice of the Peace for Cumberland during the Commonwealth<sup>14</sup> (1914), 160.

<sup>327</sup> Nightingale, *Ejected of 1662*, II, 855.

Francis Berkeley (aka Barclay) succeeded James Thompson. He was instituted on 28 Aug. 1661, subscribed to the Act of Uniformity on 14 Aug. 1662, and was licenced as a preacher on 16 Oct. 1662.<sup>328</sup>

In 1666, Robert Crompton BA became the first rector to hold a degree. He was accepted by the Archbishop of York and ordained as a deacon and a priest on the same day, 20 Sep. 1663. He was instituted in Corney in 1666. He moved from Corney and was succeeded by Christopher Stockbridge (see WABERTHWAITE) in 1677,<sup>329</sup> who died in the same year.

William Benson succeeded Christopher Stockbridge. In 1688, a parishioner, Thomas Tyson, petitioned the quarter sessions to have William Benson restrained, claiming that he had quarrelled with Thomas's wife's son, John Pert, and gone to John's mother and threatened to hang him or her, and then had them summoned to the sessions, which they would have difficulty attending as they were too poor to readily travel the 40 miles round trip to answer the case. They petitioned that the Bench have them released from this duty and have William Benson restrained.<sup>330</sup> The Bench's ruling has not survived, but it apparently had little effect on William Benson's position as he remained rector of Corney until his death in 1738.<sup>331</sup> He was Corney's longest serving rector having held the post for 61 years. His successor, John Fisher was instituted on Christmas Day 1738.<sup>332</sup> He died insolvent at the age of 84 having served as

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<sup>328</sup> Crockford's at: <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayLibCIdDetail.jsp?CDBLibCIdID=176674>.

<sup>329</sup> Nightingale, *Ejected of 1662*, II, 856, 871.

<sup>330</sup> CAS (C), Q/11/1/8/15.

<sup>331</sup> Nightingale, *Ejected of 1662*, 857.

<sup>332</sup> Nightingale, *Ejected of 1662*, 857. Hutchinson, Vol. I 562.

Corney's rector for 50 years.<sup>333</sup> During his incumbency, church attendance appears to have been good. In 1779 forty communicants attended the church, this rose to sixty at Easter. Divine Service and a sermon were delivered every Sunday and on Christmas Day. Holy Sacraments were given three times a year.<sup>334</sup>

Allison Steble, appointed in 1797,<sup>335</sup> had his post terminated in 1814, it being deemed void by cession,<sup>336</sup> presumably because of holding Corney as living in plurality with another living (the usual reason for cession). He was replaced by Thomas Harrison BA MA.<sup>337</sup>

### **1840s – 2021.**

Thomas Harrison, remained incumbent at Corney until his death in 1840 when he was replaced by William Benn,<sup>338</sup> previously rector of Bolton.<sup>339</sup> William Benn obtained a BA at Queen's College, Oxford prior to being ordained as a dean in 1838<sup>340</sup> and ordained as a priest on 22 Sep. 1839 in Carlisle cathedral.<sup>341</sup> He was presented as rector of Corney by the Earl of Lonsdale

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<sup>333</sup> CAS (W) YDRC/10/11/9; *The Cumbria Parishes*, 162.

<sup>334</sup> *The Cumbria Parishes*, 162.

<sup>335</sup> CCEd at: <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/persons/CreatePersonFrames.jsp?PersonID=136708>.

<sup>336</sup> CCEd at <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayVacancy.jsp?CDBAppRedID=270989>

<sup>337</sup> CCEd, <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/persons/CreatePersonFrames.jsp?PersonID=92804>

<sup>338</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 14 Nov. 1840, p.2.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid*, 8 Jun 1839, p.3.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid*, 7 Apr. 1838, p.2.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid*, 28 Dec. 1839, p.2.

in Nov. 1840,<sup>342</sup> and instituted on 10 Dec. 1840.<sup>343</sup> In 1841, he took the oath of allegiance and abjuration before the High Sheriff of Cumberland and the Under Sheriff.<sup>344</sup> In the same year he married Maria Lawton, daughter of the rector of Lawton in Cheshire.<sup>345</sup>

Clement Fox served as rector for Corney from 5 Jan. 1847 to his death in 1848.<sup>346</sup> He obtained a BA from Queen's College, Oxford in 1837<sup>347</sup> and subsequently obtained an MA. He was admitted to holy orders as a dean in 1838<sup>348</sup> and served as curate at St Bridget's in St. Bees<sup>349</sup>, and in Ponsonby<sup>350</sup> and Thwaites parishes<sup>351</sup> before becoming rector at Corney. He lived at Middleton Place during his rectorship, preferring to let the parsonage and glebe.<sup>352</sup> He died at St Bees Abbey on 18 Apr. 1848 aged 38.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> *Ibid*, 14 Nov. 1849, p.2.

<sup>343</sup> Cumbria County History Trust

at:<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/sites/default/files/CORNEY%20Incumbents.pdf>.

<sup>344</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 10 Apr 1841, p.3.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid*, 13 Mar 1842, p.3.

<sup>346</sup> Cumbria County History Trust at:

<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/sites/default/files/CORNEY%20Incumbents.pdf>

<sup>347</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet* 21 Nov. 1837 p. 2.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid*, 25 Dec. 1838, p.3.

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid*, 28 Jan. 1830, p.3.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid*, 17 Jun. 1845, p.3

<sup>351</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 15 Aug 1846, p.3.

<sup>352</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 14 Sep. 1847, p.1.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid*, 25 Apr 1848, p.3.; *Carlisle Journal*, 28 Apr 1848, p.3.



Clement Fox was succeeded by Christopher Abbott MA. In 1849 he took the 'customary oaths'<sup>354</sup> and died in 1880.<sup>355</sup> Beyond that no records of his 31-year incumbency have survived other than the fact that the average congregation in 1851 was 40 at the morning service and 50 at the evening service, and there was no Sunday school.<sup>356</sup>

Abbott was succeeded by Thomas Bishop Cawley Wren in 1880,<sup>357</sup> who was rector at Corney during the Bishop of Carlisle's triennial visitation in 1884.<sup>358</sup> He was still in post when he attended the Bishop's visitation to St George's church, Millom in 1907.<sup>359</sup> He died in 1915 aged 71.<sup>360</sup>

An annual flower service was held at Corney during Revd. Wren's rectorship in the early years of the 20th century. After each service the flowers were donated to Whitehaven and West Cumberland Infirmary.<sup>361</sup> The church maintained an active choir during this period. After 1904 the choir was accompanied by a new harmonium purchased that year.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 9 Jan 1949, p.4.

<sup>355</sup> *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald*, 26 Feb. 1881, p.5; A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 112.

<sup>356</sup> TNA, HO 129/572 (religious census 1851) at: <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C1360032>, accessed 29 Oct. 2021.

<sup>357</sup> A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 112. *Eddowe's Journal*, 29 Sep. 1880, p. 5.

<sup>358</sup> *Maryport Advertiser* 6 May 1884, p.3.

<sup>359</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 7 Jul. 1907, p.6.

<sup>360</sup> Death certificate, Bootle, Cumberland, quarter 1 1915, vol 10B, page 1144.

<sup>361</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 5 Aug. 1904; *Maryport Advertiser*, 11 Oct. 1902, p.5.

<sup>362</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 5 Aug. 1904; *Ibid* 12 Jun. 1912, p1; *Millom Gazette*, 9 Jan. 1914, p.1.

From 1915 to 1955, Corney and Waberthwaite, though not formally combined, shared a rector, the Revd Percy Parminter, and services were alternated between the parishes (see Waberthwaite). In 1916, Revd Parminter set up 'St Luke's mission church' at Lane End in Waberthwaite so that evening services for a combined congregation of Waberthwaite and Corney parishioners could be held there. The services, led by the rector, continued until the church was closed in 1966 (see WABERTHWAITE). After the church was closed the altar cross and vases were donated to Corney church.

After Revd Parminter retired, he was succeeded by James Squires,<sup>363</sup> and Waberthwaite reverted to having its own rector. In 1973, Corney again shared a rector when Revd Ian Forbes Black became rector of a new parochial entity, Bootle with Corney.<sup>364</sup> Two years later, Corney, Bootle, Whitbeck and Whicham were united as Black Combe parish under his rectorship.<sup>365</sup> In 2017 Black Combe parish became part of the newly formed benefice of the Lake District Churches.

### **Church Architecture**

The church consists of a single cell (there is no transept) divided into a nave and chancel by an arch and a change in floor level (there is a step down into the chancel). It has a slate roof and its walls are built of uncoursed stone (granite and sandstone) and are roughcast in parts. A bellcote on the west end of the building carries two bronze bells. On the west wall a porch protects the entrance to the church. A vestry has been built onto the east end of the north wall.

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<sup>363</sup> *Corney Incumbents* at:

<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/sites/default/files/CORNEY%20Incumbents.pdf> .

<sup>364</sup> Crockford's at: <https://www.crockford.org.uk/people/13585/the-revd-ian-forbes-black>

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*

The form of Corney church as it stands today (2021) is due to major modifications carried out in 1789, 1790, 1847 and 1882.

In 1789, four new windows were put in the church, two in the south wall and two in the north wall, all with dimensions of 5 ft. by 4 ft. The porch was moved to a new position to cover a “great door” that was broken into the west end. The side walls (presumably the east and west walls) were raised to give the roof a pitch of 1 in 3, and a ceiling beam, joists and a new ceiling were put in. That same year it was agreed that church be “Sealed [ceiled?] anew”, the aisle be flagged, a new pulpit and reading desk be installed and the existing one be repaired. In 1790 Job Borrowdale and William Pritt were given the work to renew the pews as double pews (i.e. box pews). Each parishioner was to pay for their own pew, but the money for the rest of the work was to be funded by raising a purvey.

In 1847 the church was described as ‘a plain edifice with a belfry carrying two bells.’<sup>366</sup> Later in the same year the current vestry was built.<sup>367</sup>

In 1882, £511 17s. 8d. was raised by subscription and a £50 grant from the Diocesan Society for another refurbishment of the church.<sup>368</sup> The plans for the refurbishment were drawn up by Paley and Austin who had considerable experience as architects for church buildings. The work was considerable, costing £425 and taking seven months to complete. The church was closed to accommodate the work and services were moved to a barn in Corney Hall.<sup>369</sup> No copies of

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<sup>366</sup> Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.*(1847), 199.

<sup>367</sup> CAS (W) YPR 51/3/1 vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid*; A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 110.

<sup>369</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1, vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

the plans have been found, but some details have been reported. The square windows (presumably those installed in 1790) were replaced with windows in the Victorian 'Gothic' style, the chancel roof was lowered, the plaster ceiling removed and the box pews were replaced with open pews.<sup>370</sup> The restoration revealed evidence of two small pre-reformation doorways, one in the north wall the other in the south,<sup>371</sup> and signs that before the refurbishment of 1790 the windows were Gothic in shape.<sup>372</sup> The door opening found in the north wall was retained as a feature that was still present in 2021. The balance of £86 17s. 8d. remaining after the building refurbishment was paid for was spent on accoutrements including a new altar cloth, new gates for the churchyard, repairs to the bells and stoves to heat the church and vestry. A new font, donated by Robert Scott DD, dean of Rochester and inscribed “IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY GHOST AMEN. R. S. 1882, was also installed and placed on the North side of the entrance at the west end of the church.<sup>373</sup>

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

### **Manorial Government**

#### *Seaton Manor*

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<sup>370</sup> Bulmer *Dir. West Cumb.* (1883), 435; A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 110.

<sup>371</sup> W. G. Collingwood, ‘An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments of Cumberland’, *CW2*, 23 (1923), 268; A.G. Loftie, *The Rural Deanery of Gosforth*, Kendal (1889), 110.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid*; Church of England Church Heritage Record 607279 at:

<https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/chr/ChurchDetails.aspx?id=2107>. accessed 23 Oct 2011.

<sup>373</sup> Revd. J. Wilson, ‘The Baptismal Fonts of the Rural Deaneries of Gosforth and Whitehaven’, *CW1*, 11 (1891), 341.

Court baron records for those parts of Corney that lay in Seton manor survive in the form of three admittances to tenements in Kinmont between 1741 and 1742 and subsequent enfranchisement of those tenements in 1759.<sup>374</sup> No Seton manor court presentments concerning Corney have been found, but surviving records for elsewhere in the manor deal with a plea of trespass by one tenant holder against another and the failure of 14 people to attend the lord's court.<sup>375</sup> The courts were held at Seaton Hall. No courts were held after 1802 when the Wakefields bought the manor.

#### *Manor of Corney and Middleton Place*

Records of the court baron for Corney and Middleton Place manor survive from 1641 – 1761, and from 1819 – 1922.<sup>376</sup> No manor court books between 1762 and 1818 have survived. The records indicate that the courts were held before a jury of 12 men at least once a year, but often more frequently.<sup>377</sup> The courts were held in the manor house in Middleton Place until it fell into such dereliction in the early 19th century that the court had to be moved to Park Nook (see LANDSCAPE, SETTLEMENT AND BUILDING, The Built Character). Much of the court's business concerned transfer of tenancies, imposition of fines (heriots) due to the lord, and orders for road maintenance, gutter cleaning and hedge cutting.<sup>378</sup> In 1767, Joseph Borrowdale presented John Benn for not scouring his gutter between Hen Croft and Low Corner of the Frith and not keeping it clear. John Benn was ordered to clear it and keep it clear on pain of a

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<sup>374</sup> CAS (W), WDW/1/2/2/2/2-3WDW/1/2/2/3/2-3.

<sup>375</sup> CAS (W), WDW/1/2/2/2/6; CAS (W) WDW/1/2/2/2/13; CAS (W) WDW/1/2/2/2/66;

<sup>376</sup> CAS (B), BDKF/231/7; CAS (W) DPEN/177, 243-244.

<sup>377</sup> CAS (B) BDKF/231/7; CAS (W), DPEN/177, CAS (W) DPEN/243; CAS (W) DPEN/244 manor court books.

<sup>378</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/10/4-13.

fine of 5s. 8d.. In what seems to be a ‘tit for tat’ response, John Benn presented Joseph Borrowdale for not scouring his gutter called Hen Croft Beck Race. Joseph was also ordered to redress the omission on pain of fine of 5s. 8d.. At the same meeting it was ordered that a hedge that was out of repair must be made lawful on pain of 6s. 8d..<sup>379</sup>

### *Court Leet*

The manor also fell into the jurisdiction of the court leet at Millom. In 1802, the court leet ordered the constables of Corney and other constables of the seignory of Millom to collect money from each hamlet to pay William Newton and Richard Tyson £11 for killing 11 foxes. They were also required to levy on their hamlets and constablewicks their proportion of the expenses of repairing the Cumberland side of Duddon bridge once they had been ascertained.<sup>380</sup>

### **Township Government**

As the manorial system eroded, local government functions in Corney, as elsewhere, increasingly devolved to justices of the peace, the quarter sessions, the petty sessions and the parish through its vestry meetings attended by a jury of ratepayers and chaired by the local incumbent. In addition to repairing, maintaining and improving the church building and accoutrements, the vestry meeting became responsible for fundraising (setting the poor rate) and expenditure and taking decisions in support of the Poor Laws. They also became responsible for resettlements, road maintenance, dealing with misdemeanours, setting rates for work and appointing overseers of the poor, guardians of the poor and highway surveyors. Records of the meetings from 1773 to 1927 have survived. In 1827 the vestry set up a select

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<sup>379</sup> CAS (W), DPEN/11/12.

<sup>380</sup> CAS (W), YDSO 134/3, Order from Leet Court, Millom.

committee of six members 'to deal with the poor in accordance with the Act'<sup>381</sup> Presumably the Act referred to was either the Select Vestries Act 1818 or that of 1819, or both. Select vestry meetings were to be held fortnightly. The fine for not attending meetings was set at one shilling.

In the early 18th century Corney was part of the constablewick of Birkby, Corney and Waberthwaite,<sup>382</sup> but there is no evidence of Corney Parish appointing a constable until 1852 (though the instruction issued by the court leet in 1802 (see above) indicates that one may have existed at that time). In 1702 the inhabitants of the constablewick of Birkby, Corney and Waberthwaite, and a number of other constablewicks in West Cumberland, successfully petitioned the quarter sessions that they were being overcharged for their purvey. The five JPs appointed to determine the case found in favour of the petitioners and their purvey was reduced by 15*d.*<sup>383</sup> Purvey rolls in the mid 18th century show that Corney and Waberthwaite paid a combined purvey of £1 8*s.* 3*d.* at that time.<sup>384</sup>

In matters of security and policing residents were prepared to take matters into their own hands. In 1806 several inhabitants of Corney, Whitbeck and Bootle formed an association for the prosecution of felons and other offenders with a view to alleviating immediate sufferers of the expense of prosecution, preventing crime by making the likelihood of punishment more certain and contributing to the preservation of the peace and the protection of property. Membership

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<sup>381</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1 vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>382</sup> CAS (W), D/CU/comp.1.1, purvey for Allerdale above Derwent 1739

<sup>383</sup> CAS (C), Q/11/1/62/6 Order of 5 JPs re: West coast purvey disputes.

<sup>384</sup> 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.

was made open to the public of the three parishes and the agreement to join was lodged with a clergyman in Bootle for inspection and signature of those who wanted to join.<sup>385</sup>

### *Relief of the Poor*

Management of poor relief was a major responsibility of the vestry. It was administered on behalf of the vestry by an overseer for the poor who was elected, or re-elected, annually by the vestry. Rates for poor relief were set by the vestry, and disbursements were made to those poor who had the right of settlement in Corney. In 1779, the parish collected £2 5s. 4d. for the poor, of which £1 10s. 9d. was distributed, the remainder being carried over to 1780 bringing that year's total to £ 17 14s. 7d., of which £6 13s. 11d. was disbursed to the poor and £11 0s. 8d. was carried over to 1781.<sup>386</sup> In Aug.1821 the poor rate was set at one shilling in the pound.<sup>387</sup> That same year Bootle claimed the rates for Monk Moors which was located in Bootle parish, but was part of the land belonging to Middleton Place in Corney and had traditionally paid rates to Corney. In July, Corney parish appealed against Bootle's claim on the grounds that the rates for Monk Moors had been paid to Corney 'time out of Mind', but the appeal failed.

In 1788, the vestry appointed George Dixon and Edward Brockbank to remove Ann Scott, who had become, or was about to become, a charge on Corney parish, back to her own parish of Papcastle. The outcome is unrecorded, but she was still in the parish in 1789, when Joseph Jackson refused to comply with the vestry's request that he accommodate her. The case ran on until 1795 when the vestry paid James Wiell £31 10s. for clearing the parish of any further expenses in respect of Ann Scott. In 1790, the vestry appealed against a removal order by

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<sup>385</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 13 Jan. 1807, p.1.

<sup>386</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1 vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*



Ulverston whereby Dinah, the wife of John Stables was removed and brought to Corney and had since become a charge on the parish. The appeal cost the parish £26 11s., but no outcome is recorded. In 1819, the vestry agreed that a Corney parish officer should assist Bootle parish in the trial at the Sessions of William Grindel, a pauper likely to become chargeable to Corney. In 1826 the vestry resolved to appeal against the removal of John Williamson and family from Irton to Corney. In 1846 David Chambers, chargeable to Corney, was conveyed to Whitehaven to attend the petty sessions to be examined regarding his lawful settlement.<sup>388</sup>

In 1727, Corney churchwardens issued a settlement certificate for Richard Shaw and family to the churchwardens and overseers of Holker.<sup>389</sup> In 1731, they issued a settlement certificate in respect of Hugh Troughton of Corney and his wife to churchwardens of Hawkshead St. Michael and All Angels parish.<sup>390</sup>

Arrangements available for relief the poor with settlement rights in Corney were very varied, and indicate the latitude the vestry had in deciding how best to use the money raised. In 1788, the vestry agreed to give Job Borrowdale one shilling a week for a house for William Mawson, with condition that William and his family behave in a decent manner and leave the house on reasonable notice. In 1832, the vestry agreed to advance £25 to Joseph Brockbank of Old Hutton in Kendal to defray the cost of his and his family's passage to America. In other cases, family were expected to contribute to the upkeep if they could. In 1825 the vestry resolved to enquire into the property of Elizabeth Jackson of Charles Ground to enable the magistrates to

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<sup>388</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1, vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>389</sup> CAS (K), WPR 79/7/3/1/3; (WPR 79/20/23).

<sup>390</sup> CAS (K), WPR 83/7/3/1/20; (WPR 83/7/21/19).

inquire into her liability towards the maintenance of her son, John Jackson of High Corney, and the maintenance of her grandchildren.

Young people were sometimes apprenticed to a master to reduce the charges on the parish. In 1829 the vestry agreed that 15-year-old Ann Dixon should be apprenticed to John Singleton of Bank (now Middlebank) and that John should receive an annual fee that reduced from £5 to £1 over the six years of her apprenticeship. In 1833, Jane Tyson, a girl belonging to Corney parish, was offered to Joseph Dickinson of Langley Park as an apprentice or servant for one year with a consideration of 4*d.* a week for keeping her.

Prior to having access to a poorhouse in which to house the poor, the parish appear to have sometimes dealt with the poor by arranging accommodation with parishioners in a 'common round'.<sup>391</sup> In 1789, when Joseph Jackson of Charles Ground refused to take Ann Scott in her common round (see above) the vestry decided that the overseer would board her with whoever would take her, and any who refused would pay for the board.<sup>392</sup> In 1827 the vestry resolved to join Bootle parish, which had poorhouses in Millom and Bootle village, in the maintenance of the poor.<sup>393</sup> No details of the proposed arrangements have survived, but they appear to have fallen through, or were short-lived, because in 1829 the parish sought to rent a room in the poor house at Whitehaven for housing its poor,<sup>394</sup> but again apparently without success. In 1830 they rented the house, garden, and back field at Hungry Moor (now Moor House) in Corney for

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<sup>391</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1 vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*

conversion to a poorhouse.<sup>395</sup> This appears to have been successful for a while, for in 1831 William Pepper was committed to the poor house and the vestry resolved that anyone could employ him at a moderate wage while he was there.<sup>396</sup> William does not seem to have been at Hungry Moor very long, because later in 1831 the house was let to William Jackson for 9*d.* a week.<sup>397</sup>

On the 12 June 1837, Corney 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 £78, which was the average annual expense incurred for relief of the poor in the preceding three years, was set for Corney. This compared with an average of £236 paid by Bootle, £13 paid by Birker and Austhwaite, £32 paid by Waberthwaite and £158 paid by Muncaster. A guardian of the poor was elected annually from among the ratepayers of Corney to serve on the board of guardians.<sup>398</sup> In 1856 the poor law union built a new workhouse about half a mile west of Bootle to replace the previous workhouses in Bootle and Millom (see BOOTLE).

### *Highways*

No evidence for the appointment of a highway surveyor with the responsibility for care and maintenance of the highways is evident before 1849, after which highway surveyors were elected annually. Prior to that, highways issues appear to have been dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis with the vestry appointing individuals to deal with issues as they arose. In 1792, George

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<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>396</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>398</sup> Kelly, *Dir. Cumb.* (1906), 39; *Cumberland Paquet*, 23 May 1837, p.3.

Dixon was instructed to collect the expenses for an indictment (unspecified) concerning a road in Corney.<sup>399</sup> In 1796, Mark Noble was appointed to manage an anticipated indictment and trial concerning a piece of the road up Brunt Hills.<sup>400</sup> These indictments may indicate that the roads were not well-maintained.

In 1848, the vestry fixed the rate of pay for a full male capable of working two horses and two carts on the highway at two shillings per day. In 1856, they raised the rate to 2s. 6d. and set the fee for a person providing one man, 1 horse and 1 cart at 4s. per day, while a person providing one man, 2 horses and 2 carts was to be paid 8s. 6d. per day.<sup>401</sup> In 1872, the vestry appointed a 'waywarden' to represent the parish on the new Bootle Highway District Board, formed to manage the maintenance and repair of highways in Bootle and surrounding parishes.<sup>402</sup> In 1894 the duties and powers of the board passed to Bootle Rural District Council and the board was abolished.<sup>403</sup>

### *Misdemeanours*

In 1829, when William Whinnerah refused to pay the church rate on his land in Corney, the vestry resolved that the churchwardens could proceed against him for recovery of the debt. In 1854, when trespassing cattle on Corney Fell common land became seriously troublesome, the vestry formed a committee to perambulate the fell with powers to give notice to the owners of

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<sup>399</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1, vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>400</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>401</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>402</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1, vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>403</sup> [https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/archives/Online\\_catalogues/official/highways.asp](https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/archives/Online_catalogues/official/highways.asp) accessed 16 Oct. 2021.

trespassing cattle and to take any other steps they deemed necessary for preventing future encroachment.<sup>404</sup>

### ***Post 1894 Arrangements (Rural and Urban Districts)***

As a result of the Local Government Act of 1894, Corney became part of Bootle Rural District Council which became responsible for roads, health and sanitation, housing, and planning<sup>405</sup> until 1951 when the Lake District National Park Authority (LDPNA) became the planning authority for Corney.<sup>406</sup> 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,<sup>407</sup> which discharged them through the Public Assistance Committee.<sup>408</sup> The workhouse in Bootle was closed two years later.<sup>409</sup>

The 1894 Local Government Act did not automatically give Corney, a parish of less than 300 people, the opportunity to form an elected civil parish council without making a special application, but it did provide the opportunity for Corney to combine with another parish to form an elected parish council.<sup>410</sup> In the event Corney neither made a special request to form a council nor opted to combine with another parish. Instead, it left civil local government to the Bootle Rural District Council and Bootle petty sessions held fortnightly under the jurisdiction

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<sup>404</sup> CAS (W), YPR 51/3/1, vestry minutes 1773 -1846.

<sup>405</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 17 Mar. 1894, p.8.

<sup>406</sup> [https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/aboutus/nat\\_parks\\_history](https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/aboutus/nat_parks_history) (accessed 17 Mar. 2019);

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

<sup>407</sup> *Millom Gazette*, 10 Jan. 1930, p.2.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Feb. 1932, p.3

<sup>409</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Apr. 1932, p.1.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Mar. 1894, p.8.

of local magistrates,<sup>411</sup> while vestry meetings continued (as parochial church council meetings) to discuss and manage church matters.

In 1934, Millom Urban District Council absorbed Bootle Rural District Council to form Millom Rural District Council (MRDC).<sup>412</sup> At the same time the civil parish of Corney was combined with that of Waberthwaite 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 Apr. 1934 to elect members and officials of the council.<sup>413</sup> The history of local government subsequent to 1934 is described under WABERTHWAITE.

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<sup>411</sup> Kelly *Dir. Cumb.* (1901), 529; *Ibid.* (1906), 6.

<sup>412</sup> <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/Content/Internet/542/795/42318123741.pdf> (accessed 1 Apr. 2019).

<sup>413</sup> Waberthwaite and Corney Parish Council Minute Book, 18 Apr. 1934 (courtesy of Waberthwaite and Corney parish clerk).